

Titus Chapter 2 v 1 - 14

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 10 June 2018

Preacher: Gareth Crossley

[0 : 00] I will bless the Lord at all times.

His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord. Let the humble hear thereof and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me.

And let us exalt his name together. We take up our hymn books and sing the hymn number eight.

Number eight, Eternal Light. In the New Testament, the Paul's letter to Titus.

Titus and chapter two. Titus chapter two.

We read from the first verse.

[1 : 22] This is God's word. You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love, and in endurance.

Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.

Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything, set them an example by doing what is good.

In your teaching, show integrity, seriousness, and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed, because they have nothing bad to say about you.

[2 : 38] Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way, they will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive.

For the grace of God, that brings salvation, has appeared to all. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all wickedness, and to purify for himself, a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

So reads God's word. I wonder how many of the younger ones, anybody under 16, knows what hoary age is.

You've just sung it. What does it mean? I ought to have explained it before. It just means grey hair.

When your hair goes grey, and then for some of us, white.

So it's really saying, we want to be faithful, and live for God, even to old age, right through till we see him face to face.

[4 : 19] I want to speak this evening, from Titus chapter 2, and verses 11 and 12, on the subject of the impact, of the grace of God.

The impact of the grace of God. The grace of God has appeared to all, training us in a particular way.

These two verses are very special, and help us to understand, what God is doing in our lives, once we're converted. Once we've put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, once we've received that assurance from heaven, that our sins are all dealt with through Jesus.

This is how we're to live. The grace of God, trains us, to live in a particular way. Let's start by saying, what is grace?

What is grace? I suppose, most of you, if not all of you, will know what grace is. Grace is, love, to those who are unlovely. Love, to those who don't deserve being loved.

[5 : 32] When I first started, in theological college, I was, really quite young, and very, very nervous. I'd only been converted, just a wee bit over a year, and, was really very nervous.

And, so, when we were in front of the principal, in a lecture, it was a very awe-inspiring occasion. We were all addressed by our surnames, Mr.

this, and Mr. that. You know, it was very, very formal. Not like today. And, the first lecture we had with the principal, he came and he was going to talk to us about grace.

Now, there are three men, in my year, who are married. And in Methodism, where I was then, in Methodism, you, you could be married, you could go into the ministry married, if you were accepted, but you couldn't get married, once you were in, theological training.

So, you had four years, like it or not, where you couldn't get married, whether you wanted to or not. Crazy rule. Actually, the principal told me, that there were two, two conditions, on which you could get married in college.

[6 : 44] One, that your wife was over 26. And two, that she was showing serious signs, of, disturbed emotion. When I went to ask the principal, if I could get married, I said, my wife isn't over 26, and I wouldn't be marrying her, if she was showing serious signs, of, emotional disturbance.

Well, anyway, that's the past. Here was this principal, coming to talk to us, about the grace of God. And there was, two, three married, three married students, in my year. And he picked on, one of the, married students, and he said, Mr. Eiley.

He said, uh, Mr. Eiley, do you love your wife? I mean, what a question to ask, just as you've got there. Everything very formal, everybody on edge, and a whole lecture room, of students.

Do you love your wife? Now, we didn't know, at the time, until this occasion, that this, brother, in the Lord, he was a real, fine Christian, young man, he had a habit, when he was nervous, he would take a pencil, out of his inside pocket, he would take his wedding ring, off, don't, don't ask me to explain it, I really don't understand it, not to this day, he would take his wedding ring off, he would put it on the pencil, and he would wind it, with nerves.

And when, the question was asked, do you love your wife? Out came the pencil, the ring came off, it went on to, yes, yes, sir, of course I do.

[8 : 24] Why do you love her? Because she is lovely. Yes, you love your wife, because she's lovely.

Grace, is God's lovingness, when we're not lovely, we're anything but lovely. It's a phenomenal kind of love, that God has.

So that's what we're talking about, it's been put into a, an explanation on the letters, I'm sure most of you will know it, grace, G-R-A-C-E, God's riches, at Christ's expense.

It's a lovely description. God's riches, at Christ's expense, grace. God's love to people, who aren't lovely, and don't deserve his love.

So it says, in our text here, in verse 11, it says, the grace of God, has appeared. How can love appear? How can you see it? You can hear about it, you can talk about it, you can write about it, but how can you see it?

[9 : 38] Surely, what Paul is meaning here, when he says, the grace of God has appeared, he's talking about Jesus Christ. He means, this, embodiment, this beautiful, lovely, excellent man, is the son of God, who's become a human being, he's grace, living out, living grace, embodied grace, he's the love of God, to people who don't deserve it.

So he says, the grace of God, that brings salvation, that really, deals with our problems, all our problems before God, all the things we've done, to offend him, and all the things, we haven't done, that would have pleased him.

The grace of God, in Jesus, has appeared. It's appeared to all, not just men, the word is anthropos, anthropoi, it means humanity.

The grace of God, which brings salvation, has appeared to all. One of the things that Paul said, when he was making his defence, was, this hasn't been done in a corner, we're no secret society, is what he's implying.

We're not going around, trying to, win people to our way, and our peculiarities, secretly, infiltrating. We're open, out in the open.

[11 : 21] And that's how Christians, are to live. Transparent. God, what you see, what you see, is what we are. We should be able, to invite anybody, off the streets, to any of our meetings, even our business meetings, even our church leadership meetings, we should be able, to invite anybody,

because we're open, before the world.

The grace of God, which brings salvation, which brings a solution, to our problems, and brings us right, into a right relationship, with God, has appeared to all. Then it goes on to say, teaching us, this is what it's done.

Jesus Christ, we've not only come to salvation, but we've been taught. Actually, the word there, is from a word, for training. There's another word, didascho, which is to do with teaching.

Didache. But this word, is different. It's training. There's a big difference, between teaching, and training. As any university lecturer, will know.

A big, big difference. You can teach people, you can talk, until the cows come home, and they can learn things. They can learn enough, to be able to regurgitate it, to pour it all out, in an examination, and quote, what they've, what they've learned, what they've been taught.

[12:44] But that's not the same, as being trained. It's a word, that's used for children. How parents, how parents, how they train, their children. You, the difference, between training, and teaching, is that, you're exerting, an influence, on them.

We had some, young fruit trees, in our home, in our garden, at, in Derbyshire. And, they were, they were growing up, a little bit too close, so that the sun, couldn't get into the blossom, and the future fruit.

So, I, strapped them all down, put, put strings, tied them all down, with tent pegs, to, gently bring them down. You can do that, when the, when a tree is young.

You can't do it, when they're old, and there's some, real lesson in that. You, you, gently bring, you mustn't put too much pressure on, otherwise, the branch will break. Just, enough, to, influence, to influence, the shape, for the good of the tree.

Particularly, for the good of those, who own the tree, so that they can grab better fruit. But, with children, it's, it's bringing a pressure. Usually, it's the pressure of love, and earned respect.

[13:59] And, you apply, that, influence upon them, to, not only teach them, so that they can, like a, a parrot, repeat it all back again. But, so that it, impacts their lives, and influences their lives, for good.

Train up a child, in the way that he should go, and when he's old, he will not depart from it. There will, there will be the marks, even if that person, doesn't turn, to the Lord Jesus Christ, in true faith. That child, brought up in a God-fearing home, will know the impact. You'll see, the impact on their lives, hopefully. The grace of God, which brings salvation, has appeared, to all, training us.

It trains us, to say no, it trains us, to turn our backs, on the old life, ungodliness, worldly lusts, devise these two things up. Anything that's, wrong before God, we're going to say no.

That's it. We turned over a new leaf, but this is not just, first of January, this is life. I'm turning over, completely. I'm going to deny myself now, and say no, to that old way of life, that old way of thinking.

[15:12] I want to please God, and I want to turn away, from worldly lusts, the passions, and the appetites, and the interests, that I've had, which I know, don't please God. But it's the positives, I want us to look at tonight, on Major.

You see what he says here, in this, these verses before us. to teach, to train us, to say no, to ungodliness, and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives.

Self-controlled, upright, and godly lives. That's giving us, the impact, of the grace, of God.

It's telling us, that when we become, a Christian, the love of God, in Jesus Christ, is influencing us. It's influencing us, and training us, to live in a particular way. It's training us, psychologically, that's, to live, soberly, or self-controlled.

[16:27] It's training us, socially, to live, righteously, upright, lives. And it's, training us, theologically, to be right, with God, and walk, in the fear, of God.

These are very, very important. The impact, of grace, on our minds, and hearts. The impact, of the grace, of God, in the way, in which we behave, towards other people.

And the impact, of the grace, of God, in the way, that we, approach God, and live for him, and to please him. The first one then, to live, soberly, to live, self-controlled.

I'm used to the old-fashioned word, soberly, here, in this verse. And so, if I slip into it, please forgive me, I'll try and remember, that your version, says, self-controlled. It's a good, description is self-controlled.

Sober, we tend to get people, when they hear the word, sober, they think, oh, that means, not three sheets to the wind, not caled, and not walking, inebriated.

[17 : 43] And as you don't know, those words, I'll assume, that I picked them up, somewhere, other than Yorkshire. Drunk. But it means, to have a balanced mind.

Not just, self-controlled, in the sense of, holding yourself, restrained, but the sense of, being balanced, and your mind, being at peace, calm, living, for God.

Let me give you some, illustrations, from the scriptures. Do you remember, the Lord's visit, to the, land of the Gadareans? He went, late at night.

Well, he didn't send off, in the dark, but when they got over, to the other side, of the sea of Galilee, the lake of Tiberias, whichever, place you lived in, same, stretch of water.

He got over, to the land of the Gadareans, and it was dark. And there was, a couple of fellows, ran out, screaming, and shouting. And, the Lord Jesus, went straight up, and talked to the first one, that came to him.

[18 : 59] And he addressed, the evil spirit, that was controlling him. And he cast out, that evil spirit.

The neighbours, knew these two, the local town, a little bit further, from the coast. The folk, knew these two, very, very well. They were terrified, of going along there, because these two, lived in the caves, that were dotted, around that coastline.

And they were, terrifying characters. They'd scream, and threaten, and the people, were frightened. Sometimes, men would go out, in a gang, and get old of them, and chain them up.

And, the record says, that, even when they were chained up, they had such, phenomenal strength, the strength of the insane, and they were able to, break these chains.

And so, here they were, two men, who, lived, in appalling conditions, in the caves.

[20 : 08] And they were, out of their minds. And when Jesus, spoke to this man, and cast out, the evil spirits, that were in him.

Many, many, evil spirits. the townsfolk, were shocked. Because, they saw them, saw this man.

And the testimony, recorded in Mark, is, they saw him, sitting, clothed, and in his right mind.

Isn't that a wonderful testimony, to the grace of God? Isn't that a wonderful testimony, to the power of the Lord, Jesus Christ? This man, who was insane, this man, who was possessed, by evil spirits, this man, who was running around, without a stitch, of clothing, on his back.

Once he'd met Jesus, sitting, clothed, and in his right mind, listening to the Lord Jesus. And then, there's another illustration.

[21 : 16] You remember the, prodigal son? I mentioned it, this morning. The prodigal son, took everything he could. Oh, he was awful, wasn't he? Didn't he treat his father, dreadfully?

He was saying, give me what will come to me, when you die. In other words, I want to think of you as dead, and I want what's coming to me. And as the youngest son, he was due to one third, of all that his father had.

And it probably, if we looked back, or asked the Lord Jesus Christ, to explain it, had it been a real situation, that he was talking about, that man would have probably, had to sell, a fair amount of his property, in order to be able, to give this son, what he demanded.

One third, of what he owned. And we're told in the story, that this young man, went away, and he went as far away, as his legs would take him, to get away, from dad.

And from that home. Whilst he was there, he got a lot of friends, because he got a lot of money. He was rich. He got a third, of his dad's property.

[22 : 30] And he had a great old time. Oh boy did he. And whilst he had money, he had friends. There's always plenty of folk around, who'll help you spend money.

As long as it's not theirs. And there came a point, where he ran out of money. And all his friends ran out too. No friends, no money.

And there was a famine. No work. No food. And he was reduced to a situation, where he's feeding pigs. Well I had a go at feeding pigs once.

It isn't a very pleasant experience. It was, my wife and I had gone back to her parents, and her brother, said on the Saturday, would you mind doing me a favour?

Because, well, we're going out tonight, and I'd like to lie in in the morning, and I wondered if you'd feed my pigs for me. Well, that's sound, you know, this isn't, I've got to be neighbourly, this is my future brother-in-law.

[23 : 39] Don't think we were married at that point. Trying to get some assurance from the other one who was involved. And, I just, you know, it seemed the right thing to do, if you're asked to, I come from the town.

No, I have difficulty knowing which way a cow walks, you know. And, and I was told, that I would get on the tractor, and I would travel over a number of fields, well away from the home, from the farm, and, I would open up, a tap, that would produce this, horrible, vile stuff, pouring out, into a trough, and then I would pour, some meal of some sort, into this trough, it smelled, horrible.

And then, I was to stand on this concrete block, and shout, gis, gis, gis. Now, I was sure my brother-in-law was having me on, trying to make a charlie out of me.

I took the tractor, I did everything according to his instructions. I stood on that concrete, and I looked round, and I couldn't see anybody else for miles.

There was nobody in sight. There wasn't a house in sight. And so I said, come on, pigs! And nothing happened.

[25 : 06] Come on, pigs! Your dinner's ready! Breakfast! Nothing happened. So I thought, well, I better give it a go. Gis, gis, gis! They all came running.

And, oh, they slurped. Oh, and I couldn't have touched. Oh, if I was starving, I couldn't have touched that. Oh! And then you read, what Jesus said.

But when he came to himself. When he came to his senses. That's what happens when God begins to work in somebody's life.

They come to their senses. the psychological impact. The impact on our minds and hearts when the grace of God comes to us and confronts us.

The Bible says a lot about disciplined thinking. And we who love the Lord Jesus Christ ought to be characterized by self-control and not only self-control, but disciplined thinking.

[26 : 19] That we are balanced in our thinking. The Bible has a lot to say about it. If you look into Ephesians 4, it says there, put off the old nature.

Be renewed in the spirit of your mind. And put on the new nature in righteousness. It's a change. You know, it's like taking off your jacket, an old jacket, and thinking right.

Changing your thinking. Being renewed. That's what the Bible speaks about often. That our minds, we've got to think for God. What is the great law before God?

The moral, abiding moral law. It is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength. We have to love God with our minds.

Just love Him, but use our minds in a way that will honor God. Peter says in 1 Peter, chapter 1, verse 13, gird up the loins of your mind.

[27 : 26] Be sober. Be self-controlled. That's a funny expression, to gird up the loins. I don't know what it says in your translation, but that's in mine. Gird up the loins.

It's from the original. And what it is, is that the men in the Middle East all wear long, frock-like clothing.

It's a hot climate and it's usually white and it's not always easy to distinguish the men from the women in certain situations. And when the men were wanting to work hard or run, when they were engaged in physical work, they would often lift up the hem, the edge of their clothing, and pull it under their belt.

They have a rope or leather belt round their waist and they would pull it. The maxi would become a mini in one quick movement so that it freed their knees to be able to get on with the work.

And that came into the Greek language. Gird up the loins of your mind. What does it mean? Gird up the hem. Pull in the hems of your mind. All our minds are capable of running away, aren't they?

[28 : 44] Going every which way. It's one of the problems a preacher had to try and keep people's attention. Because our minds are prone to wonder and to flip from one thing to another like little bees or butterflies.

Gird up. Hold it on. Hold your thinking. Get your thinking under control. Think for God. Think for Christ. For righteousness.

So the psychological impact is significant. And we could give many other illustrations. But what about the sociological impact?

Living righteously. Living righteously before God. Let's give some illustrations from the scriptures again. What about Zacchaeus? Zacchaeus was not just a tax collector like Matthew.

He was the next rung up. He was like your tax inspector. And in those days among the Romans tax inspectors were able to almost prescribe their own rules and regulations and decide what they would like to tax.

[29 : 58] Because above them they'd got a quota of income that they'd got to gain. They'd got to find in their area this amount of money. And so how they went about it it was left very much to all them.

They were able to twist and cheat and it was so so very unusual to find an honest tax collector in the days of the Lord Jesus that it said that there was one town who actually put a statue up to an honest tax collector.

And tax collectors weren't allowed into the temple because they were all regarded as cheats extortioners and corrupt. Here was Zacchaeus.

Jesus invited himself to tea at his home and Jesus talked to Zacchaeus and Zacchaeus had his heart changed as he listened to the Lord Jesus and he became a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ and what did he say to Jesus?

Lord if I have cheated anybody I'll give them back tenfold. And Lord for anybody that that I've been unfair with well I give away I'm going to give away a third of all that I possess.

[31 : 29] Huge chunk I think it was probably more than that more than that more than a third. He was going to give away a lot of his possessions.

God had touched his heart and it had an impact on his wallet. It said of Yorkshire that you always know when they're truly converted when they open their wallets and give.

We're not tight. We're thrifty. It's the Scots that are tight. Sorry. I hope there are no Scots people here who are getting offended by that.

Oh dear me I must try and take a course in PC. Or maybe I'm too old. There's the Philippian jailer. Remember that Philippian jailer about to take his own life? The prisoners are free. Roman law decrees if you lose your prisoners you lose your life. You actually get court marshaled, brought before the court and you're executed.

[32 : 40] This Philippian jailer knew what was in front of him when he thought the prisoners had escaped and so he took his sword out, he turned it on, the handle down to the ground and he was about to thrust himself on it, to pierce himself under his ribcage and to kill himself.

And Paul knowing what he was going to do said do yourself no harm, we're all here. And the jailer came in. What must I do to be saved?

He said. Now it wasn't fear of death. He was about to kill himself after all you don't kill yourself if you're frightened of dying.

He wasn't afraid of dying, he was afraid of God. He'd heard these two characters, Paul and Silas in the prison, in that dungeon. He'd heard them singing, he'd heard them praying, even at midnight praying.

He'd heard them and he thought that earthquake was a visitation from God because of these two men he chained. And it was fear of God.

[33 : 54] What must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. Lovely to be able to say that when somebody asks that question. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved straight away.

All it takes is faith. Trust him. Entrust your life to him. Believe on him. And what happened? That jailer takes Paul and Silas up to his own quarters.

That jailer bathes the backs of these two because they would probably be bleeding considerably from the lashing that they'd received, the public lashing they'd received.

they'd be bleeding. He bathed the jailer. Probably the jailer had given the command for that lashing or at least been part to it.

And there he is, a changed man, bathing the wounds. And then he puts breakfast before them. What a transformation. And then he introduces a whole household.

[35 : 03] and Paul and Silas talk to the whole household. Everybody in his family and all the servants there, the household there, talks to them all about the Lord Jesus Christ and the whole household were baptized.

They believed in the Lord Jesus and were baptized. This man was transformed. Isn't it amazing? Converted after midnight, baptized before breakfast.

that's not usually the practice we follow these days. But we ought to take note. We ought to follow the scriptures. So here's a man again changed, changed in a considerable way.

And there are many illustrations that could be drawn of the amazing transformation that occurs when we become impacted by the grace of God.

And thirdly, there's the theological impact before God. To live godly. How do we glorify God? That's a question that's often been asked.

[36 : 11] And the best answer, we glorify God by loving Him and doing what He commands. Loving Him and doing what He commands.

How do we show how much we love God? We show it by worshipping God. We show it in our service of God. We show it in our living for God.

That's how we show Him how much we love. It's very interesting that when love is spoken about, when God's love is spoken about, God loving, it's always in the context of doing, He's doing something, is involved in an action.

Love isn't talk. Love is action. You show love by what you do. You show love by who you are, what you are.

You demonstrate your love. A number of husbands who've come to me over the years for marriage counselling would sit there with their wives and a wife would say, I don't think my husband really loves me.

[37 : 20] Oh, you know I love you. I've heard it time and time again. You know I love you. Oh, but you never tell me. Oh, but you know. How do we show our love fellas?

A bunch of flowers once a year on their birthday? A box of chocolates at Christmas that we eat half of? How do we show our love? You show our love in the actions every day of your life in that home. how you treat that precious person given to you. Now I'm slipping over to being a marriage guidance counsellor. But fellas, it's a good lesson to learn.

Romance starts when you're married. It doesn't end when you're married. You don't need to bother about the beginning part, the romance. Don't be too fussy about that, ladies.

But be very concerned about the romance you get when you're married. That's when it all begins. The love God is to live for him, to worship him.

[38 : 33] Why is it that we're dropping down in so many places, so many of our churches up and down the country, dropping down to one service? And even where there are two services, forgive me for saying, the congregation is considerably smaller in the evening.

Why? I heard one lady say, I'm so glad when we have a half past nine service because it gives me the rest of the day. For what?

For your pleasure? Those who come out on a Sunday morning and say, oh, it's been a real blessing to be among the people of God, a real blessing to be hearing the pastor speak to us from the word of God and explain the truth, what a blessing.

blessing. And then you don't see him in the evening. That's a funny blessing. If you or I get blessed, we want more of it, don't we? We should be eager.

Maybe we ought to be asking the powers that be for three services on Sunday so that we can be together. We don't want them all the same. No, let's have a little bit of difference, but to be together with the Lord's people and to be worshipping and studying things together about the Lord, talking together, sharing.

[39 : 43] That's what it's all about, isn't it? Isn't it great to have a day when you don't have to cut the lawn? You're under no obligations to cut the lawn. And all the other stuff that you can do the rest of the week.

To love God with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength. To think for God and use your heart for God. and to fashion your will to live for him.

There's no greater blessing and privilege in the whole world than to be trained by the grace of God to live self-controlled, upright, and godly for his glory.

Let's sing our closing hymn. do you not do you you you you you you you