

Younger Men & Slaves

Titus 2:6-10

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, May 5, 2019

Turn with me to the book of Titus, if you would. That's the book we're in this morning. Please turn with me to the book of Titus. And as you're doing that, if you're joining us for the first time this morning, we're in the middle of a series called the "How to Plant a Church" series on the book of Titus, because that's what the book is about. It tells us how to plant a church. It tells us how to get it started and off the ground. And Titus does this in an interesting way. He does it by talking about the fundamentals of the faith. He tells us to plant a church by going back to the basic truths of the Christian life.

You would think that in a book like this, Paul would say some very deep things. You would think he might tell us some secret tips and hidden mysteries for how to plant a church. After all, Paul knew a lot about this subject. He was an expert in the field. He was the greatest church planter of all times. So, you think he might tell us about the latest church growth strategies and marketing ideas from the first century. Or you think he might tell us how to win friends and influence people and get our numbers to go up; how to be cool and hip and relevant to the culture. It's interesting, people write a lot about being relevant to the culture or being cool and hip, and the men that wrote the Bible were beaten within an inch of their lives by the culture. He doesn't say anything like that. Paul doesn't do that here. Instead, he talks about the fundamentals. He talks about things we already know.

And he says it this way in chapter 2:11-12, if you want to read some of these fundamental things. In chapter 2:11 Paul writes, "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." That is so basic to the faith. That is so fundamental. I don't think there's a Christian on the planet who doesn't understand that. I don't think there's a believer anywhere who hasn't heard that the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men? There's nothing secret about that, there's nothing deep. And yet Paul puts it in here, right in the middle of the book of Titus to say, "This is how you plant a church, this is how you get it started. You do it by grace. You do it by faith in Jesus Christ. You do it by remembering that He does it all and we do nothing. It's all about Him." If you look in chapter 3:5, he says this another way. He repeats it from another angle. In chapter 3:5, he says,

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.

Paul says this again just another way - "We have been saved not on basis of works, but according to mercy. It's according to grace. God does it all." You can see that in the verbs in that passage, if you look at it. He says, "God saved us, washed us, renewed us, poured the Spirit out upon us so we would be justified and made heirs of eternal life. God does it all. Not only does He take the credit for what happens in the church, He takes the credit for what happens in salvation as well."

I've told you before, you didn't become a Christian and come to church today because someone in this room died for you. You're here today because Jesus Christ died for you, amen? That's why you're here. You didn't come here because someone in here rose from the grave for you and bore the weight of your sins. Jesus did that. You're not here because someone in here gave you new life, brought you back from the dead, gave you a new heart, new soul, new creature, made you knew, knew, knew. Christ did that and Christ alone. Which means that Jesus is the one who plants the church. Jesus is the one who gets it started and off the ground. You're here ultimately because of Him.

This is so fundamental to the faith. This is so basic and yet so many people forget it today, don't they? So many people think the church is run like a business. They think you started like you would start a store down at the mall. You come up with a mission statement and a five-year plan and some fancy pencils and off you go. Or you get a slick new product and a web page and you're ready. But the church isn't built that way, not ultimately. It's built by the grace of God on the person of Jesus Christ.

To explain this a little bit, in his book "Transforming Grace," Jerry Bridges says that in the States, there are two types of bankruptcy. I don't know if you have this here in Canada or not, but in the States there's two types of bankruptcy. There is "temporary bankruptcy" where a company is in trouble. There's a "permanent bankruptcy" (it's the second type) where a company can't recover. They can't get back on their feet, they're ruined forever. And Jerry Bridges says, "A lot of Christians think that they've declared temporary bankruptcy when they were saved. Because they think they're saved by grace, they're saved by Christ alone. But now that they're saved, now that they're a Christian, they can do it all themselves. They can come back and get back on their feet again." And he says, "You can't. You need to be saved. You need to continue the Christian life by Christ alone." Friends, do you understand that your bankruptcy spiritually is a permanent bankruptcy? Do you understand your sin problem is a permanent sin problem? Now that you're saved and you've become a better person, you're not a better person. The sin problem is the same. You need grace in the beginning, grace in the middle and grace in the end, amen? You need Christ in the beginning, Christ in the middle and Christ at the end - which is what the book of Titus is all about.

I've told you before the outline of the book of Titus is very simple at the end of the day. It's easy to follow. It's about leadership and then living. That's the outline; leadership and then living. Chapter 1's about leadership, the kind of leaders you want in the church, the kind of men you want in office. And chapter 2 is about living, the way you're supposed to live the Christian life. And the idea and chapter 2 is that you can do all of this, you can live the Christian life and be a godly man and be a godly woman and plant a church and all these things, because Christ does it all. You do it all by the grace of God.

And as you read chapter 2 (if you want to follow along with me), you can see that Paul applies this to several types of people, several different groups in the church. For instance, he applies it to the older men in verse 2 when he says this - he says, "Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in the faith, in love and in perseverance." And the idea here is that older men can do all these things. They can be temperate, dignified, sensible and sound in the

faith by the grace of God. That's the point of the chapter. They can do all of this because God does it all through them.

Then he applies it to the older women and the younger women in verses 3 through 5, if you want to read along there. He says,

3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, 4 so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

And the idea there is that women in the church can do all of these things. They can be all of these things by His grace as well. They don't do it alone. There is a permanent bankruptcy, but Christ in His mercy has enabled them to do all of this.

And then he addresses the younger men in verse 6, which I'll read to you in a moment. But he tells what the grace of God does in their lives as well. Which is important because if anybody needs the grace of God, it's our young people, amen? I feel like I could say that because I'm in this category. I'm pretty young, I think. I feel older every day. I've told you before, there's probably no group of people in the church that's being hit harder today by the enemy than our youth; being attacked more than them. Just turn on the television and what do you see? You see lie upon lie upon lie. You see attack upon attack upon attack aimed at our young people; just being pelted at the youth.

The entertainment industry is like a battleground today. I knew several people in Los Angeles that were saved out of the entertainment industry, and you would talk to them about their life before and after salvation and it was just from the pit of hell to daylight. Go to some of the universities here in Canada and in the States and elsewhere. Go to some of the schools and what do you see? You see the same thing.

I read a statistic recently that said that 70% of Christian young people leave the church after high school and never come back because they're being fed so many lies. They're being told to ignore your parents, do whatever you want, sin however you want to, there are no consequences in life, there's nobody you'll have to answer to - and that is all one big lie. It's not true.

And I want to tell you as we're coming to the book of Titus, it was no different in the first century. The young people there were being fed lies too. As a matter of fact, it may have been worse because the island of Crete where this book was written to was a terrible place. According to one historian, there were three evil "Cs" in the ancient world: Cilicians, Cappadocians and Cretans, and Cretans were the worst. They were at the top of the list. Can you imagine planting a church and hearing somebody say that there's three evil "Cs" of British Columbia: Kamloops, Kelowna and Chilliwack, and Chilliwack is the worst; it is the pit? I think Chilliwack's a great place, except when you spread manure. I keep telling our farmers in town, I was like, "Just text me. I'm up on the mountain, just text me. I won't come down. I'll come down when the breeze blows through."

Another author said the term “Cretan” was so bad it was synonymous with the word “liar.” And to out-Cretan a Cretan meant to lie in the worst way imaginable, stab someone in the back. Some of you told me you grew up in a home where your parents said, “Stop acting like a Cretan.” That's a 2000-year-old statement. That's how bad these people were. And you can just imagine the impact this would have had on the youth on the island of Crete. You can just imagine what it would have done to them, because young men are always a little more rambunctious than everybody else. We're all that way (young men), we're born that way. There's an African proverb which says, “If the father jumps a fence, the son will jump the house.” Which means if the father is this bad, you can just imagine how bad the sons would be. If the parents on the island of Crete were this evil, you can imagine what the kids were like. There were stories in the ancient worlds of young gangs on islands like this. Gangs are not a new thing in history. And the violence they would perpetrate and the crimes they would commit.

And yet Paul says here in Titus chapter 2 (this is the good news of this), Paul says here that the grace of God is for the young people too. His grace is enough for the young men of Crete. It's almost like Paul puts the young men at the end of this list here to remind Titus that even the worst groups, the grace of God can reach them, God's not through with them, He hasn't given up, His reach can reach into their lives and save them too.

The story is told of a young, poor slave whose master died in the 1800s and left him with \$50,000, which was a huge sum of money back then. It would've been worth millions of dollars today. In fact, it was so much money that the slave didn't know what to do with it. So, he just left it in the bank. He never touched it, he ever made any withdrawals. So, after a while, after a year or so, the bank called him in and said, “Look, you've got \$50,000 in here. Spend it, enjoy it, put it to some good use.” And after thinking about that for a minute, the slave very humbly said to the bank teller, “Please sir, can I have 50 cents for some cornmeal?” And I tell you that story because I'm afraid a lot of Christians are doing that today. A lot of our young people are doing that. God is giving them \$50,000. God is giving them millions upon millions of dollars, grace upon grace upon grace, more grace than they could ever spend, ever use, ever need, and they say, “Please, sir, can I have 50 cents for some cornmeal? God can I have a little help?”

Friends, I want to tell you whatever stage of life you're in this morning, God wants to give you more than just a little help. He wants to give you more than just a little cornmeal. He wants to give you the kingdom itself. He wants to give you heaven. Which means that whatever you're going through today, He can get you through it. He can get you through the spiritual attacks from the culture. He can get you through all the lies. It's no problem at all for Him. You just have to come to him and ask - which is what we're talking about this morning.

If you're taking notes this morning, in Titus 2:6-10, we're going to look at how the grace of God impacts two groups of people in the church. That's our passage for today. That's what it's about. Pretty simple, how the grace of God impacts two groups of people in the church; the young men and the slaves. Those are the two groups of people.

And I told you a moment ago, if you're wondering why they're listed together, it's because they were some of the worst people in the ancient world. They had the worst reputation. Young men, because of their temperament - hotheaded, bullheaded. And slaves, because of their disposition

in life. Slaves were so desperate in the first century. They were so put out and poorly treated that some of them just became like animals. And Paul says here that the grace of God can help them too, Jesus can save them. In verse 11, when he says, “For the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men,” he means slaves, young men, everybody. And the first group he mentions here is the young men. Paul tells us how the grace of God impacts the younger men.

It's interesting that Paul tells Titus to address the young men personally here, because he didn't do that with the younger women. If you remember back in verse 4, Paul told the older women to encourage and teach the younger women. He didn't tell Titus to do that for obvious reasons. He was protecting Titus here. He was giving him something of a barrier and a buffer. But now, he tells him to address the young men directly, speak to them personally. And he says this in verses 6 through 8. He says,

6 Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; 7 in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, 8 sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

I'll walk you through all of this in a moment, but the word for young men in this passage, in verse 6, is a *neos* in Greek, which comes from the same word that was used for “young women” earlier. The word for “young women” is *neas*, and the word for “young men” is *neos*. You can see the connection there. And it basically refers to anyone who's around the age of parenting; anyone who is young enough to be in the workforce and still have kids in the home. That's kind of the age range for this word. It's very broad.

In our day and age, we have three stages of life. We have childhood, the teenage years and adulthood. But in the ancient world, they only had two stages of life. You had childhood and adulthood. There really were no teenage years. That's a modern concept. People died young back then, and in the home, typically, if you wanted to have a workforce, you had it through your children. And so, they went to work at a young age. And they got married at a young age. Even today, the Jews have a tradition called the “Bar Mitzvah”. Some of you have heard of that. At the age of 13, they celebrate their children coming into adulthood. That's where this idea has come from. That's this age range here.

And Paul gives him one command, he gives him one main instruction for these young men. If you notice, he says, “Likewise (I told you last time he does this because young men have a short attention span – one command) urge the young men to be sensible.” That's the main command here. That's the main instruction. “Be sensible.” In some of your translations it says, “be self-controlled” or “reasonable”. It means “to keep your emotions in check, keep your passions under control. Don't let your temper get the best of you.” Which is important because young men can struggle with this. They can be pretty impulsive at times.

I remember the time a young man came up to me and he said, “Hey, I just spent all my savings on a new plasma screen TV. What do you think?” I said, “I think you'll be in a sermon illustration someday.” I said, “Take it back and put it in your university or something.” But young men do that sort of thing. I mean, I did. I didn't have any savings anyway, so it didn't

matter, when I was young. Which means that this is important. They need to take this to heart. Paul has a very simple command for them, because this is what it all boils down to at this stage of life for a young person, a young man. I don't know how many times I've counselled young men and said, "You need to get control of yourself. You need to take it easy," because they're so angry. Or "You need to take a step back from this and think about what you're about to do, because you're going to regret it." That's what Paul says here, "Be sensible, be reasonable."

And he ties this directly into Titus' life here because apparently, Titus was a young man too. He was in this stage of life. And if you notice in verse 7, he goes on to say this, he says, "Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds." You see the word "you" there because this is tied directly into the life of Titus. Paul talked about young men in general in verse 6, and in verse 7, he focuses in on Titus and he says, "Titus, this is how you can be sensible. This is how you can be reasonable, show yourself to be an example." He says, "You're a leader, you're a minister in the church, and Titus, you need to remember that people are watching you. Set an example for them."

He says, "With purity and doctrine." That's the next thing he tells him here. "Let your doctrine be an example. Be a leader in what you say." And he says, "You should be dignified" in verse 7. That's the next one for Titus here. The word "dignified" means "serious". And it's a good word for someone at this stage of life because ... at least I know when I was a young man, I was a goofball. You spend all your money on plasma TVs. And Paul says, "Titus, you can't do that as a minister. You've got to be dignified."

And in verse 8, he rounds this off by telling Titus in verse 8 that he needs to be, "Sound in speech which is beyond reproach. so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us." That phrase the "opponent" there could be a reference to Satan because he is our opponent in Scripture, he is our adversary. It could be a reference to any opponent, any enemy of the church. Paul says, "Conduct yourself in such a way that your enemies will be put to shame. They'll have nothing bad to say."

Let me just say for a moment that this is a very important passage, I think for young people. This is key because young men (and I'm speaking from experience here) are told the opposite from the world. Do you guys agree with that? And they are told to live however they want to, sow their wild oats while they're young. Do you guys have that expression in Canada? Sow your wild oats? They're being told to live it up now, for tomorrow we die, tomorrow we become an adult and have to get a job. But the problem with this advice is you will have to answer tomorrow for what you do today. And they're not being told that by the world. The problem with that advice is wild oats can make you sick. The sins you commit today, you will have an accounting for in the future. And they're not being told that. If you ask any number of people, particularly older men, they will tell you that the worst things they did, they did while they were young and they regret it. The worst sins they committed, they committed at this stage of life, and they wish they could go back and change it. And Paul says here, "Think that way now."

Several years ago, I had a chance to speak to some high school students, some young men at a Christian sports camp in Illinois on the issue of purity, sexual purity. And I asked them, I said, "Do you know what you call an old man who talks about sex all the time? You call him a

pervert. You say he has a dirty mind." I said, "Do you know what you call a young man who does that? You call him cool. You say, 'He's my hero.' Why? Because you were told that it's okay for young men to sin. You were told by the world around you that it's okay for young people to act that way, to sow their wild oats while they're young, to live it up. But you aren't told that there are consequences to that. You weren't told that what you sow today, you reap tomorrow. You weren't told that if you have a dirty mind now, you will have a dirty mind later. I guarantee it. That's the way it works. If you're a pervert now, you'll be a pervert later. You won't wake up one day and be another person. You're not going to wake up 10 years from now and be somebody else. It doesn't work that way. Life doesn't work that way."

One of my professors in seminary, he said it this way, he said, "What you will be, you are now becoming." And the question Paul is asking Titus here and the young men of Crete, and the thing he's trying to get their mind around is "What are you becoming right now? What kind of man are you turning out to be?" Friends, don't think you're going to wake up one day and repent and come to God on your death bed. You may not have a death bed, you may just die. We're not promised a deathbed. In his book, "Thoughts for Young Men", J. C Ryle says it this way. He says,

Young men, consider these things and you will not wonder that we preach the way we do. Surely if you did think of them, you would break with sin forever. Will you play with poison? Will you sport with hell? Will you set fire into your own lap? Will you harbor your deadliest enemy in your arms? Do you think you will pay attention to godly things tomorrow? Tomorrow is the devil's day. Today is God's day. Satan does not care what your intentions are, as long as you put them off until tomorrow. Young men, it is appointed for you to die. And no matter how strong or healthy you are now, the day of your death is near. I see young people sick as well as the elderly. I bury young corpses in the grave as well as the aged. I read the names of people no older than yourselves in every cemetery in the world. So, take your sin seriously. Be sensible, be reasonable, and repent and believe now before it's too late.

This is all talking about the negative side of things with young men, but when you look at the impact young men have had on the church, it is incredible. You can't even quantify it. Because of their energy and their enthusiasm and their zeal, young men have turned the world upside down for Christ. The same passion and recklessness that drives some of them to sin has driven some of them to do extraordinary things for God.

And I could mention several names - David Brainerd died in his 20s, Robert Murray McShane died in his 20s. But another name that comes to mind is one you may not have heard of before - William Borden. I don't know if you heard the name William Borden before. But when he was in his early 20's, William Borden graduated Yale University and inherited a fortune from his parents. He was a millionaire at an age when there were no millionaires. He had more money than he knew what to do with. And as a young college graduate, the sky was the limit.

But he had just become a Christian, he had just given his life to Christ, so he decided to give all his money away, to give everything to charity and board a ship to Egypt to reach the Muslims for Christ. And while he was there, he contracted spinal meningitis and died at the age of 25. And on

his tombstone in Cairo, Egypt, someone scribbled the words, “If it were not for eternity, a life like this would make no sense.”

Even in his journal, William Borden wrote these words on the ship as he was going to Egypt. He wrote, “No reserve, no retreat, no regrets.” And I would say that is the motto of every godly young man in history. “I’m holding nothing back from Christ. I’m laying it all on the line. I’m giving up everything for the one who gave everything up for me.” May God give us more young men like that. May He give us more young men like William Borden.

And that leads us to the next group that Paul mentions here in this passage. So, the first one is the younger men. I said quite a bit about that because that’s on my heart. That’s my stage of life. Paul gives them one command, one main instruction here – “Be Sensible. Don’t do anything now you would regret later. Live for Christ now before it’s too late.” Which brings us to a second group that’s impacted by the grace of God in this passage, and that is the slaves. So, first Paul addresses the younger men in the church in Crete. Second, he addresses the slaves.

This is interesting because we don’t have slaves today. Thank the Lord, at least not in Canada. We don’t have a whole group of people that fit into this category. But in the Roman world, they had lots of slaves. They had slaves everywhere. Some said that there were more slaves than free men. And because the Gospel was offered to everybody, because salvation was for all, it appealed especially to the slaves. I told you, I think last week, that the two groups of people that flooded the church when the church first started were slaves and women, because the ancient world had tossed both of them aside.

And Paul addresses the slaves in verses 9 through 10 when he says this, “Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.” There are five commands for slaves here or five instructions if you notice in your passage there. We’ll go through these quickly. First, verse 9 says, “Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything.” The word “subject” there, it’s the same word used for young women in verse 5. It’s a compound word that means “to put yourself under someone. To place herself under their authority”. Paul tells slaves, he says, “You are to willingly follow your master. You’re to willingly do what he asks you to do.”

He says next, “In a well-pleasing way.” That’s the second command here. “Don’t just follow the master but do it in a well pleasing way.”

He also says, “Don’t be argumentative about it,” which is the next one. “Don’t bicker and complain.”

He says, “Don’t steal, don’t pilfer” in the text. This was such a problem in the first century that slaves were often called thieves. That was just their title because one way to get back at your master was to take things when he wasn’t looking. To take some money, take some clothes, take some food, whatever. Paul says, “You should not do that as a Christian.”

And he ends up with this one, this final command down in verse 10 – “But showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.” The word “adorn” here is *kosmeo* from which we get the word “cosmetics”. And the idea is that a Christian slave should show all good faith so that they would wear the doctrine of God like cosmetics or makeup. They should be so godly, their life should be so different from the world around them that it should be as evident as makeup. People don't hide their makeup. That's the whole point of makeup. People are supposed to see it. And Paul says, Christian slaves should not hide their new found love for Christ, everybody should be able to see it as well.

Now, slavery was so brutal in the ancient world that it would be very odd to see a slave act like this. Aristotle, the Greek philosopher once described slaves as breathing tools or animated instruments. Because in Aristotle's mind, a slave was on the same level as a shovel or a hammer. They're just a tool. They're not really a person. And because of that, slaves would resent it. They would become very bitter, evil people. So, to see a slave who is subject to his master, well-pleasing, not argumentative or stealing, would have been shocking. They didn't make slaves like this. And Paul's point here is you should do this so your master would look at you and say, “Maybe there is something to this Christianity thing. Maybe it's real, and how can I learn about Jesus?”

And let me just say here, this doesn't mean the Bible condones slavery because it doesn't. It's quite the opposite actually. When verse 11 (I told you before), when it says, “The grace of God has appeared to all men,” that's a direct reference to slaves because slaves were considered to be men in the Bible, not animated tools. They were considered to be like everybody else.

And we might add that since we don't have slaves today, we can't really relate to this, we don't know what this is like. But we can relate to having an employer. It's probably the closest thing to connect to this. I think we all have a boss or an employer in this room. We're not owned by them, but we work for them. And they're not our master, but we follow their lead from 9 to 5. And I think for all of us, that can be very difficult to do. Does anybody have an easy boss to follow? Thanks Jordan. I was hoping Jordan would raise ... I was hoping you'd raise your hand. Nobody else did, I noticed. But it's hard. I read an article recently which said the number one reason people leave their job is because they have a bad boss. They don't like the person they work for. The article said, there are several reasons for this. They don't like him because he doesn't know what he's doing. He doesn't treat them with respect, he's not loyal to them. He can be a bully. But Paul says, “Even if that's the case with you, even if you don't like your boss, you need to do this. You need to follow these commands, because you never know if it might lead him to Christ. You want to adorn the doctrine of God in your workplace. You want to wear it on your face like makeup so that he will look at you and say, ‘Maybe there's something to this Christianity thing.’”

A friend of mine was telling me, she worked at a dental office where people complained a lot. There was a lot of negativity in the office. And every year when her review would come up (she was a believer - she was an assistant to him), he would say, “Why are you so different from all these other people?” That's what you want to hear at work. And she had a chance to talk to him about Christ. She said, “Every time we had that year-end review, it was so awkward because he would be so complimentary for me. I would tell him, ‘I act this way because of my faith in Jesus

Christ.' And every year would be this long pause. He didn't know what to say to that." But that's the point of this passage. You want to adorn the doctrine of God.

You don't want to be like the little boy who was applying for a job at a rich woman's house. And she said, "I'm sorry young man, but we don't have enough work to keep you employed." And he said, "You don't understand ma'am, you have no idea how little it takes to keep me employed." (It was funny when I wrote it down). You don't want to say that. You want to be well-pleasing to your boss. It's been said, some people can put the "irk" in work, they can make it miserable. They can put the "pro" in procrastination. You don't want to do that.

And if you're wondering, "Well how do I apply this?" I mean this is so lofty, this is so out there. "How do I live this out in my day-to-day life?" Verse 11 says it just this way, it takes us right back to where we started this - "For the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men." The word "for" there is a preposition of reason or purpose. Because this is the reason you can do all this. This is your purpose for being a godly employee or young person. It's because the grace of God has appeared to you. That's the point of all this. All of you, slaves included, young men included.

God has given you His grace. You have a permanent bankruptcy. You cannot be saved by your deeds. They'll never be righteous enough, they'll never be good enough, but that's why Jesus came. That's why He went to the cross, so that you could be saved according to grace, so you could be saved according to mercy and have all you need in Him to do this.

Young men, if you look at all the things in this list and you say, "I can't do this, this is impossible. This is like pie in the sky kind of stuff." "Be sensible, dignified, pure in doctrine, be an example, all that sort of thing. I can't do that." I want to tell you, you can do that but only by His grace. This is not too hard for you. You can do this by His mercy.

For the employees in this room, for those of you who have a bad boss or a bully, those who work for a man who doesn't treat them with respect - if you look at this list and you say, "I can't do this either, you don't know my boss, you don't know how bad he is. Be subject to him, be well-pleasing, wear my doctrine on my face?" I want to tell you, you can do this as well, but also only by His grace.

God has made His grace known to you through Jesus Christ, and if you trust in Him today, He will make this all a reality in your life. Listen, if slaves could do this in the first century, you could do this as an employee. I mean, you get to go home at the end of the day. You get to separate yourself from your boss. If young men could do this when they were bombarded so much in the world of Crete, with so much evil and bad things, if they could be godly young men there, you can do it today.

And let me pray for you now as you do that. By the way, we have the privilege in a moment of baptizing a young man who's been attending our church. As we're preaching on young men, I could think of so many young men that are walking with the Lord in our congregation today. And we praise God for them, amen? And we pray that they would increase. But let me pray for you now as you seek to apply this to your life so the Lord would give you His grace.

Father, we thank you, Lord, for Your Word that we've studied this morning. We thank you so much for what it says about grace and what Your grace does in our lives. Thank you, Father, that we are saved through Christ and that He has provided all that we need.

Lord, we need this reminder because as we go through a dark world and a dark place, we forget these things. And we think we're the only ones or we think that there's no way we can please You in this stage of life or in our jobs or in our families, whatever we're going through. And yet Lord, You remind us so gently here that You've given us enough grace for all these things. Thank you for that, Father.

Thank you for the things we can celebrate this morning, the Lord's Supper and baptism as we remember what Christ has done. Father, may we take it home into our lives and to our families, to every place that we go and give You glory for it, Lord. Thank you for being all that we need, and we pray this in Christ's name, amen.