

# Rev James Macdonald: Titus 2

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Preacher: Guest Preacher

[ 0 : 0 0 ]     Now as we turn to the Word of God, we pray that His own presence would be with us and that He would apply it to our own hearts.

Because we all need to hear the Word of the living God in the midst of all that we hear in our broken society and all that comes to us from day to day and all the rubble that we find round about us.

We look for a few moments at Titus and chapter 2, at verse 13.

First of all we can read from verse 11, for the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled upright and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself, our people for His own possession, who are cellars for good works.

Waiting for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself, our peculiar people, cellars of good works.

[ 2 : 0 2 ]     That is how the A.V. would sit and that's it in both languages but it's saying the very same thing.

Titus and Timothy here were converts of Paul but they weren't converts of Paul in that sense.

No one is a convert of an individual because no individual can or is able to convert an individual.

But it was Paul that God used as an instrument to do that work in their lives and because of that they feel that they are true companions of His in the work.

And now he refers to them in the first chapter to Titus, he says, my own son. That's how he refers to him.

[ 3 : 1 1 ]     That is the relationship of the children of God together as a family, as they are brought into the family of believers.

See they had no difficulty in that day in defining what a Christian was. A lot of difficulty today in defining what a Christian is but there was no difficulty then with these people because they themselves had passed from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto the wonderful, glorious gospel and the kingdom of the Son.

And as somebody once said, speaking about this, he said, how do you know that you are a Christian? And he said, well he says, I was there when it happened.

I was there, he said, when it happened, meaning that he didn't need others to tell him how this was or that was, it happened to him. And that is what Titus here and Timothy and Paul are referring to.

They were cellists for what changed their own lives. That is the zeal that they had. They had a healthy zeal. It wasn't a zeal without knowledge.

[ 4 : 43 ] That's the dangerous one because we can be very zealous without knowledge of what we are talking about. But this is very different from the people that he was writing to here and to the people who he had left Titus with and the Christians who were always liars.

And this witness, he said, is true, wherefore rebuke them sharply. There was no compromise in this area. There's no compromise when it comes to conversion.

There's no compromise when it comes to Christ because there was no compromise when Christ Himself came and went all the way to the cross of Calvary for us.

Somebody once said that you can argue a person out of a theory, but you can never argue a person out of an experience.

And that's worth noting. That's what they were doing here. They had experiences. They had a past. Understandably, they knew that.

[ 6 : 03 ] So did Saul of a past. But he had also, they had a present. They now lived for Christ. They had found this purpose.

They had found this power of great price. And because of that, they were living for Christ and they had a name.

They had a hope. Is that not what is wrong with so many in our land and in this world today, that they are chasing the wind, chasing the shadows and not really able to focus on something that they can say, this is what I hope for.

Now this all came in the package that came to them when God intervened in their lives. They did away with their past.

They dealt with their present and it also kept them focusing upon the future hope.

[ 7 : 10 ] There was the world that they had given themselves to and it had disappointed them as it will have disappointed people tonight, wherever they are.

If they think that there is a happiness and lasting joy to be found in this world, it can promise plenty. But it will never ever fulfill that promise to you or to me or to anyone else.

And the reason behind that is that now through the Holy Spirit that has worked gloriously in their lives, they are able to believe the truth.

That isn't something like saying, well, one and one is two and anybody can believe that. It is that they are made able to believe the truth relating to God and to Christ.

And in the light of that, they see and they have seen that the Saviour promised long ago had come and was there to work in the lives of individuals.

[ 8 : 31 ] This is the Saviour, he said, who gave himself for them. The first thing we see here is the sin that separates.

The sin that separates this iniquity, this lawlessness, that is at the heart of everything in creation here, lawlessness.

Everybody wants to do what is right in their own eyes. They don't want to be subject to any higher authority than themselves. Your sin, he said, has separated you from your God.

And the subtleness of that is that man is not aware of that separation. That's the problem.

It ananethatises the mind in such a way. It keeps them away from realising that there is a separation between God and man in their natural state.

[ 9 : 38 ] And that is how it is for everyone who comes into this world, as Wesley put it in one of his hymns, fast bound in sin and nature's night.

That's how he saw it, fast bound in sin and nature's night. But the other thing about it was that only a part of man died, that man died spiritually.

Spiritually. He's quite capable of doing all the other things that he has to do in this world. And that keeps them thinking that that is enough and that that can maintain a union with God while there is a separation that has to be brought together and to love the Lord.

By one man sin entered into this world, he said, and death by sin. That's one other thing that people say, well, everybody dies. And that's true.

It is appointed unto every one of us here tonight to die. It's a solemn thing. It's an horrible thing. But it's an appointment that we can't get away from.

[ 10 : 57 ] But there is also a second death. There is a second death that can be avoided. And that is why we see this here.

This is why that in Adam all died. All died. But in Christ, my friend, they can be made alive.

We sang there, God looked to see if there was any on earth who did well and who was good and who sought the Lord. And he said, I didn't find anybody.

Not one in this earth. And there would have been people who thought that they were good enough and the likes of that. But they didn't show it.

That's what happened. They remained in that way. They sunk into the mire. He played that the psalmist says he took me from a fearful pit and from the miree a clay.

[ 11 : 55 ] Yet God didn't leave himself without witnesses. This is why the sovereignty of God comes in.

Overall blessed forever. There was never a time when the church was not before the Father.

And it wasn't a church building. It was the church as God sees the church from his abode, from his people scattered throughout the world.

Not one of them says shall be lost. Here we find the doctrine of election in chapter 1.

He says according to the faith of God's elect.

[ 12 : 59 ] That is the only faith that counts. Because everyone has a faith. Everybody has a faith in something. But it's a faith in God's elect that acknowledges the truth which is after Godliness.

This is not one of the problems so often we hear such and such a person has done this. Such and such a lady has done that. And it's not according to the truth you see. So they do away with the gospel because of the failings of individuals.

That we mustn't focus upon individuals or on the failings of individuals. We have been given one to focus upon.

And that is the one that really matters. And the one thing needful that Mary chose the good part that would never be taken from her.

And that is what we want you to remember here on this morning. This day chosen in him. He said chosen in him.

[ 14 : 12 ] We didn't choose God my friend. Not one of us. It doesn't matter who we are, who stands here. Not one of us chose God.

The prerogative was God's my friend. It came initially from God. The first movement in your life.

But this first stering that you had for the gospel or for the church or for whatever it was. It came from God first of all. Because we were dead in trespasses and in sin.

And you don't expect any reaction from a dead person. Nothing. And this is why it's so important for us to grasp this. That salvation is not of man.

It is of God first of all. And it is that is what makes it effectual. That's why it's different from everything else in this world.

[ 15 : 12 ] That's both humbling. But it is also encouraging. When we are we sink into the mire and into unbelief and all the things that come our way in this world and everybody.

The subject to that. No one is above these things. But you have to remember. I didn't love God. God first loved me.

And that is how he is writing here to them about this how this sin that separates and always separates.

Causes separation. Causes pain. Causes all sorts of disharmony in the midst of a God. And that is why this had to be dealt with.

This is the point that had to be dealt with. What separated you and I from God. And we know that when Abraham and his son were on the way up to Mount Moriah there.

[ 16 : 23 ] The son asked him he says the sacrifice he says the wood is here and everything says but where is he says the sacrifice. And in a moment Abraham said God my son he said God will find a sacrifice for himself.

That was that was incredible insight and incredible faith. When you think back on thousands of years before Christ came.

He will find one he said for himself and that is why he had such a faith and a faith that was tried.

But that way a faith also that was rewarded. Rewarded. So we move on from that sin that separates to the salvation the sacrifice that satisfies.

The sacrifice that we said something had to be done and nobody on earth could unlock the book nobody on earth could unlock the situation.

[ 17 : 36 ] No amount of sacrifices or whatever. Although they were all symbolic of what was to come. Yet he says that he came he gave himself out the God and our savior Jesus Christ who gave himself for us.

Who else would do it. The scriptures know of no other way the scriptures know of only one Lord one faith and one baptism.

That's all it knows. One sufficient sacrifice and that is Christ. That is why Christ is so important.

It's not other things that are important. Nothing should have the preeminent over Christ as being the preeminent. In any service or whatever we do.

Because this goes back a long long way. It says in the book of Proverbs there when he speaks about this he says the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way.

[ 18 : 55 ] This is Christ before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting from the beginning or ever the earth was when there was no depth.

I was brought forth when there was no fountains abounding with water before the mountains were settled before the hills was I brought full while as yet he had not made the earth nor the fields nor the highest parts of the dust of the world when he prepared the heavens I was there when he set a compass upon the face of the earth the depth when he established the clouds above when he gave to the sea his decree then I was with him as one brought up with him and I was daily his delight rejoicing always before him and my delight he said were with the sons of men.

Not as well as delight was this one who came and willingly went on to the cross of Calvary.

The New Testament echoes this when he says boys from heaven says this is my beloved son this is the one that I have loved in eternity before the world was this is the one that I have sent this is the price that is to be paid for this redemption for this to close this gap my friend it cannot be done any other way.

And he didn't come he said to condemn he came that they might have life and harbored in all his fullness. To Adam's children I say I tells us he was like a roof dealt with a dry ground no form no calmness no desire that they should seek after him that is the fruit of the darkened mind where as this gap abides and since the fall there were many sacrifices many efforts made and they were all God ordained in that sense because God has plenty of time he's not tied with time and space he's out with all that they can see generation after generation and after generation go it doesn't make any difference as far as that but his purposes will be worked out in the strangest and maybe the harshest of ways at times.

[ 21 : 42 ] The church could not be redeemed with things like silver or gold that is what we have to take on board immediately we can't buy your way into heaven we can't buy with silver or gold or whatever you possess or I possess here as being something they are corruptible things when we come to worship this one and just talk about redemption and corruption of this corruption that had to be a death.

There had to be a death of death the death of death in the death of Christ and so it had to be and that is why when you come to this and you see this you see a wonderful person Christ is and her wonderful sacrifice he offered for wretches like you and I before the will of man could be won over.

The slave here had no will of his own he had to do his master's will and that is why we read there something along the lines of that.

Sinners say what I do things my own way and that's the way it's going to be that's the way I want it to be but it's not technically he's not doing it his own way he is doing it through the master that is in charge of his will that's how it is done but there is no such thing as what that man is saying not at all rather it's his master to his master he said a person stands or falls to his master and this is the question for us whose master of our life the just he said for the unjust that he might bring us to God bring us together in this we were held there by God's law unable to free ourselves how can an unholy person fulfil a holy law and that's what people do when we try to save ourselves by works or by something that we do we give or something we say how can we how can we who are unholy how can we fulfil a law that is perfectly holy well that is why there was only one who could do that one who had no son and no God the Lamb of God wounded for our transgressions bruised for our iniquities for our foolishness our disobedience our deceit and malice and all that he went all the way to do that therefore you can say unto you who believe he is precious precious there are people tonight in this in the world and in our land here who would see who would kill God if they could do they would wipe everything of us that's behind us wipe everything off the map of anything to do with the Bible or religion or anything like that but they can't do it because no weapon formed against it can ever prosper all these people will fall on their sword and their own sword eventually but they just carry on because of the stubborn will that man has he gave us life so that you might live and that's wonderful but then lastly we have the salvation that is sufficient that he might redeem them redeem them and purify unto himself well I have the AB here in front of me a peculiar people sellers of good works doesn't matter really it's saying the same thing in that different using different words but it's a peculiar people that he says that he is you are no doubt the world tonight would say that you're peculiar because you're in church because you're not where they are you're not involved in what they are involved in so you're odd or peculiar about that but if they knew that the meaning of that word peculiar it is has nothing to do with being strange or odd or anything like that it means that you are when you get something and you mark something down on a bit of paper and

a circle around it and say that's mine that's what God has done with every individual of his children here tonight he has made them he has surrounded them he has said this is my possession he says that's not peculiar if we have God's possession there is no greater honor than that no greater honor than that that God is our Father in heaven and for him Lord we love him because he first loved us because you were before this he said you were a group of no different from anybody else he said that's all he says you're no difficult different from anyone else because you were of yourselves sometimes foolish disobedient deceit but after that kindness and love of God our savior towards man appeared and it's on about the appearance of grace on to the grace came through Jesus Christ the law came to Moses grace and peace came from the Lord Jesus Christ and we're in the era of grace we are in the words of the Bible we are since Christ came into this world we entered into the latter stages of this world when Christ touched this earth he brought in the latter stages and that is what we have to be on our guard against that we have this glorious hope that we are has blessed hope and they are looking for their glorious appearing of the Son of

[ 29 : 21 ] God of our savior Jesus Christ and what a day that will be the ceremonial law had many ways of cleansing the cleanse with fire the pastor through fire the spoil went through fire and water to make it to purify it and so did the high priest when he was consecrated set apart for the gospel for the word of God he said he is that the blood was applied applied to his ear and to his hand and to his feet these three things have meant he was consecrated for that purpose and that purpose only but we say well well have crisis argued why does things like this happen why do hard providences come our way why does things leave us in despair sometimes in the likes of the lab well it's in the whole in a huge package of God that this works together for our good whether we accept it or not whom the Lord love us he just ties us he cleans he works away he prunes away at them so that they might bring forth more fruit that is why we have been saved we have been saved to sit around doing nothing all day we have been saved to serve saved to work for as long as we are as humanly possible for us to work and that's why we have to pass through the furnace of

God's purification from time to time and nobody would go there of their own accord nobody would he will sit and he does it and you will not come out of that situation the way you went into it you will have left something behind he will have cleansed you he will have taken some of the edges of you and of me in some way or another so that we can sing better for him and get a better note out of us well this brings us now to the very covenant that God has made in Christ the new covenant is said that this is in my blood and this is says I will put my law into their minds and write it upon their hearts so that they can't forget it it's a heart relationship that we have with God a heart relationship and that shows us that it is the gap has been closed we have been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ we have all that and much more we have our difficulties of course we are we're living in the same world we can't be exempt from anything in a world like this and we have to pass through but this world is not your home if you're a Christian you are looking beyond to the blessed hope that awaits the people of God of course they are not satisfied here well God never said that we would be satisfied here but he says you will be satisfied when you awake in his likeness in his life when we see him for what he is what have we seen before what we see we see us through a glass darken there's a bit of murkiness about the thing and yet it is joy and light for us to see him but then in the full glory of God then we will see him as he is and that's enough to keep us going along the way because of the Savior's finished work it is in hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began that's in chapter one and verse two and this is the man who is left with this task Paul has moved on he has left him to set up order in the church and he sets out the conditions and the type of people that he is expected to serve there and that's why he says that they didn't have a problem defining what a Christian was because then they would be satisfied with the Christians work you are to witness for me for there are many unruly and vain talkers of theirs and deceivers and you have to stand up and be counted and if ever in this world's history in our

age anyway that we needed people who would stand up and be counted and have the courage of not words but the courage of their conviction it is today when there is so much movement of everything going on in this quackmire of evil that is surfacing that God is in control of it and God will honor those who honor him and this leaves us with the only thing that we have is the hope remember when Hagar when Abraham threw Hagar out with a child and gave her a bottle of water and she went out into the wilderness and the water finished he drank the water and rather than seeing the child die she went and placed him under a shrub there and walked away from him and then God intervened at the point of her extremity and I have heard he says the boys cry I heard I heard and Hagar looked and she saw the well of water just what she needed to keep him alive she saw it and she filled the bottle and gave it to the child he shall be a great nation he said God said and who knows tonight here that there might be somebody who will be a great ambassador for Christ in the short while that we have together in this world sin and its separation separates the sacrifice that satisfies it satisfied divine justice God himself and then the salvation that is sufficient that is what we need in our heart of hearts tonight not more money not better car not this and not that but we need salvation salvation and where is salvation going to come from well he said salvation is of the Lord bless us Lord together and function my word that we can only soul and others Lord can water it but God can give the increase that it might become a savor of life and to life not a savor of death and to death go with us no Lord lift up our spirits and our hearts and forgive in Jesus name. Amen.