

## Before & After God's Grace

Titus 3:3-7

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, May 26, 2019

Please turn with me to the book of Titus. And as you're doing that, I told you last time that Titus does not seem like an exciting book, if you just read it cover to cover. It doesn't sound like it has a lot going on. But if you understand who it was written to, if you understand the context of the book, you will see that it was written to a church plant. And as you know, church plants are very exciting. It's all hands on deck on a church plant.

In fact, if you're joining us for the first time this morning, we're coming to the end of a series that we started back in January on the book of Titus called the "How to Plant a Church" series because that's what the book is about. Titus tells us how to plant a church. He tells us how to get it started and off the ground, which means this was a busy church. This was an exciting place to be. There was a lot going on, especially for Titus.

And just to show you this, if you look in chapter 1:5, this shows you a little bit about what was going on in Titus' life at this time. Verse 5, Paul writes, "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you." Paul says, "This is why I left you in Crete, this is why you stayed behind on the island. Titus, you have two jobs, two tasks to do - set in order what remains and appoint elders."

But if you think about it, that doesn't sound like a lot. A lot of you work jobs where you wish you only had two things to do. Amen? You have 1,000,001 things to do, especially if you're a full-time mom. I live with one of those and you guys are busy. Titus had two things to do, which sounds easy but he really was very involved. If you've ever tried to do these two things, you'll know this was no walk in the park.

For example, the phrase "set in order what remains," that means to line things up according to Scripture, to put things in their proper place. Which means Titus had to step into these churches, find out what they were doing, recommend some changes, and then walk them through the changes without splitting the church. You guys know the three rules of change, right? People hate change, change takes time, and people hate change. Those are the three rules of a church. Paul says, "Titus, it's your job to step into these churches and change them. And by the way, they're Cretins, which means they might stone you." They were a volatile group of people, which means this was difficult. It took a lot of skill and patience.

And then it says in verse 5, he had to appoint elders, which means he had to change the leadership structure too. He had to walk into these churches and change the way decisions were made, which is just as volatile to get into a lot of trouble doing that. And Titus had to do this while he was preaching and teaching and counselling people. He had to do this while he was praying and shepherding and witnessing to the lost. Which means he was probably overwhelmed in the ministry. He had a lot to do. And yet Paul tells him he could do this because he wasn't alone.

If you look in chapter 2:11-12, Paul tells us how Titus could do all of this, how he could do the ministry. Verse 11 in chapter 2 says, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age.” Paul says, Titus could do this with the grace of God. He could do this with God's mercy.

Just to explain this verse to you a little bit, Paul says, “The grace of God has appeared to all men,” meaning it's appeared to everyone. The word doesn't really mean men as much as it means everybody, which means everyone could hear this and be safe. Titus could present the grace of God to everyone. He didn't have to go around the island of Crete saying, “That guy looks nice, let's give the grace of God to him. And that guy looks like a jerk, let's not give it to him.” He didn't have to pick and choose. He could just spread it everywhere.

And this also means Titus could tell the people in Crete that God's grace was enough for them. That's another way to look at this. It will never run out because if you notice, it is God's grace and not the grace of man. It's God's mercy, which means it is infinite just as He is infinite. I've often had a thought that I will get to heaven and after about a million years, the Lord will say, “Okay, that's enough, you're too annoying, you have to go.” I don't know, maybe you guys don't think that way, but I think maybe a thousand years and He'll have enough of me. This verse says He won't because this is infinite grace, infinite forgiveness. There's always more leftover despair and therefore, Titus can keep going in the work of the ministry.

A famous pastor tells the story of the time he was coming home from a long day at work and he was exhausted. And he wanted to quit, but he had been studying Second Corinthians 12:9, which says, “My grace is sufficient for you.” He had been meditating on that, and he says, as he was doing that, he passed the Thames River in London, the big body of water. And he said, “If I was a little fish in that water, and I said, ‘Lord, I'm thirsty,’ the Lord would say, ‘Go and drink, what's your problem? There's water everywhere.’” And he says, “If I was a little mouse in the granaries of Egypt, and I said the same thing, ‘Lord, I'm hungry,’ He would say, ‘Then just eat, you're covered in food.’” He said, “If I was standing on top of a tall mountain and I said, ‘Lord, I need some air, I need to breathe.’ The Lord would say this, ‘There's air all around you.’” And he also says in Second Corinthians 12:9, “My grace is sufficient for you. It's everywhere you look.” You can never run out of His grace. You just need to take it and grab it. That's how you do the work of the ministry, that's how you plant a church. That's how you live the Christian life. Some of you are coming here this morning after struggling with sin all week, amen? You've just battled with it all day long, every day. You know what you need? You need grace, you need mercy. And Paul says here, you have it in abundance. It's for everybody. Some of you are trying to do the things in the Christian life you know you need to do. You're trying to read your Bible, you're trying to pray, you're trying to parent your kids, you're trying to deal with difficult family stuff. You know what you need? You need grace, you need mercy. Some of you are working a job that is about as godless as Sodom and Gomorrah. You go into work and you don't know what kind of foul stuff is about to spill out of everybody's mouth all day long. You need grace. You need God's help. And Paul says right here, you can have it. Everyone can have it, for the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men.

I read a statistic the other day that said that...(The Angus Reid Institute did this)...They discovered that only 20% of Canadians pray everyday (at least of the people they polled) - 20%. The rest of the country either doesn't pray or prays less than that. And there's probably a lot of reasons for that, but one reason is simply because we don't think we need God anymore. Paul says you need Him, you need His grace and you can have it in abundance, which is what the book of Titus is about.

I've told you before, the outline for the book of Titus is very simple at the end of the day. It's about leadership and then living. Chapter 1 talks about leaders, the kind of men you want leading the church. We walked through that several months ago. The kind of men that should serve as elders. And chapters 2 through 3 talk about living, the way you're supposed to live the Christian life.

And as Paul talks about living, as he goes through the latter part of the book, he does something interesting because he just bounces back and forth between life and doctrine, life and doctrine. If you read in chapter 3 (which Richard just read to us), chapters 2 through 3, you'll notice he gives you a little bit of doctrine, a little bit of truth, and then he tells you how to live it out. That's how the book goes at the end of it. Doctrine, life, doctrine, life.

And just so you can see this for yourself, I want to read from chapter 2:11 on through the middle of chapter 3. Just so you can see how Paul writes this. He says in verse 11,

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, 14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. 15 These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

### Chapter 3

1 Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, 2 to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. 3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. 4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness but according to His mercy.

I'll stop right there, but I wanted to read that long section to you because I want you to see Paul's flow of thought here. If you notice in chapter 2:11-15, he gives you doctrine, he gives you truth. He tells you the grace of God has appeared. Then in the beginning of chapter 3, he tells you how to live it out with the government. He says, "Remind them to be subject to rulers, authorities, and to be obedient to the government." And then he goes right back into talking about doctrine again.

He says in verse 4, “But when the kindness of God, our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us.” In other words, there's the pattern - life and doctrine, life and doctrine.

And the doctrine he goes back to over and over and over again here is the grace of God. The idea here is that he puts it right above this section on the government and right below it, kind of envelops it like a cloud to say, “This is how you live with the government. This is how you survive, with His grace.”

I told you last week, one of the most difficult relationships we have as Christians is with the government, isn't it? You guys know what I'm talking about, right? You turn on the news. It's one of the hardest places to live the Christian life because of the crazy stuff we see coming out here. And Paul says here, you can do that with His grace –“My grace is sufficient for you. You just need to reach out and take it.”

Robert Murray M'Cheyne said it this way...(He was a pastor in Scotland who was known for his wise counsel.)...And in a letter to a friend, he said this (and I think this summarizes what Paul is saying here), he said, “For every one look at yourself, take 10 looks at Christ.” You guys get that? “For every one look at yourself, take 10 looks at Christ.” Some of you have struggled with sin so badly this week. You've struggled with work, you've struggled with whatever's going on in your life because you're looking in the wrong direction. You need to look to Christ and look to His grace. And that's what our passage is about this morning.

If you're taking notes, in Titus 3:3-7, I want you to see two more reminders about the grace of God. That's our passage for today. It's what it's about. In this passage, Paul gives us two more reminders about the grace of God. If you were with us a couple of weeks ago, you'll remember he told us about the grace of God in chapter 2, so we've already gone through this. But now he goes back and he does it again. As if to say, “I can't get enough of this, I can't move on yet. There's more to say about this grace.”

And he gives us two more reminders and the first one is this, Paul reminds us what our life was like before God's grace. That's the first reminder he gives us here. He reminds us of what our life was like before God's grace entered in.

I don't have to tell you that you were a mess before God saved you. Amen? Do I have to say that? Everybody gets that, right? You were a spiritual disaster. The Bible says you were lost, you were aliens from God, you were strangers, you were dead, blind, deaf. You can't give enough adjectives here. And Paul says, as a Christian, in the Christian life, you can't ever forget that.

When you look at the government, when you look at the horrible things coming out of parliament, wherever, you can't look at that and be snobby about it. You were just as bad as they were. And he says this in verse 3. You can say it this way, when you go to work and you hear guys talking like a foul mouth and as if their tongue just fell in a sewer, you were once the same way in your heart. And that's what Paul says in verse 3. If you read, he says, “For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.”

If you notice, Paul starts off verse 3 with the word “for” tying it back to what he said earlier. “This is the reason for your good response to the government. This is the reason for your obedience, “For we also once were all the things in this list. We were just as lost as our leaders are.” It can be a real temptation to look at our leaders and say, “Boy, I would never do that.” Paul says, “You did, at least in your heart.”

And so to explain this, he gives us a list of seven sins here that we committed in verse 3. I need to mention, this is not the only time you see a list like this in Scripture. There are other lists of sins in the Bible. You see one in First Corinthians, one in Galatians. Some of you have read Proverbs 6, remember the seven things the Lord hates in Proverbs 6? This is a common thing in Scripture to give you a list like this. But just to walk you through this list, he says in verse 3, “For we also once were foolish ourselves.” It doesn't mean stupid, it means sinfully foolish. There was nothing wrong with our brain, it was our heart that was the problem. We made wrong choices that displeased God. And it says we were “disobedient, deceived, and enslaved to various lusts and pleasures”. That's an interesting phrase there because it means we didn't just lust, we were enslaved to lust. We didn't just give in to pleasure, we were enslaved by it. Pleasure was our master. And pleasure here can mean all kinds of things. It could mean sexual sin, it could mean giving into things like gluttony or pride. It can mean all sorts of stuff. And Paul says, “There were various lusts and pleasures that did this to us,” which means there were a variety of them. We served many masters. The idea is as soon as one pleasure left, another one took its place. As soon as one lust went away, another one stepped into replace it.

John Calvin said, “Our hearts are factories constantly producing idols. And as soon as you kill one idol, the factory line brings another one down.” To the point that it says, we spend our entire life in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. Which sounds a little strange because a lot of us weren't hateful before we were saved, at least not in the traditional sense of the word. We weren't malicious people, but we were envious of others, weren't we? We were jealous of things that other people had. I remember the first time I bought a charcoal grill and then I was walking through the neighborhood and I found out they have gas grills. Some of you have known that a long time, but I started sinning. I was like, “Hey, wait a minute.” We're that way. We're hateful at heart.

And the interesting thing about this, is that Paul says we were all these things before God saved us. We committed all these sins. If you notice, there's no qualifying statement in here. There's nothing about you being one and this person here being another. Paul says, “You did all of them, all seven sins.”

And his point is that that should remind you to be patient with the government. It should remind you to be more gracious towards lost people. As we see how evil we were, it should help us when we see how evil they are. It should get us through that. When we look at how much we have sinned against God, it should help us when we see how much they've sinned. We don't approve of their sin, but at least we understand where it's coming from, right? At least we understand why they're doing it.

At our care group last week, we were discussing the sermon and I told our people, I said, “I think if we grew up with things as bad as they are now, it might be a little easier for us. It probably

wouldn't bother us so much because it's all we would know." But we've seen things turn for the worst, haven't we? Let's just be honest. We've seen things change. Whether you're here in Canada, whether you're in the US, whether you're in almost any country. And it scares us. It makes us angry.

But do you know what you can't say when you see that happening? Do you know what you can't do? You can't say, "I don't understand this. I don't know what's going on." Because you do understand what's going on. You understand completely because you were the same way yourself. Do you know what you can't do when you turn on the news? Do you know what you can't say when you see another crazy idea coming out? You can't say, "This is all so strange to me." Paul says, "It's not strange. You were the same way yourself. You know why they're doing it, they're doing it because they're lost. They're doing it because they don't know God. What do you expect someone to do who doesn't know God? And just like it took the grace of God to save you, it will take the grace of God to save them. Amen? Just as it'll take a miracle from heaven to turn your life around, it'll take a miracle from heaven to turn their life around. That's the good news you have this morning. God is in the miracle business. That's the good news you have. God saves lost people, and you should pray to that end."

Listen, friends, if you see your leaders being foolish, disobedient and deceived, if you see them being enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, if you see them spending their life in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another, the last thing you should be is shocked. You acted the same way. We did the same thing, and look at what God did for you. And He can do the same thing for them. "Look at what grace did for you," Paul says.

The story is told of the time Alexander the Great told one of his generals to spend anything he wanted for a day and the king would repay it. He would take care of the debt. And so the general did that. He went out and he spent an enormous amount of money, millions and millions of dollars. And then he brought the bill to Alexander's treasurer. And the treasurer took it to the king, to Alexander, and he said, "We can't pay this. This is too much. This is an insult to the king for the general to run up this kind of bill." And Alexander thought about it for a minute and he said, "It's not an insult, it's an honour for him to think I have such great wealth. It's an honour for him to think I have this kind of grace." And I mention that friends because it's not an insult for you to bring your sins to God. It's not an insult for you to ask Him for forgiveness. It's an honour to His grace and to His great wealth. You should take your sins to Him because he can cover every one of them. Everything in this list can be paid for by the blood of Jesus Christ. The famous Bible teacher C. I. Scofield once said, "Grace is not looking for men that it will approve of, it's looking for men it does not approve of. It's looking for men who are guilty, vile and helpless, so it can save them." That's what Paul says here. He saved you and he wants to save your political leaders.

Which brings us to the next point that Paul gives us in this passage, the next reminder about the grace of God. The first one is that you need to remember what your life was like before God's grace. Your life was a mess. Whether you grew up in church, whether you grew up on the street, whether you grew up in a Christian home or a godless home, in your heart, it was a spiritual disaster. You were foolish in sin, disobedient, deceived, enslaved and hateful. It can't get any worse than that. That's a very, very dark list. But the good news is grace didn't leave you there.

God paid all your debt if you're in Christ. Which leads us to the next reminder Paul gives us about the grace of God, and that is you need to remember what your life was like after God's grace. You need to remember what your life was like before His grace, and you need to remember what your life was like after His grace. You need to remember the change that He wrought in you. God did not leave you in sin. God did not leave you in this miserable place, He changed you. And if you read verse 3 all the way through verse 7, it says,

3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

I won't say a whole lot about this passage just for the sake of time, but let me point out a few things here. Verse 4 starts off with the word "but" forming a contrast with all that was said before. It marks a change in direction. In other words, you were in sin, you were all these terrible things in verse 3, but now you are this. Now you are saved and washed and renewed. Now you are justified and made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, and it's all because in verse 4, it says, "God appeared to us." That's what marked the change. That's what put it in a different direction - God did it. We were in sin, we were dead and disobedient, but verse 4 says, "The kindness of God, our Saviour and His love for mankind appeared, and He saved us."

If you notice, it says that He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy. That's a helpful phrase because it doesn't say, "God saved us by His mercy or of His mercy (although He did do that)," it says, "According to His mercy." In other words, if you think of it this way, mercy was the standard by which He saved us. Do you get that? Mercy was the measuring rod by which He did all these things in our life. Not our works, but His mercy, not our good deeds, but His grace. God didn't look at you and say, "Boy, that guy is a really great person, I'm going to save him." God looked at you and He said, "I have enough grace for that sinner." That's how you're saved. You wouldn't be saved at all if it were not for the mercy of God.

And verse 5 says that He did it by the washing of regeneration. That's another way of saying the cleansing power of regeneration. It says, "renewing by the Holy Spirit." That doesn't refer to the continual renewing of the Spirit (although passages do teach that), it refers to the one time renewing, the one time make over that we receive that salvation. The word "regeneration" means "born again" essentially, given a new life; the word "genesis", "creation", "beginnings". When you're saved, you have a new beginning and it renews you into a different person. And when that happens, verse 6 says that He does it richly.

If you look in verses 5 through 6 or verse 6, "Whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior." That means God was not stingy with your salvation. He was not stingy with His Spirit. His grace took care of everything.

And verse 7 says, "This was all done so that being justified by His grace, we would made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." And I'll say more about that in a minute, but that's the result of all this. You are now justified and made an heir of eternal life.

But I want to point something out to you as you read all of this. We went through that a little quickly, but I want you to notice something, as you look back over verses 4 through 7, and all it says about being saved and washed and renewed and justified, I want you to tell me where do you see yourself in that passage? Where do you see your name in there? You don't, right? What does it say about your good works in that passage? What does it say about your good deeds and your righteous efforts? It says they're not necessary. You're saved according to His mercy, not according to deeds. Why does it say that? Because God did it all. Did you pick up on that as you read that? Our salvation is all of Him. It's all about His works, His good deeds, His great name. We're only mentioned in verse 3. Our deeds are mentioned when it says, "For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient and deceived." That was us, but God did the rest. We were those things, but He was all of this, our salvation is all of God.

One of the privileges of my job is I get to read a lot of people's testimony when they're being baptized. It's really, really a joyful time. And it doesn't happen a lot, but occasionally, I will have to remind someone, "You told me what you did in this testimony, but you never told me what God did. God's the one who saved you. God's the one who gave you eternal life. The hero in your story is God." Amen? The glory in your testimony goes to Christ. As a matter of fact, your testimony is almost like a theology lesson of sorts. Got a little bit of you, but the whole thing is about how God saved you. All you did was sin. Jonathan Edwards said, "You contribute nothing to your salvation except the sin which makes it necessary." Wow! To say it this way, the way you defeat sin, the way you get victory over it (because some of you have been struggling with it all week) is to get out of verse three and into verse 4 as quickly as possible. That's where victory is found. That's where you have hope. You need a jump from verse 3 into verse 4 and keep running and don't look back. "For every one look at yourself, take 10 looks at Christ." For every one look at your mess, take 10 looks at His grace.

You could apply it this way, when we see all the evil things around you, when you see the sinful things coming out of the government and the news, this is how you should handle it. You don't look at that, you look to Christ. You don't focus on the government and the news. That's going to depress you, that's going to get you down. You look at His grace. Make sure your attention is pointed in the right direction. Make sure your eyes are focused on the prize. We get so discouraged when we see this stuff coming out of the news. I don't know about you guys, but I can only look at the news a few times a week and after that, I can't go on if I keep doing that. I was telling someone the other day, it's doesn't surprise me that I disagree with politicians. I expect that because you can't agree with everybody. That's just life. But it does surprise me at the things that they talk about all the time. The sexual things and the things like the abortion kind of stuff. Why is that talked about over and over and over again? Why is that pumped endlessly through the system? I can hear that and I can get discouraged, I can get frustrated. You know what the answer to that is? The answer is this; my hope is not found in the government. Amen? My hope is not found in the evening news. My hope is found here in Jesus Christ. My hope is in God alone.

Which is why Paul says so much about this. If you notice, every member of the Trinity is mentioned in this passage to remind you of this. Every member of the Godhead is brought forward to show you how great your salvation is. This was an all-inclusive project. God the Father is mentioned in verse 4, God the Spirit is mentioned in verse 5, and God the Son, Jesus Christ is mentioned in verse 6. God the Father appears, and He saves us. God the Spirit renews us and washes us, and God the Son justifies us and makes us an heir of eternal life to say that your salvation is all of God, it's all of Him, Him, Him. It's not about you.

We start off in verse 3 as enemies of God, and we end up being justified and made heirs of eternal life because God took care of everything. Your salvation is perfect, it's finished in Him. God did it all. Isn't that amazing? And it leads me to ask you this morning, do you believe that? Do you believe your salvation is all of grace? Do you believe God did it all? Do you believe the Father, Son and Holy Spirit all played a part in it, and is that enough for you? Is your salvation complete, or did you come here this morning trying to finish your salvation or trying to complete it yourself through good works? Are you here in a church because of what God did in your life or are you here in a church to earn something? I don't know how you could improve on the work of the Trinity. I don't know how you could make it better, but I still have to ask you, is that your motive in the Christian life? Are you trying to improve on what He did? I hope you're not because that would be the silliest thing in the world. God started your salvation and He finished it. He began the work in you, and He will complete it. So you need to trust Him.

As I was preparing for this sermon, I came across an illustration that I think explains this pretty well. I have with me this morning...haven't done one of these in a while. I know you guys love my visual illustrations...But I brought a glove with me here this morning. Just an ordinary work glove from our garage. And to be honest, I don't use it a whole lot, because I'm renting. I don't own my own home yet, so there's no point being overzealous. So, I haven't used this thing...I was looking, I was like, "I don't remember where my gloves are." I was like, "They got to be somewhere around here." I love renting, it's beautiful. You don't have to mow your grass until your neighbour does. And you're like, "Oh, now it looks bad." But this glove represents who we were before salvation. It represents who we are in Titus 3:3. And if I let go of this glove and dropped it on the floor and I said, "Glove, I want you to do some work. I want you to pick up my Bible and carry it to the car." What would happen? Well, nothing, right? It's just going to sit there. What if I said, "Okay, glove, you just need some encouragement. You need to be lifted up. Come on glove, you can do it. Come on glove, let's get to work"? What would happen? Same thing. What if I said, "Glove, you just need some fellowship. You just need to be with other gloves, so here's a friend. We'll be multicultural. Here's another friend, that's a different one"? What would that do? I mean, nothing. Now they're just all sitting there together.

See, here's the thing friends, even though the glove is designed for work, even though it's created to do something, it's totally unable to do it until an outside force enters in and gives it life, right? Until someone comes in from the outside and gives it regeneration, a new heart. It's the same way with the Christian life. We can't do anything unless someone gives us life. We can't do anything unless someone enters in and helps us, and that's why Jesus Christ came. That's why God appeared - to give you life.

And the question is, will you believe it today? Will you come to Him and receive this life if you haven't? Will you let Him do everything? I pray that you will because this is the only thing that will save you. I pray that you will because it's only thing that will bring you into heaven. You need to trust in His wonderful grace, and let's pray for that this morning.

Father, we do thank you so much, Lord, that Your grace is enough for us, that it is sufficient. And there's not a man or a woman in this room who is saved, who can't read a passage like this and say, "That's me right there. That is my spiritual biography. I was that person." And yet, look at what You've done in our lives. Lord, look at what You've done in Your kindness and mercy, and You deserve all the praise for our salvation today.

Lord, there's probably some here today (I'm guessing there are because there usually is) who have never experienced grace like this. And they hear all this talk about sufficiency and Your love being enough and all the things the Trinity did, and that's just kind of a theory to them. They've never experienced it in their own heart and life. And Lord, I pray You would save some this morning and draw them to Christ and show them that you are truly a God of wonders and a God of salvation. We rejoice in this Father.

And we thank you that as we consider our church and just where we're at in this stage of the journey, that we know as You remind Titus right here that You will take care of us. You took care of us at salvation, You'll take care of us every step of the way, and we throw ourselves on Your mercy this morning, Lord.

Would You be glorified in the work of Your church, Lord, would You be glorified as the Gospel goes out from these walls, and we pray this in Jesus' name, amen.