

(Titus - Part 24): Sinful Man, the Object of God's Love

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer's sermon explores the profound love of God for sinful man and the transformative power of His grace and mercy.

Duration: 35:01

Scripture: Titus 3:4

Topics: "Titus"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of repentance and the rescue and deliverance that comes through it. He cautions against painting overly elaborate scenes of heaven, as our human minds cannot fully comprehend it. The speaker then uses the analogy of a poor boy being adopted by a wealthy man to illustrate the transformation that occurs through salvation. He concludes by highlighting the need to acknowledge our own brokenness and humility in order to fully experience the grace and inheritance offered through Jesus Christ.

Transcript

Beginning with the fourth verse, But, but, after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, But according to his mercy he saved us, By the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, That, being justified by grace, We should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Now, The Holy Ghost describes us in verse 3, And Then he goes on in the verse 4 and Verse 4 is Like stepping into nice warm water Verse 3 is like plunging into ice-cold water But verse 3 comes before verse 4 and And if we will not have verse 3 we cannot have verse 4 Verse 3 says describing us Describing the nicest person here We're all humble And nobody would say that's me man would say that's my wife or wife would say that's my husband or The child would say that's my mother We always have somebody else in mind. I tell you frankly, I don't think it fits me by nature But the nicest person here Has to accept this as a reasonable facsimile of his photograph foolish Disobedient Deceived Enslaved to lust, pleasure-mad, living in malice, Envious Hateful and hating one another Now that's the description the Holy Ghost gives of us And if we will not believe or as bad as he says we are We cannot believe that he's as good as he says he is so this is our photograph Then comes this little glorious word so small with such a variety of meanings this little simple word B-U-T but and The whole thing is changed But after that the

kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared I Think this little word but as it's used by Paul is One of the most powerful words in the entire Bible It is repentance.

It is rescue It is deliverance. It is salvation. It is a thousand things and Here we have it coming between verse 3 and verse 4 Rescuing those who are in verse 3 By the kindness and love of God in verse 4, but he says and you know, I Think that there will be scenes in heaven.

I am very cautious in painting heavenly scenes I have listened to some real oratory By men who know more about heaven apparently than John the Beloved did And I'm very cautious about it Also, I'm very cautious about quoting God unless I quote from the scriptures themselves or making dialogue between God and the soul. I Am not sure that I know too much about the future life since I know so very little about this life But I think I could be Nearly correct in Imagining scenes that might be there in the days to come When we meet somebody we didn't expect to be there we are we've gotten over and entered the celestial city and we see walking toward us a man whom we recognize because personality persists in the world to come individualities unchanged our Total being remains Don't think of yourself as a ghost or a strange Zombie, you are going to be you only glorified You are going to be recognizable. You'll have a memory you will be able to call the Memory things that happen below Just as Jesus after he came out of the grave Remembered what he had told him while he was still with him before his crucifixion so You're going to remember and you're going to recognize this person coming toward you and the last time you saw him he was cross-eyed drunk and You understood that he had lived and died that way and the last you heard of him He was somewhere in a coma and There'd been little gaps hiatus They call that if you want to be real learned little gaps in his in his history You didn't know about and you're going to say you here and he'll smile and say yes I'm here and shake hands with you and You'll say but how did you get here the last time I saw you you couldn't even stand up You were a total hopeless Alcoholic and you had 14 jail sentences behind you and you knew every warden in the state of, Illinois and Every cop knew you and your picture was in the post offices Now here you are.

How do you account for this and he'll smile and say but but After the kindness and love of God our Savior toward me appeared something happened Don't you suppose there are a lot of people a lot of Jews who didn't know that man on the cross there That repentant thief or a lot of Romans who didn't know anything about it Later on heard the gospel and perhaps never heard of this man This repentant thief for the Gospels were not immediately written And it's easy to imagine Hundreds of Romans who believed in the gospel of Christ when Peter preached and little later as others preached But who never saw who had never heard of the story of the penitent thief on the cross and the last day remembered of the penitent thief was he was hanging up there along with another thief and That he had been sentenced to die Don't you suppose there'll be many a Roman that'll walk up and say to this thief you here Why I remember when the newspapers came out and said that you'd been crucified for insurrection and thieving and all sorts of sins and the thief would smile and say but I Was all you said I was and worse and I had been guilty of things the law never knew And that I never admitted I was much worse than anybody here knows I was only God knew how bad I was but the kindness and love of God my Savior appeared to me and by a flash of spiritual Intuition I recognized him as he died in the middle there between us two dying thieves And I said Lord remember me and he said this day shall not be with me in paradise So I want to sort of tip you off you people who will be in heaven before another Century passes. I want to tip you off get ready for some delightful surprises Because you're going to find some people there. You didn't know would make it You're going to find people there now This is not a plea to throw our arms around all religions and all cults and all Christ denying branches of Christianity know We're going to have to come the only way there is to

come But some people come that way and we don't know it we lose track of them and that's it well The kindness and love hour of our Savior toward a man appeared and notice it says the kindness and love of God our Savior and There's nothing startling about that.

There's nothing there to bother anybody If I said the ocean is vast. Nobody would ever blink an eye If I would say the rain that falls from heaven is wet. Nobody would ever move They'd wonder why I'd said the obvious and if I were to say the Sun is bright Nobody would say anything else They'd say I wonder what he's getting at because we all know the ocean is deep and vast We all know that the rain is wet and we all know That the Sun shines brightly So when I say the kindness and love of God Nobody's going to even bat an eyelid on that.

We've heard that all our lives. We know it's true That's nothing to wonder at because that's the kind of God God is and incidentally That's why unbelief is so wrong. It refuses to believe that God is the kind of God he is but here we say the kindness and love of God our Savior and There's nothing there to excite attention because God is kind God is love God being that kind of God, that's what you would expect a loving kindly tender well-reared cultured mother You expect her to get up and look after a baby And if you say Mrs. Jones gets up at 2 o'clock in the morning and gives her baby a bottle nobody's going to run and give her a medal Of course, that's the way she is.

We've known her since she was little and that's kind of woman She is you could expect that of Mrs. Jones. That's all right. We say we know that But listen, it says here the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man What kind of man? Why a foolish man and disobedient man deceived man Enslaved man pleasure mad man malicious man Envious man hateful man.

That's the one now the love of God suddenly turns aside and and Flows in its fullness toward that kind of man put the two words toward man on there and you have a wonder of wonders and you you you have a You have the reason for and the source of many a great hymn such as amazing grace how sweet the sound Why did it amaze the man? Because God was gracious. No God is gracious and nobody should stand amazed at God being love or God being kind or God being gracious but that the kind gracious love of God Should have as its object such a slavish foolish disobedient deceived lustful malicious envious hateful person as I am That's where the wonder lies my brethren And that is why the hymn writers have never yet gotten over trying to get us to sing The wonderful love of God and the kindnesses of and the love of God toward man toward man I say hateful and hating one another hasn't discouraged God Not changed his mind in the slightest about us What is man that thou art mindful of him said David? And some of the scholars tell us that that word mindful means a fixture in the mind That man is a fixture in God's mind God the only eccentricity of the great perfect God is That he loves mankind with a fixture that he can't escape. He can't shake it off He loves mankind because God is the kind of God he is we may expect him to love us and we may expect him to be kind to us and so the why of his loving us you sees not in us at all the why of his loving us is in him and The why of these being kind to us is in him and yet I would suggest Three thoughts here that might help you intellectually if it doesn't spiritually Why God loves us? Well, the one is That God is love and only does the thing that is natural to him It is natural for the sun to shine we say it is natural for birds to fly and fishes to swim it is natural for that which is love to be loved and so we say God loves us because it's the natural thing for him to do Second reason he loves us is that we're his creatures and he's pleased with everything he made When I was up at Glen Rocks, I took my bird book along now don't smile and my field glasses And I discovered two new birds.

I guess I know around 80 now species. That's not many but that's that's a few and I I said to somebody I have just I just was asking God whether after all the tents torn down and the big woe is over and the battles done And we don't learn war no more and man will his brothers all all over the world I wonder if God won't let me spend a couple of centuries Investigating his wonderful world. I love it.

God made it. I can't help but love it I love to tramp through the woods and See chipmunks dash out and Vesper sparrows mount a high tree and sit and try to sing That's the best you can say for a Vesper sparrow He's just doing his best, but he's not much of a singer, but he's lovely to hearing in the in the evening Well, God's pleased with everything he made and when when sin came in and ruined it Then God started over to remake it, but he still loves it apart from sin and we're a part of his creation But there's a third reason we're made in his image and I don't make this as a statement But I ask it as a question Is the reason for God's undiscouraged and undiscourageable love for us his persistent love for fallen man Could it be that he loves himself in us? Could it be that the great God who? Sinlessly and perfectly loves himself Sees the tattered fragments of his own image in the fallen man and loves himself in the man and seeks to redeem the man because that man Has a family resemblance Don't think I mean that he's saved. No We must be born again to be saved We must be renewed as it says here to be saved But still fallen man has in it even even the rich man in hell Even that rich man in hell had something divine in him Because he said oh father Abraham Will you please let somebody go and tell my brothers that they don't come to this terrible place? Why then I ask? Why why did he say that he said it because there was yet compassion in his heart in hell And compassion doesn't come from the devil I Wonder if he loves himself in us.

Don't go away and say I said he did But just say I asked the question does it? Then he says Paul still quoting Paul. He saved us not by works of righteousness, which we have done Why did he not save us by works of righteousness because there were none and Because there are none But you say was not that a work of righteousness when the poor man in hell wanted to to deliver his brethren. No That was a work of human sympathy which was Given to the man by God in creation, but that same man willfully had rebelled against the majesty in the heavens and Remember that no King reigning by rights ever accepts the gifts of a rebel And nothing that a rebel can do Ever is accepted by the king against whom he rebels and Therefore there were no works of righteousness the man who is in rebellion against God Can never bring a gift to God Cain tried it Cain brought a gift to the God against whom he'd rebel and God turned his back on it thought it was a beautiful gift a gift of fruit and flowers Beautiful gift any woman would accept it and smile and thank the man who gave it to her But God wouldn't take it for it was given to him by a rebel if that rebel had repented and Gotten right and been forgiven.

God would have accepted his fruit and his flowers gladly, but he wanted nothing from a rebel He saved us not by works of righteousness why because there were none and are none But according to his mercy, there's room for a whole sermon in itself God the salvation you have Accords with the infinite mercy of God and not with any merit of yours I know that's old stuff and it sounds very fundamentalist and I am a fundamentalist But it's true nevertheless the infinite limitless mercies of God By how does he do it now? There's God suddenly become emotionally overcome that as you get emotionally overcome and Rush out and take us in. No, he doesn't He does it by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost You see even infinite kindness and love Can't receive an unregenerate sinner into heaven Even the infinite mercy of God is limitless as human thought and beyond Could ever receive a sinner into the presence of the angels Wisdom had to find a way To save that Lustful slavish pleasure-mad malicious envious hateful lying man It had to find a way to save the man To justify him because God is just and to cleanse him because God is holy No one just person can enter the kingdom of God so God has to justify

the man Love wants to do it, but justice Forbids it and wisdom knows how to do it. So wisdom Sent Jesus Christ our Savior.

This was through Jesus Christ our Savior Jesus Christ our Savior Notice it calls God our Savior in verse 4 and Jesus Christ our Savior in verse 6 and There's no incompatibility there God the Father is our Savior and God the Son is our Savior well, John Bunyan said That when he's early Christian life, he was very much worried about how Jesus Christ could be both God and man He said I wasn't willing to accept it on anybody's authority. God had to show me I had to find it in the book he said He said I got the reading in the book of Revelation and it said and behold in the midst of the throne and in the midst of the elders There stood a lamb He said the Holy Ghost showed me In the midst of the throne there was his Godhead in the midst of the elders. There was his humanity He said oh, I did exceedingly rejoice Exceedingly rejoice to see that he stood with God at the throne as God and with man Among the elders as man So he's both God and man and was through Jesus Christ our Lord He justifies and he cleansed and he washes and he regenerates and he renews he does all these things through the mercy through his mercy by The atonement in Christ's blood are almost finished Now notice it says heirs here.

We are made heirs in verse Seven being justified by his grace. We should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life Heirs, that means we inherit everything God has Heirs of God you say I can't believe it You know why because you won't believe verse 3 if you don't believe you're as bad as God says you are You'll never believe you're as well off as God says you are I'll remember if you won't believe you're as bad off as he says you are You'll never believe that he was well off through grace because psychologically can't be done You hold out on God as to how bad you are Your nature won't permit you to take all the promises of God as to how good God is to you You crimp yourself and crowd yourself be enlarged Oh ye Corinthians and see how bad you are nor do you can see how good God is and how wonderful the grace of God is Now we're heirs and I was trying to think about this heir an heir of God that I am one of God's heirs You know, we can't take it in Let's imagine a little boy Who has lived in the slums of some great city? New York's East Side say and He's now eight or ten years old and he's had a very narrow Life he's lived among ash cans and in alleys and Stealing fruit from corner fruit stores and ducking policemen. That's the way he's lived He never had a new shirt on his life His pants are hand down three four Fellas up that down to him and his shoes.

He never had a new pair on And he's never slept anywhere but in a corner and Suddenly Somebody comes along and adopts him off the street corner one of the richest men in America With yachts and outboard or what do you call them? These big power motors things they these rich men from run around I see them on the lakes and states of every kind and Utterly rich beyond the description we go to the boy and say, you know what? You're an heir This man has adopted you and you've suddenly Inherited vast ranches in Arizona and great estates in Canada and Huge states down on the coast in Florida. It's all yours to say nothing of money in the bank The little fella doesn't understand. He'd exchanged the whole business for a pop suckle sickle Sure, because you see He He just he can't think like that and God doesn't blame you for not being able to think like that You are used to poverty spiritual poverty.

Anyhow, you're used to Locking everything shutting your door and locking and say to you what did you lock that? You're always used to live in that way living in the slums of the universe But there's only one place worse than Earth and you know what it is. Hell Hell the earth is suspended halfway between Heaven and hell not yet forsaken by heaven and not yet committed to it Here we are and that's what we're used to and then suddenly we have somebody so cold water on us and say You're an heir of God We shake our heads and say well, I'm willing to believe it, but I haven't a faintest notion what you're talking about Read

your Bible study it and pray and keep on grow and expand and learn to think the way God thinks and maybe sometime You'll know a little bit, but if you don't know here, you'll know there The heirs of God heirs of God according to the promise of eternal life, well, we scarcely know what it is I wonder if that's why the Lord gave us the communion service that we sort of might sort of Get a hold of something we could see in taste You know The ideal is that we'd be completely spiritual But the Lord knows us too well to hope we can ever be completely spiritual as long as we're walking around in this mortal tabernacle So he made everything spiritual With the wine and the bread he said now you can have this and look at this and feel it touch it taste it That I'll let you have those two no more I'll let you have those two emblems those two elements those two Symbols and signs of my death and resurrection and glorious coming again. You keep on Be different from the world And every so often he didn't say how often there's difference of opinion among the brethren, but every so often Eat the bread and drink the wine say the words and sing the hymns and pray and remember me till I come And you'll become heir of all that God has we Christians ought to be the happiest people in the world and the saddest The saddest because we live in a heartbroken world and the happiest Because we're heirs of The most gracious God and that was Paul Paul said sorrowful yet always rejoicing.

How do you figure him? Some of you people with adding machine minds They insist on getting everything down and added up at the bottom and then Prove it four ways to show. It's correct You won't do you won't do God wants imaginative men and women that can intuit things that the Holy Ghost can give flashes of Understanding that you never can explain and one of them is how a man can be rich and poor at the same time Paul said poor yet making many rich. How did he do it? Can't put that in an adding machine feed that into Mr X and it won't come out For how he can be sorrowful yet always rejoicing How Jesus could sing a hymn and go to the Mount of Olives.

There you have it two peaks Or a peak in a valley The peak of song and the valley of suffering We Christians are caught there We never know from day to day whether we'll be on the mountain peak singing or in the valley suffering But it doesn't make too much difference. Anyway, because we're heirs of God And when we receive the bread and the wine we tell the whole world that wants interested to know This is just a little reminder like the ring on my wife's finger reminding Just isn't isn't the marriage but it's just a little symbol. We recognize since we're here on earth And this is a symbol we recognize perhaps it's deeper than that but it is that It's beyond that but it is that And it tells us that he died that he rose that he lives that he pleads and he's coming back again Amen, amen, now we'll have the communion service and Any persons that we say visitors, but really you're not visiting here.

Nobody's visiting here We we use that we call them guests we have a guest card and I guess it's just the paucity of the English language But really I'm as much a guest here as you are Nobody runs this church. This is the house of God. This is the body of Christ or Part of the body of Christ and you have as much right at the table as I do So nobody can shut you out Let me give you this little little thought and then we're we'll have our communion service in a Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky a Closed communion Baptist Church The pastor Was a very warm friend of Well, it was his brother-in-law they pointed the church out and told me the story his brother-in-law who was a pastor in the Presbyterian Church and The brother-in-law Presbyterian brother-in-law was visiting the Baptist pastor Came Sunday first Sunday and they had communion What Could this pastor do his brother-in-law was out of the fold and So he did his best.

He said my friends If this were my table I'd invite you to it and I'd invite everybody to it. There wouldn't be anybody that I'd Exclude I'd invite everybody to it Said I my brother-in-law's here and he's Presbyterian

and I'd invite him to it if it was my table But he says since it's my father's table. I have no right to invite anybody So he said but the children will know and they'll come That was an easy way out He thought it was so the Presbyterian pastor got up down front and said could I say a word? And of course he had to grant him the right.

He said I agree with my brother-in-law This is not his table this is his father's table and since his father and my father's the same father then this is my father's table and He said if the pastor can't invite me to my father's table He can't exclude me from my father's table and he went up and got up and went and took communion along with the rest. I Think that's just delightful myself and that's just delightful. I Can't invite you and I can't exclude you let every man examine himself.

Amen

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