

The Work of God's Amazing Grace

I. Introduction: Brownfield Remediation

One of my jobs in the past was managing brownfield remediation projects. A brownfield is a designated industrial wasteland. Land developers look for abandoned brownfield sites that they can purchase, remediate and then redevelop for a good purpose. It begins by assessing the extent of the contamination; Where is this property toxic, dangerous, ugly, nasty, and unclean? What will it cost to remediate and restore this property so it can be useful again? The developer is interested in the restoration of the property so that it can be beautiful, productive, and serve a profitable use. He invests time, money, and risk to get a return. The developer purchases and remediates the land with an ultimate use in mind.

Why does God rescue wretched, self-serving sinners like us? He has an ultimate purpose and use for us. He takes broken, toxic, unclean people, buys them, cleanses them, and trains them all for the purpose of making them into a useful asset for His kingdom. This whole process of redemption displays His power, grace, kindness, love, holiness, and beautiful nature to the universe. We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; for our joy and His glory!

II. The Context of the Letter: Saved for a purpose

The letter before us is Paul's instructions to Titus on what he needed to do to establish and organize the local church on the island of Crete. The mission of the church is to make Christ known to the world. This letter provides specific instructions for various groups of people to equip and prepare them to fulfill this mission of making Christ known.

Before we take a close look at our main text, I want to take a moment to scan the letter, and I want you to note the emphasis in this letter on GOOD WORKS. This letter is a set of specific instructions to be taught to specific groups in the church.

In Chapter 1, Paul lays out the specific requirements and qualifications for godly leaders. In chapter 2:1, Paul tells Titus to teach "what accords with sound doctrine for the purpose of setting the church in order so they can do GOOD WORKS."

In Chapter 1:16 Paul tells Titus that there are false teachers that must be silenced. "They profess to know God but deny him by their WORKS. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any GOOD WORK." It is not just what a supposed leader says, but is how they live and what they do that qualifies them to speak and lead.

In Chapter 2:14 we learn that the purpose for Christ's sacrifice was to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for GOOD WORKS.

In chapter 3:1, we learn that every believer is to "be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every GOOD WORK."

In chapter 3:8 we again see that it is imperative that "those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to GOOD WORKS."

And finally in chapter 3:14 Paul repeats “ let our people learn to devote themselves to GOOD WORKS”

It is clear from this repetition that Paul wanted Titus to emphasize good works. With that emphasis in mind, let’s look carefully at our passage, Titus 2:11-12

Titus 2:¹¹ *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,* ¹² *training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,*

III. **The Work of God’s Amazing Grace;
Appears, Brings Salvation, and Teaches Those Who Are Saved.**

This passage gives us three amazing works of the grace of God. 1. It has appeared 2. It offers salvation to all, and 3. It teaches those who are saved how to live.

- a. **The grace of God has APPEARED;** This certainly was in the public appearance, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Son of God before witnesses. God’s GRACE is that which He offers to underserving sinners, that when received by them causes joy, pleasure, gratification, acceptance, and peace with God. God’s grace is most fully expressed in the beauty, perfection, and person of Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is the full expression of God’s grace. The good news (gospel) is that Christ came from heaven and was born of a virgin, lived a perfect life, and then suffered and offered that righteous life on the cross, as a substitute for sinners, to pay the penalty due to sinners by suffering the full wrath and judgement of God toward sin. He died and was buried for 3 days and then was raised to life, conquering death, and ascended to the right hand of the Father and will soon return to rule and reign forever as king of kings and lord of lords over all creation in a perfect newly created earth and heaven. That will be the full manifestation of God’s glory and grace, this same grace has appeared.
- b. **This grace that appeared BRINGS salvation offered to all.** God is no respecter of persons and offers this pardon for sin and salvation to all people. To receive this salvation they must turn from their sins and believe in Christ and receive Him as their Savior and Lord. As God’s servants offer this pardon through the preaching of the gospel, the Spirit effectually and sovereignly moves and regenerates the hearts of God’s elect, enabling them to hear, understand and respond in faith and repentance to the offer of pardon and forgiveness. This is how God executes His plan through His church to redeem and rescue sinners for the purpose of displaying and declaring His goodness, mercy, and kindness to the world through their transformation and good works.

Ephesians 2:8-10 expresses it like this: *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one can boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

Note carefully that we are not saved by our effort or works, but God saves us for the purpose of doing good works for His honor and glory.

So God’s grace appeared in the person of Christ, and then offers salvation to all men through the

proclamation of the gospel, and finally, ...

- c. **This grace of God TEACHES** those who respond in repentance and faith how to live for His glory; to deny self, reject ungodliness, repudiate worldly idols and desires, and to embrace self-control, service of others, goodness, and to do good works, all to display the light of His glory in a dark and fallen world. Just as a good mother not only births a child, but also disciplines and cares for that child, so the Holy Spirit not only regenerates us, but also trains us on how to fulfill the purpose of our new birth, which is to live upright, godly lives in the present age.

IV. APPLICATION

- a. **We need to pray and seek to know the work He has for us to do.** God has good works to do for those that He has rescued. He has prepared specific good works for you to do to display His character, beauty, love, holiness, and presence to others. What are some specific steps you can take to discern and fulfill His calling in your life?
- b. **We must repudiate and reject the worldly philosophy of self-fulfillment and self-actualization as the path to personal happiness.** God gives His grace to undeserving sinners, not for them to find personal fulfillment, but to change them for His use and glory. The pursuit of self-actualization is a vain, wicked, and ungodly focus that ends in ultimate destruction and death. What are some clear practices that we can engage in to renew our minds and help us resist the message of the world?
- c. **We must never grow weary in thanking God** for saving us and using us in His service. Pray and ask Him to use you however and wherever He wants to. Continue to prepare yourself and be ready to worship and serve Him however He chooses to use you.