

Things to Remember Living In This World

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Date: 01 March 2020

Preacher: Jason Webb

[0 : 0 0] Take your Bibles and turn to the book of Titus. I'll be reading Titus the third chapter. Titus chapter 3. Titus chapter 3.

Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities.! At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived, and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures.

We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But, when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy.

He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good.

[1 : 42] These things are excellent and profitable for everyone. But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.

Warn a divisive person once, then warn him a second time. Warn a divisive person once, then warn him a second time.

[illegible]

It's the word remember. On Sunday evenings, as I've had the chance and the opportunity, and it's been rather sporadic lately, but we've been going through the book of Titus. Titus the man is on the island of Crete, and the church isn't all put together yet. It's in a bit of a mess. It was just planted. Things aren't exactly the way they need to be, and that's why Titus is there, because Paul left him there to straighten things out, to put in place what was left unfinished.

And so in a very succinct way, in a nice little type package, Titus, the book of Titus, is a blueprint for the Christian church. And so it's for us, and it's for Christian individuals, and so it's for you in particular. It's for you. Martin Luther called it, the book of Titus, a model of Christian teaching in which is comprehended in a masterful way all that is necessary for the Christian to know and to live. Everything pretty much is stuffed into this very small three-chapter book. It's a model.

[4 : 35] It's a blueprint. And so the church is in a mess. The church is unfinished. So what do you need to do? Titus chapter one is get the right kind of leaders in place. Get the right kind of leaders in place.

Now, Titus, here's what they look like. Here's the men that you should be looking for to lead the church. So you check the blueprint, you compare it to what you have, and you put it into place.

Next is get the wrong leaders out. There's no point in having good leaders in mixed with a whole bunch of other bad leaders. No, you need to get the wrong leaders out. The false teachers, the foolish, selfish, the sinful. And so here's what they look like. Get them out. That's chapter one. It's all about leadership. It's all about church structure. Chapter two is now we're inside the church and we're not dealing with the leadership so much as the people, all of the people. And we have different kinds of people in the church. You have older and you have younger. You have men and you have women.

And so that's all of us. You're somewhere in that group. None of us are left out. And here's what you, each one of you are supposed to be doing. This is what godliness looks like in your particular situation. So if one morning you wake up and you're wondering, what does God want me to do?

You know what a wonderful exercise is to do is to just go to Titus chapter two, find your category and say, this is what the Lord wants. This is what godliness looks like for me in particular.

[6 : 22] So that's chapter two. But chapter two doesn't just tell us what to do. It tells us why to do it. Because if you haven't noticed, if you don't have a big enough why, no matter what you're supposed to do, it doesn't necessarily get done. Why? Why do we need to do this? It's not good enough to just have blueprints. You need to have a reason to build. So Noah, I don't know if he had blueprints done for the ark. But if he did, that was good. But there was a big, big why, why he needed to get to work.

And so he had a big why. So he got the job. He got going. And so the rest of chapter two is about motivation. Why should I be doing these things? Why should I be pursuing godliness? And Paul says, it's the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It's appeared to older men.

Maybe you're in that category. You were saved when you were older. It appeared to younger men and older women and younger women. And everywhere the grace of God comes into a person's life, when it came into your life, the grace of God had a single lesson. It taught us all the same thing. It taught us to say no to ungodliness and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives. Jesus died in order to save us from ungodliness. If there was no hell, that's not true, but if there was no hell and there was only sin, it still would be amazing that Jesus saved us from our sin. Because sin is what is bad and evil and destructive in and of itself. And so Jesus died to save us from that. He died to make you his own.

And he died in order that you would be eager to do what is good. So when Jesus is on the cross, one reason that he is there is in order that you would be eager to pursue godliness and doing good.

When we're tired, when we're weak about doing good, it's because we're forgetting that Jesus was on that cross in order to make us his very own eager to do what is good. There's somehow been a detachment.

[8 : 54] We're not attached. We're not thinking about why Jesus was there. And that's why Paul is saying, this is the why of godliness. It's a big why. It's Jesus on the cross. That's why you should do this.

So now we've talked about the church, and we've talked about our private lives, in our families, so to speak. But is that all? Is that all Christianity is? Is what we do here, inside these walls? Or what we do in our private, in our family lives? Is that all Christianity is? Is that all that godliness is about? Does it just make private, good people? And I think sometimes we, I don't know if we necessarily conscientiously think that, but that's easy for us to think.

When we think about what is godliness, we have a very, we can narrow it down into something that's just church, churchy, and private. So it's just a church, it's a church thing. It's just a personal thing. It's a family thing. But that's not where Paul stops. Titus, remember, is this comprehensive, it's Christian teaching for the whole, everything the Christian needs to know to live? That's what Martin Luther said. But he doesn't stop at chapter two. He goes into chapter three. And so we need to go into chapter three. And so Paul says, you need to remember, there's more for you to do than what we've talked about. There's more for you to live than chapters one and two. Remember what you are supposed to be doing? We're in the world. We're not of the world, but you are in the world. You're citizens here. You have neighbors. We're citizens. We're neighbors. We're not of this world, but we are in the world. And so how do we relate to them? What does godliness look like towards the government, toward government leaders? This is an election year. I think this is an appropriate passage for us to think about, about government leaders, toward our neighbors, towards the wicked out there in the world, towards those neighbors that aren't so nice, towards those co-workers that aren't good.

And so that's Titus chapter three. And let me say, this is just as important as whatever's gone before. It's no good being a Titus two woman if you're not a Titus three woman. It's no good being a Titus two man if you're not going to be a Titus three man. This is, if we get this wrong, it doesn't matter how good we are in our church or in our private family lives. We're falling short of the glory and the extent of what the gospel should be doing in our lives. We're falling short of living up to the gospel. We're going to become terrible, ineffective, offensive witnesses for Christ. And so we're going to go around with Jesus Christ posterized on our t-shirt, and yet our spiritual BO will drive people away from us. We'll make Christ and the gospel smell bad. So how do we avoid that?

And this is where our key word comes in. It's remember. You need to remember. Remember what? We have three things that we need to remember. Three big categories. And that's our three main points for today. Remember first, how you're supposed to act towards those on the outside.

[12 : 52] Remember how you are supposed to act towards those on the outside who are unbelievers, who aren't in the church, who aren't in your immediate family. They're in the world. And they're in the wicked world.

They're in the John 3, 16, for God so loved that evil world that he gave his only son. They're in that world. So how are we to act towards those? Verses 1 and 2, what does it say? Remind the people.

You see that Titus chapter 3, verse 1, remind, remind the people. You know this, and I'm talking to you.

You know this, but you need to remember it. We have enough stored up in here, but sometimes we forget it. We forget what we're supposed to be about. So you've been told, and Paul is saying to Titus, you need to tell them again. There's very little new that pastors, that teachers bring. It is a lot of reminding. It's a lot of, remember this, remember this, remember this. So how are we supposed to act towards those on the outside? How are you supposed to be acting towards those on the outside? Well, it says be subject to rulers and authorities. Be obedient. Talking about government. Be subject. Be submissive.

Only to conservatives? Only to Republicans? What if Bernie Sanders becomes president? What then?

[14 : 37] What if the entire Congress, for some reason, Congress and all, it goes into some sort of atheistic form of socialism? What if they pass laws and take your guns away? And I'm sure you hope that doesn't happen, but what if it does? Should we revolt? Should Christians agitate for revolution? Join a militia? Paul doesn't, Paul's very clear. Be subject to rulers and to authorities.

Be obedient. Christianity didn't grow and expand and eventually, in a good way, infest and fill the entire Roman Empire because they were agitating against that empire. They were down there in the catacombs worshiping and praising and singing. They were not down in the catacombs planning revolts and undermining the government. They weren't plotting assassination attempts. They weren't forming little militias in order to defend themselves against the Roman government. And so that's what Paul is talking about. And so brothers and sisters, yes, we are citizens of the United States. That is true.

But we are citizens of another country first. And this isn't our home. We're passing through. This isn't our world. And so we don't need to agitate and fight and plot and scheme like those who have no hope beyond this world. And if this is the only world that we have, if this is the only life we have, if this is the only country we have, then yes, we need to do those things because it's this or nothing. But that's not the biblical perspective at all. This country or nothing.

And those who plot and agitate and scheme, this is, it's this or nothing. It's this country or nothing. But that's not you. And so what Paul is saying is, is when you're in this life and in this world and in this country, you can afford to be subject, to be obedient to those who are in authority. There's no authority that exists that God has not had a hand in putting into place. And so does that mean that, you know, the Bible is clear. There are situations in order where we need to disobey governing authorities.

So what about those? What happens when they come into direct conflict with God, with God's laws?

[17 : 44] Well, then we obviously may and should disobey. But throughout the entire Bible, when you see this disobedience, it's always peaceful disobedience, it's always submissive and humble disobedience.

It's always accepting the consequences. So Acts chapter 5, the apostles disobey the Sanhedrin, and then they were flogged, and they took their floggings. And then they went home rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name. Daniel, when ordered by the king, you know, that decree to not pray to anyone else except for the king, Daniel kept praying, and he took the consequences.

He was thrown into the lion's den, and God saved him. You can think of a Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They took the consequences, and the Lord saved them. And remember what they said, the Lord is going to save us, and even if he doesn't save us, we're still not going to do what you asked. But they took the consequences, the Lord saved them. But all of them, all of them, they all suffered when they disobeyed, but they were not political agitators, political revolutionaries, or anything of the sort. And so that's the first thing. We need to have this basic understanding that this is how the Lord wants us to live in this country here. Remind them to be ready to do what is good. To be ready to do whatever is good. And so be ready. So here's the second thing. It's not the second thing to remember, but we need to remember how we're supposed to act towards those on the outside. So how are we to be acting? Well, we are to be ready. What does it look like when you're ready for something? If your daughter is on a tree, and up in a tree, or your son is up in the tree, and they're going to jump off, and you are ready to catch them, what do you look like? Well, your eyes are on them, your hands are open, your feet are set, you're ready for action, she's going to jump, you're ready to catch her. Being ready is being alert, your eyes ready, eyes peeled, scanning, eager, ready to go in a moment's notice. And so again, what is our posture to be towards those on the outside? It is this posture of I am ready to do what is good. Think of a mousetrap. It's ready to go off when it's set. The moment something comes across its path, it goes off. That's the kind of readiness that we are to have towards doing good to those who are on the outside. Not reluctantly, ready. So I heard this past week, or two weeks ago,

I guess now, of a pastor, and I was down in Florida. I heard about another pastor who lived in Florida, Florida, and remember that whole Y2K thing, and maybe if you're older, you remember what was going to happen. It was going to be the end of the world. And if you're younger, guess what? It didn't happen.

Well, when that whole Y2K thing was supposed to happen about 20 years ago, this pastor abandoned his church. I mean, he didn't really up in one day just say it, but he resigned. And he took his family, and they all moved to Montana. He left his family. He left his neighborhood. He resigned and moved out to Montana or something. And his reason was, I have to take care of my family first.

[21 : 32] And there's a little bit of plausibility to that, I suppose. But when he came back after nothing happened, and he went back to his church, and he asked, you know, can I become a pastor again?

They said, no way. No way. So when the world is supposed to end, you're going to go to Montana.

Just think about yourself and your family, but not about us, not about the people that you're living with. And we have to fight against the same sort of attitude where it's just about me and my family or me and my church. We need to be ready to do what is good. We need to be sources of goodness out in our neighborhoods, in our work, among the people, in the world. And so, yes, our family is first, we say, but that's not all. We need to be ready to do good. And the whole Bible is full of this idea that righteousness is not merely a private thing. You can read Psalm 112.

And it talks about this righteous man, and it's social. It's public. He talks about his generosity, about scattering your gifts to the poor, about lending freely. That's what righteousness is.

It's ready to do good to your neighbors. And so, it's not just reading your Bible and going to church. It's not just raising your children for God. Yes, it is those things. It definitely is. But that's not all.

[23 : 13] Paul is saying, be ready. Remember that posture. Hands ready. Eyes ready. Feet ready. Like the mouse trap. Like the parent ready to catch his child. Ready to do whatever is good. Whatever is good.

One commentator wrote, for both Paul and Jesus, believers are those who follow their lead into the public square. And the good works have a point that goes well beyond staying under the speed limit, keeping a nice lawn, and paying the bills on time. The ambition is larger. The promotion of faith, faith, and love, and hope, and justice, and mercy, and faithfulness to whatever degree possible.

Did you hear that? And I like that. It's an ambition. That's what he's talking about. An ambition for promotion. So, when I'm at my workplace, or I'm in my neighborhood, or when I'm with my unbelieving, unchurched family, do I have this ambition to promote whatever is good in their lives? That's what Paul is talking about. Next, he says, to slander no one. Don't talk bad about people.

I found it funny, or sad, or something. This Wednesday, I think it was, the Pope preached his Lent address, and everyone, and he said, maybe what you need to give up for Lent is talking bad about people, gossiping, and slandering. And I think he was talking about online kind of stuff.

So, like, in other words, stop trolling people on the internet. That's what you should give up for Lent. Paul is saying, don't just give it up for Lent. Give it up, period. Period.

[25 : 15] No slandering. No insulting. Not in private, not in person, not in front to their face, and not behind their back. Slander in a Christian is bad breath in a dentist.

Bad breath is bad, no matter who has it, but when it's in the dentist, you say, that's out of place, right? Slander in the Christian is out of place. If anyone considers himself religious, and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, what does James say? He deceives himself, and his religion is worthless.

If your religion does not stop your fingers from typing things, or from your mouth from saying things that are insulting, slanderous, unnecessarily bringing up people's faults, then James is saying, what good is your religion?

Now instead of all that, be peaceable, considerate, and humble toward all men. These things are, they kind of all go together. They're like a braid in a girl's hair. You know, they're interwoven together. They're overlapping, and they're interconnected. Peaceable. It means you're not a fighter.

You're not fighting. You're not argumentative. You're not looking for this fight all the time. You're considerate. That means reasonable, fair-minded. If you're considerate, kind of the word carries this idea of you're easygoing. You're not always getting your toes stepped on. You're not rash. You're not hot-headed toward people. And then showing humility toward all men. It means showing meekness, or even courteousness. Being courteous. So don't be a bull in a china shop. Think about who you're with, and be careful. Be thoughtful. Be considerate. It's kind of that idea of, you know, when you tell your boys, your young boys, be a gentleman. Right? Be a gentleman. That's kind of this idea. That's what it's getting at. It's this opposite of harsh and abrasive and offensive, just unnecessarily.

[27 : 41] Usually, people, you're always stepping on people's toes. And if they're not doing what you want, then you're going to let them know it. And so if you put all this together, what Paul is saying is, be gracious. Be gracious. Be a breath of fresh air in your world. Be a bit of sunshine in your world.

Fresh air and sunshine at work, on your street, in your town. And you can't have the bunker mentality, where it's just me and mine, and that's who I need to take care of. What Paul is saying is, be out there doing good. Be out there being good. And we can say, that's all good in theory, isn't it?

It's all good in theory. I know that's what I'm supposed to do, and I thank you for the reminder, but that is hard. And let's be honest, when it comes right down to it, that is difficult, what Paul is asking us to do. Leaders aren't necessarily good leaders. Kind of already hinted at that. Sometimes the people who are in charge are not people that you wish were in charge.

And neighbors aren't always the friendliest. And people out there in the world really can be so foolish, so proud, and so hard to get along with. And it is easy for us to start thinking, I am better than they are. Why do I have to be nice to them? Why do I have to be courteous to them?

Why do I have to bend over backwards for them? They aren't exactly falling all over themselves to be nice to me. They aren't exactly lovable. They aren't now. But they weren't then either.

[29 : 38] People haven't changed in 2,000 years. Remember what Crete was like? We need to remember, in the context in which Paul is preaching this, or teaching this, and telling Titus, you need to teach the people, this is how you're supposed to live. Remember what Crete was like?

Chapter 1, verse 12, Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, and lazy gluttons. Well, that's not exactly a five-star review. And that wasn't coming from one of their enemies.

Paul says, one of their own prophets say that. One of their own spiritual leaders. The one that you think he wants the best for them. That's what he says about them. We talked about this. It's been over a year since we started this series.

But I think, again, we need to remember what Crete was like. It was like the Wild West. It was the frontier of civilization, if there was any.

It's the pirates of the Caribbean stuck out in the Mediterranean. Again, listen to how some of the ancient historians of this time wrote about the people of Crete. The people that Paul is telling Titus to tell the people, this is who you need to be ready to do good to.

[30 : 57] This is who you can't slander. This is who you need to submit and obey to. What were they like? Well, this is what some of the ancient historians said. When it comes to ambushes and piracy, the Cretans are irresistible both by land and by sea.

They were pirates. Another, it's impossible to find personal conduct more treacherous or public policy more unjust than in Crete.

Cicero, the Roman senator and historian, wrote, Cretans consider highway robbery honorable. Honorable.

One modern historian sums it all up like this. Crete was a failure. A primitive, pirate-infested, aristocratic, Dorian ghetto with nothing to recommend it beyond its ability to produce effective mercenaries.

Crete was the projects of the Roman Empire. Cretan's career. And that's where Jesus was building his church. And that's where Paul is saying, Now be ready to do whatever is good.

[32 : 10] That's the context. It was hard then, and it's hard now. Then how are we ever going to do it?

How are we ever really going to do it? How aren't we going to get all self-righteous, better than thou, looking like the Pharisees who were looking down on everyone else, and brothers and sisters, that's in us.

That's in me. Pride is the first and the closest shirt I put on toward my heart. It's the closest shirt I wear to my heart, and I doubt you're any different.

And so how then are we going to get into the right place, the right frame of mind, the right heart attitude, where we actually do what Paul is saying, where we're ready to be considerate, and humble, and courteous, and kind, and not slander, and instead be ready to do whatever is good.

Well, this is where our second big remember comes in. The first one was, remember how you're supposed to act out there. The second is, remember what you used to be.

[33 : 29] How are you going to do it? You have to remember what you used to be. At one time, we too were foolish. Are they foolish? We were foolish too.

We had no fear of God. We were living for all the wrong things. We thought this was the way to life, and it was killing us, and we were, sin does make you really and truly stupid, and we were really and truly stupid in our sin.

Sin is one of the worst things for us. It is the worst thing for us, and we were in love with it. In other words, we were just like them. Disobedient.

That means rebellious, stiff-necked. We were like stiff-necked donkeys that are just going to do whatever we want. We were horses without bridles, where, yeah, occasionally we went on the right path, but it was only because we just happened to.

It wasn't because we agreed with God. It was just, or it wasn't because we were obeying God. We just happened to agree with God for a time. We were disobedient. Is that how they live?

[34 : 32] Lawless. Or only picking and choosing the laws that they want to obey. Is that how they live? That's how we used to live. That is how we used to live.

Deceived. We looked at them. We look at them and say, they're so foolish. They're so confused. So, it's like they're not attached to the truth.

Yes, they are. They are confused and foolish. The devil has blinded their eyes. You notice that it's the idea that they are, they have been deceived.

It's not so much that here in this place that they're deceiving themselves. Someone from the outside has deceived them. Satan has blinded their eyes.

Kids, have you ever played that game where you blindfold someone and then you tell them to follow you? Follow your voice. Follow me. I'll lead you through and just follow my voice. And you're in the house and maybe you're feeling a little bit mean.

[35 : 43] And so you get behind a chair and say, follow me, follow me. And then they fall over the chair and, oh, it's real funny if it's not you. That's what Satan has done.

He's blinded the eyes of those who haven't believed and he said, follow me. Follow me. I'll show you the way to go. I'll show you how to do this. I'll show you the right way. I'll show you the best way to live.

And he's not trying to get them to walk into chairs and walls and have a nice little laugh about it. He's trying to get them to walk into an everlasting hell.

He's saying, follow me. And they're following him. They're deceived. But so are we. So are we.

And we should have more pity. I should have more pity and less scorn. He says, you were enslaved to all kinds of passions and pleasures.

[36 : 45] Again, they're slaves in chains and you were too. Would a runaway slave who finally found their freedom mock and scorn someone still in chains?

And we shouldn't either. Living in malice and envy. Again, it's ill will. Not happy that they're happy. That's what envy is.

I'm unhappy that you're happy. What envious, if you think about it, it is such a sick, little, small-hearted thing. That's what they are.

That's what we were. Being hated. It's not just, it means really, probably, hateful.

In other words, we weren't lovable either. Do you have a hard time loving them? Do they have a lot of problems and it makes it really hard? You weren't lovable either.

[37 : 47] You were hateful. We stunk. We stunk. And we stunk spiritually. People didn't like that.

And we were odious to others and they were odious to us. They didn't like us and they had good reasons for not liking us. Being hated and hating one another.

Just this idea that we're all in this together. All gross. All defiled. All not very lovable. And all stuck in this together. And that's them.

And that was you. That was you. But how did God treat you? Verse 4.

But. But. That's where we were. That's where we would have stayed. And we wouldn't have gotten better. Dead bodies don't get better.

[38 : 53] They just start smelling worse. But God did something. That we were in that wretched condition but God did something. And so here's the third remember. So the first remember is remember how you're supposed to act towards them.

The second one is remember though what you were. And now here's the third thing. Remember what God did for you. And we're going to hopefully Lord willing go into this section of the passage more deeply next week.

But remember what God did for you. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared. Kindness. Love. The word love there is philanthropia.

It's where we get our word philanthropy. And it basically means the exact same thing. It's loving men who are poor and needy and who need love.

Who need help. They're in a wretched place and they need someone to help them up. And that's what God that's what Paul is saying when the kindness and the philanthropia the philanthropy of God appeared.

[40 : 01] It's loving men who are poor and needy and can't help themselves and that's what it means here. And so did we work ourselves out of that wretched state that we were in?

Did we work ourselves out of it? Did we get our act together? Were we really righteous and then we started doing what we were supposed to do? No.

That's not what it says. It was philanthropy. It was mercy. That's all it was. It was love and it was God's generosity that saved you.

And if God hadn't saved you you would be there still still as foolish and as deceived and as enslaved as you ever were.

That's how God found us dirty and he washed us dead and he gave us new birth poor and God poured out his spirit on us generously.

[41 : 10] We were destitute. We were poorer than the street kids in some forsaken Ethiopian city. No parents no family no inheritance and this is what God did.

He made us heirs. heirs of the hope of eternal life. Heirs of eternal life. And so we were hopeless. We were miserable. We were destitute.

We were wicked. We were hateful. We were disobedient. God was there and we didn't want him and we didn't need him. Proud wretches.

That's what we were. Proud wretches. But God saved us and God was kind to us and he was ready and he was eager to do us good.

And when Jesus came down he came saying this is what God's heart is. This is what God's love is. This is God's heart for you. And he went around and it says he went around doing good.

[42 : 13] He always had a kind word for someone. An encouraging word for the weak. A helping hand to the poor. Food for the hungry. Light for those who are lost and confused. Think of Nicodemus.

He knows everything and yet he knows nothing. And Jesus is saying here I am. Here's light. Here's truth. And so when God found us in that proud wretched state God the Father loved us.

This passage is Trinitarian. God the Father loved us. God the Son loved us. God the Holy Spirit loved us. The three in one did us good when we were wrecks.

God the God loved us. So how can we do anything else? So yes the world is sinful. And the world is not very pleasant.

But I was the world. You were the world. And God so loved the world. He so loved you and me.

[43 : 18] And so what's your response going to be? what's your response going to be? Well what does your response really have to be?

Well first your response has to be gratitude. Gratitude. When we think of what we were and what God did for us the first response has to be thank you Lord for saving my soul.

Thank you for changing me, for washing me, for giving me a new heart. A new mind, a new spirit. Thank you for saving my soul. Thank you for your mercy. That's the first response.

When we read Titus 3 our hearts should be desperately saying thank you. Second response. There is an implied warning here.

If that's the way that you used to be, we just talked about that, what we used to be, if that's the way we used to be, we can't live like that anymore. I think Paul is definitely clearly saying, that's what we were.

[44 : 23] You can't be that anymore. That has to be the second response. If I was that way, foolish and disobedient and stubborn and proud, then I can't be that way anymore.

That's my old life. That's my old man. That's who I used to be. I'm not that anymore. That's not my new life in Jesus Christ. That's our second response. is to say, whatever is on this list that is disgusting, I have to turn away from and whatever is good, I have to embrace.

The third response has to be, and it must be, for you and for me, is a gracious, winsome, loving attitude toward the people of this world.

toward sinners, toward whoever's on your bucket list of deplorables, toward the liberals, toward the deceived, toward the deluded, toward the disobedient, toward sinners.

That has to be our response, because anything else, anything less, would be ungodly. ungodly. It would be ungodly and ungodlike, because is that how God is?

[45 : 47] Is that how God treated you? We freely received. We must freely give. If we have been graced with God's grace, then we must be gracious.

verse 8 says, this is a trustworthy saying, and I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good.

This is absolutely true. What Paul is, what Paul, he's probably quoting something here. It might be a hymn, it might be a part of a little confession, but he's saying this, what we have here, what we all know, what I just repeated for you, this is absolutely true.

That's what we were. God has been so good to us, and the only thing that we can do is then now be devoted and ready to do good to those on the outside.

So three things this morning. Three things to remember. Remember what you were when God found you. When God found you.

[47 : 07] Remember what you were. And then remember everything God did for you. And remember then, the third is remember then how you should live toward those on the outside.

Well, may the grace of God be with us all in order that we could do this, to help us to do exactly that, to remember what we need to remember.

The wonderful grace of our Lord Jesus. Let's sing that. It's hymn 702. 702. Let's stand as we sing. Let's stand as we sing. Let's stand as we sing. Let's stand as stand as as we sing.

pray with me. Heavenly Father, when we think of where we were and what we were and what we were like when you came and found us and sought us by the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit, there are no words that we can say except for thank you.

Thank you for your love and your grace that reaches the most defiled. And we thank you for your love for sinners.

[48 : 40] And that's what we are and we put ourselves into that category. We thank you for your grace and your mercy to us. help us to remember what we were and what you have done.

Because we are too proud and we forget too easily and we start to think that we earned this or we're better than others and we're not and we just need to remember that.

So Holy Spirit, remind us of what we were in order that we might graciously do what you have called us to do. You've commanded us.

Now give us the grace in order to do it, that we might be pleasing to you, that we might be a fragrance, a sweet smelling aroma out in the world, that we would reflect something of our Lord Jesus and his love and his graciousness, his humility, gentleness, courteousness, peaceableness, kindness, that we might be a reflection of him and all of his beauty.

Make us to shine even brighter. For Jesus' sake, I pray. Amen. Amen.