

# Studies in Titus - Part 4

by Paris Reidhead

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*Paris Reidhead's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of God's grace in teaching believers to live righteously while eagerly anticipating the return of Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 45:57

**Scripture:** Titus 2:11

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on his past mission trip to Africa and his initial belief that it was unfair for people to go to hell without a chance to be saved. However, he realizes that he was trying to improve on God's justice and that these people deserved wrath and judgment just as much as he did. The speaker then shares a soliloquy in his mind where he hears God questioning his expectations of justice and reminding him that he loved him and died for him despite his own sinfulness. The sermon emphasizes the grace of God that brings salvation and teaches believers to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

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## Transcript

Will you turn, please, to our text, Titus 2, 11 to 14. Well, no, I won't ask that. Have you memorized it? Are you memorizing it? What will I have to offer? First trip to the moon or something like that.

Titus 2, 11 to 14. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a purchased people, zealous of good works. Last week we were dealing with the fact that the grace of God that brings salvation not only teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and teaches us to live soberly, righteously, and godly, but also teaches us how to live soberly, righteously, and godly.

Just to be taught to do it might not be enough. In fact, it might be a means of enormous frustration and unhappiness. To teach us to do something that we can't do certainly couldn't be thought of as a great blessing, could it? To make it clear that we have to do something when we're not able to do it, oh, it's like taking a little five-year-old child out and saying, honey, jump over the house, and peeling out a great black snake whip with which you're going to encourage the child.

How much whipping do you have to do to get a child to do something that is impossible for it to do? And if a parent did that, the full sanctions of the law would be brought down on such a parent. Being inhuman, cruel, and for God to teach us to live soberly, and righteously, and godly, and not to teach us how, would be considered similar cruelty on the part of a heavenly Father. So you can be absolutely certain that if he has taught us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly, that he has also made full, complete, adequate provision for us to do both.

We're not going to dwell further on that at the moment. I want you to see the stream of the revelation from the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly, looking. It's a continuum.

It's ongoing. It's not this, and then later on this, and then sometime later that. It's a stream.

And they move together. And so he is saying that the same one that teaches us how to live soberly, righteously, and godly, does so in that he also causes us to look for that blessed hope. Looking is the way it's expressed.

Looking for that blessed hope. Now, when I listen to some, listen to the memories of some, one of the privileges that I have being born at the time I was, is that I can look back to a lot of the teachers of prophecy in the thirties, some of whom I knew, many of whom I heard, knew personally, some many of whom I heard. I grew up in Minneapolis, and Minneapolis was the center of fundamentalism.

And we used to have some of the greatest teachers of Bible prophecy in the nation come to our conferences and conventions in the Twin Cities. And these were names of people that I had met. In fact, as a student in Bible school, I went to, whenever I knew someone was coming for some kind of a conference, some nationally known speaker, I would go to the committee and volunteer my car and myself as driver for the period of time that this famous person would be there.

Well, it took the committee with great fortitude to say no to some eager Bible student who says, I will be, provide the driving service. And I did it for one reason only, just to be with these men, listen to them, talk to them, ask them questions, find out what I could from them, and met many of them. Well, as I look back on it now, I'm astonished at what was given and what we accepted.

I was absolutely convinced, beyond any question of a doubt, when just allowed that the Lord was absolutely going to come before 1933. We would never, we wouldn't see it. When 1933 came and went and 1934 was on us, I was somewhat disappointed.

But not really, because now another of the teachers said it was 1943, they'd missed by one inch in the pyramid or someplace else. And so it was 43. So we waited with expectancy for 43.

And then when 43 came and went, it was 55. And on and on it went. And finally then we moved into a place where we weren't talking much about prophecy.

I think it rather happened when one of the writers for the Sunday School Times had an excellent article that Mussolini was the Antichrist. It was still in type of form locked up out in California where the paper was being printed and hadn't been printed yet when Mr. Mussolini was hung by his heels in a Milan filling station. And rather made the article unnecessary, shall we say.

Prophecy. And it was the source of division and strong feeling. I mean extremely strong feeling.

I guess I got a little bit of a question about it all when in one year in Minneapolis we had three nationally known teachers who gave three distinctly differing interpretations of the same portion from the Book of Daniel. And I concluded that if these three men, all of whom were viewed as experts, should have such widely divergent views, possibly it would be well for us to be a little judicious in what was said about this. So I think that was when I began to say I wonder if this is what the Lord intended us to do.

You know what's interesting is that the Bible doesn't teach systematic theology. Did you know that? The Bible does not teach systematic theology. You know what it does? It teaches responsibility.

And it uses theological truth as the basis for responsibility. Now theologians gather up this and make a systematic theology out of it. But they have to lift it out of the place in which it occurs because it occurs as the basis of responsibility.

I remember when I was a pastor in New York City, there was in one of the outstanding churches of this country in the city a conference on prophecy. Well somehow or other they asked Vance Havner, whom many of you know and love as a dear man of God, they asked Vance Havner to be one of the speakers. And he was quite certain that they'd made a mistake, that for some reason they'd misunderstood.

But he went. And he said, I didn't know what I was going to do. Here I was, a little BB gun with these big cannons.

He said, I didn't know what I was going to do. So he said, I prayed about it. I'm no student of prophecy.

He said, I can sum up my prophecy in these words. He went away, but not to stay. He's coming back again.

And he said, when I said that, I've said about all I know. I'm sure of that. But he said, I just asked the Lord.

Oh, he said, I just waited. I listened and I said, Lord, I'm going to go home. I'm not going to stay.

I listened the next day. Lord, I'm in the wrong place. I'm going home.

But he said, he gave me the answer. And so he said, when came my turn to speak, I just got up there and said, well, in this prophecy conference, God has laid upon my heart this. Brethren, seeing these things are coming to pass upon the earth, what manner of men ought we to be? And I'm going to talk to you about the manner of men we ought to be.

Well, that's where the Scripture teaches prophecy. The manner of men we ought to be. What kind of people? I don't think it's, we get a revival of it now.

Somebody came to me yesterday, or this week, not yesterday, the day before, and Thursday, oh, I'll get to it, Thursday evening, and said, Brother Redead, with all that's happening in the Middle East, and all that's happening, don't you think the coming of the Lord is nice? Yeah, you know, I do. I wouldn't be surprised if he came before breakfast. I don't think it's because of what's happening in the Middle East.

It's only what's happening in his heart, in the heart of the Father, the triune God. The Father knows what the times are, but I'm going to live as if it could be before breakfast. But I'm not sure.

Well, I mean, think of all, I said, Red, you tell me what your position is, and I will glean from the newspapers, and the news magazines, support for any position you want to take. I can give you, from

current events, I can give you support for any position you want to take. You just tell me what your position is.

Not that I'm so smart, but I'm saying that you can look at such a vast meal of information, and can gather and glean and put together a roster to support any position you wish to have. Now, that isn't the way God gives this revelation of his coming, of things' future. This is how he does it.

Looking for that blessed hope. Why is it a blessed hope? Why is it a blessed, why is it a happy hope? A joyous hope? Well, only to those to whom the grace of God has brought salvation. To those that have been taught to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, who have been saved from the purpose of sinning, who are saved from the penalty of sin, who are being saved from the power of sin, to them the prospect of being saved from the presence of sin, is a great delight and source of joy and happiness.

Looking for that blessed hope. And the glorious appearing of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ. Why? It's a purifying hope.

You know, if you truly believe that the Lord could come between now and lunch today, if you have in your heart that yearning, longing desire that he should come, and that you should see him. Oh, I know there are reasons why. But you know, the times and the seasons aren't hid in unlocking the secrets of the pyramid, or the secrets of the Greek language, or anything else.

The times and the seasons are hidden in the Father's heart. And he could come. As far as I'm concerned, I'm just like Paul was, and Peter, and all the rest of them from that time until this, looking for that blessed hope.

Yearning, longing, waiting, expectancy, expectantly. And why? Well, if you do that, then you're quite certain of this. You're going to want to be where you ought to be, and thinking the way you ought to think, and saying what you ought to say, and doing what you ought to do, if you're living in the delightful anticipation that he will come.

I remember when we were children at home, and my mother was away, and my brother and I, and perhaps the neighbor kids, would do some things around the house. For instance, if we'd been to the circus, our living room was a marvelous trapeze center. And you could stand on the back of a club chair they had in the living room, and you could jump into it as though it were a trampoline.

There were lots of things we could do, as long as we knew she wouldn't be home. Yeah, we did that, right? In fact, the neighbor boys did too. We did that, yes, but not when she was due.

It was only when we knew she wouldn't be home. If we had the slightest thought that she was about ready, smooth the bed out, straighten the chairs up, Hi, Mom. Butter wouldn't melt in your mouth, you know what I mean? What was it? Well, we were... I think it's important for us to realize that he has not given to us any timetable done that I know of.

I don't see any reason why he can't come when he wants to, when he wishes to. So, as far as I'm concerned, this is all part of the same stream. The Lord that brings the grace of God, that brings salvation, teaches us to look for that blessed hope.

Yearning, longing, expecting, wanting him to come back, to see him face to face. But notice the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Now, the grace of God that brings salvation, and

here it is, the great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

So what we're finding then is that in this text, in this portion, we are confronted with the fact that in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and all authority in heaven and earth has been given unto him. And there's a man in the glory. Oh, I am so glad there's a man in the glory today.

That he died, and he was buried, and he was raised from the dead, and that he had emblems or symbols or the evidences of his death. He had nail wounds in his hand and a sword scar in his side, and nail-torn feet. Those are the only evidences of his sacrifice that he permitted to remain, that there's a man in the glory.

And that this great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, is coming again. Now, why do I dwell on that? Because there are heresies around. And you may encounter them.

I've found evidences that heresy is here in the Washington area. So just a little word as we pass. Looking for that glorious appearing in the great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Years ago, when I was pastor in New York, we had some people come to us that seemed to respond very enthusiastically to what I was teaching. And of course, like any other pastor, I welcomed them. They had disbanded the church up in some other part of New York City, and eight or ten families came to the tabernacle.

And I was very pleased. But, as time went on, I found that things weren't as they appeared to be. Oh, they gave lip loyalty to what I was teaching, but they were taking certain families home.

And they were teaching them, who is Christ? Do you know who Christ is? And if they were open and teachable, tell me, then they would tell them that Christ is Jesus and His body. Did you hear that? Christ, according to this heresy, out of England and out of China, Christ is Jesus and His body. Nothing from them.

And so when you press back, you find out these people said, He was sown a natural body, but raised a spiritual body. And that what Thomas saw was a theophany, not the presence of the resurrected Christ. And that the Spirit of Jesus was absorbed into the Godhead, and now Christ is Jesus and His body.

In other words, the elders of this church are Christ. They speak, the elders are the ones for... And so everybody in the church has to do... Well, death, union with Christ and His death means that you turn over to the elders the right to make all decisions in your life. Who you should marry or shouldn't marry, what you do with your business, what you do with your money.

What does it sound like to you? Sounds like a type of authoritarian thing, doesn't it? Oh, how many people have been caught up in this very subtle, dangerous, nefarious heresy. Over 20 people were in the tabernacle. Homes were broken up because Christ had said, this woman and this man, through the eldership, and broke up homes, broke up families, caused no end of carnage and misery and unhappiness.

What had happened? Remember, the Lord Jesus said, they will say, lo, here is Christ, lo, there is Christ. The great God and Savior Jesus Christ. Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

He went away, but not to stay. He is coming again. And when we see Him, we will know Him.

We will look upon Him who was pierced for our sins. And we will know Him because there is a man in the glory today, the eternal Son who became flesh and dwelt among us and went to the cross and died and went back with that resurrection body and is at the right hand of the Father and has all authority in heaven and earth. The great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

The grace of God that brings salvation teaches us that He is who He is. And protects us against being led away by subtle delusions and heresies and insinuations. So, it's not only a purifying hope, but it's a protecting hope.

Once you understand that He is coming again. The same Jesus that they saw as sin is coming. One of the leaders of this heresy out of Asia was in the home of Lyon's pastor and his wife.

And she said, oh brother, the expectation of the Lord's return is such a comfort to me. And he looked at her and said, but sister, the Lord has returned. He is here.

What do you mean? Well, what did I say according to the teaching? Christ is Jesus and His body. So, if that's the case, then Christ has returned in the form of the body. And she came to me and she said, brother, have you had any? I said, yes.

She and her husband. I said, we have a dossier that thick on that teaching that's come out of England and out of China. Because once the shepherd sees his sheep torn by wolves, even if he wasn't wise enough to keep the wolf out in the first place, you can be sure at least this under shepherd is going to make certain that the wolves don't get back to him.

He's going to get acquainted with the stratagems in the teachings and be able to warn others also. So, it's a protecting hope, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of whom? Of the great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He's coming again.

In all the glory of His resurrection time, He's coming again. Now, why? Who gave Himself for us? Who gave Himself for us? This great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, gave Himself for us. Gave Himself for us that He might purify unto Himself a peculiar, a purchased people, zealous of good works.

Now, let's go back in the text and see what happens. The grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts. You remember my five words over there? Awakening and conviction and repentance.

And we've said that repentance is denying ungodliness and worldly lusts. And ungodliness means no God but me. I'm going to do what I want to do.

And so, there's a point in time when that is repudiated, it's denounced, it's renounced, it's abandoned. And we call that point repentance. That change of mind about who's to rule, who's to be in charge, who's to be boss.

Now, that's the first thing that He does is to teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. That's the first thing. And that's why it's so extremely important that there should be revived again in these last 16 years of this century, if it's possible so to do.

A re-emphasis on the moral law and man's responsibility to the law. And the fact that repentance is necessary, a prerequisite to forgiveness and to pardon. Because that's the first thing God teaches us.

Look, if that has not been taught, if it has not been clearly established in the minds of those... Look, suppose you could have a company of saved people without repentance. Now, obviously it would be unscriptural, it would be unbiblical, it would make the Lord out. He said, accept your repentance, but let's assume for a moment that there could be forgiveness and pardon and salvation without repentance.

What would it mean? That would mean, here are people that are saved people, but I am still committed to governing my life, running my life, deciding how to satisfy my appetite, insisting that I am the boss, I am the ruler, I am God in my life, but I am forgiven and I am pardoned. And I can go on with this attitude. Now, let's go back.

He gave himself for us that he might save his people. Why did they call his name Jesus? That he might save his people in their sins? That isn't why they called him Jesus, was it? Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Not in them, but from them.

So, he gave himself for us that he might purify unto himself a purchased people. And so everything that he does has to be consistent with this purpose. It obviously has to be consistent.

If there were any inconsistency, the whole thing would fall apart. And it would make this scripture a non-entity. It wouldn't have any significance.

It would just be meaningless gibberish. The great God and Savior gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar purchased people, zealous of good works. Now, if he could save people apart from repentance, if they could be forgiven and pardoned while they're still determined to govern and rule and control, it would be like the courts allowing people with smoking guns going out and murder to continue to go out and murder on the populace simply because the judge has got a soft part for criminals.

No. No. When this murderer throws down his gun and says, Judge, I'm finished.

I'm through. I realize the enormity of my crime. You have to do anything that the law requires that you do to me.

I deserve it all, but I still am going to go on from this day on as a law-abiding person. The fact that his mind is changed about his past crimes doesn't in any sense pay for his past crimes. It doesn't make up for the responsibility of the law to be just and to impose justice.

Justice requires that he be punished. The fact that he has changed his mind predisposes the judge to some measure of mercy, but it can't absolve the crime nor the requirement of the law to carry out its sanctions. And so when a person repents, changes his mind about who's to be boss, who's to be king, who's to be sovereign, that isn't salvation by works.

All that is is a precondition for God to be merciful. But how is he saved? By repenting? No. The great God and Savior Jesus Christ gave himself in order that the justice of the law might be honored and that the holiness of God might be vindicated.

That's why there can be forgiveness, not because he repented, but because God's law has been vindicated, God's holiness has been vindicated, and government has been established, and so as a result, with repentance, predisposing or preparing this, because there's a change of attitude and faith, now there can be forgiveness and pardon and new life. But he didn't give himself, I mean, salvation wasn't to save people in their sin. He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a purchased people, zealous of good works.

So, once we understand that God's purpose in grace is not just to get people into heaven, not just to get people into heaven, God's purpose in grace is to get people into the right relationship with himself. And it begins with repentance, because the essence of sin is, I am going to live as if there were no God but me, and I'm going to be God. Now, as long as that attitude prevails, there's no possibility of pardon or forgiveness in eternal life.

There has to be this change of mind. Now, thus the grace of God that brings salvation teaches us that the great God and Savior Jesus Christ gave himself for us that he might purify unto himself a purchased people. Do you understand now what we're doing when we're talking? You think, I think, let me try to illustrate this way.

When I went to Africa, I think, as best I can know my heart, so many years ago, my purpose was to improve on the justice of God. I didn't think it was fair right cricket, if you please, for people to go to hell without a chance to be saved. And I felt that my duty was to go and warn them to flee from the wrath to come, and plead with them to take the gift of God's eternal life.

And I remember one day, all of a sudden, awakening to the fact that the people I was seeing and meeting and witnessing to and talking to in Africa were monsters of iniquity, and deserved God's wrath, and deserved to go to hell. That they were deliberate sinners. That the law of God had been written upon their hearts.

They'd never held a Bible in their hand. They'd never heard the Ten Commandments read. But they knew the law of God just as much as if they'd memorized the Ten Commandments in the old, shorter catechism.

Because, well, you're not surprised at that. Look what Romans 2 says, For when the pagans, the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written on their hearts. And they were human beings, and God wrote the law on their hearts.

And they had deliberately sinned against the law of God. Why did you choose? Why did you do it, I asked them. Because I wanted to, they said.

And I recall getting down alone in my bedroom and saying, God, I've been led down a garden path. This whole thing has been misrepresented to me. I thought these were poor, ignorant people that didn't know your law, and were just sinning, and were going to be lost.

Lord, these are just as bad as the people, the sinners I left back in Indiana and Minnesota. They deserve your wrath. They deserve anything you can do to them.

They're monsters of iniquity. My God, they're just as evil as I was. And all the people I tried to reach.

What am I doing here? Lord, these folks deserve your wrath. When I'd finished, as I found. Look, if you've got a problem with God, He knows it, so you better get honest with yourself and tell Him.

I just don't figure it. You can con people, but you can't con Him. So if you're going to be honest with anybody in the whole world, be honest with God.

And I was resigning as a missionary. Right then and there, I'm finished, I've had it, I'm done. This whole thing is misrepresented.

These aren't poor, ignorant people stumbling into hell. These are monsters of iniquity, rushing toward it with salivation and delight. They deserve your wrath.

And when I finished, and God, you get a word in edgewise, it seemed to me that deep within my heart, I never heard anything audibly. God's never spoken audibly to me. But I've had lots of clear impressions in my mind.

And it seemed to me that I was listening to a soliloquy in my mind, and it was like this. Did you not expect the judge of all the earth to do right? If these people are lost, and they are lost, it is because they deserve wrath and anger and judgment. I did not send you here to improve on my justice.

These people are just as evil and wicked and sinful as you were. And they deserve wrath and judgment just as much as you did. But I loved you, and I died for you.

And you heard of my love, and you repented, and you received me in forgiveness. Now, I didn't send you here to them because they deserved to hear. They don't deserve, didn't deserve to hear any more than you did.

I didn't need to let you hear the gospel in order for your justice and judgment to be complete. I let you hear the gospel because I loved you. And the reason I sent you here is because I love them.

You're not here because they deserve you or me. But I poured out my soul unto death. I gave myself for them.

Do not I deserve the reward of my suffering? You see, right from that moment, my whole ministry in Africa and elsewhere changed. No longer was I working because the sinner deserved it, but because the Savior deserves the reward of his suffering. That's what this verse teaches us.

These verses teach us that the great God and Savior gave Himself that He might redeem us and purify unto Himself a purchased people. We don't go to the sinner because they deserve anything. We go because He, He deserves.

Those two Moravian boys had heard about the island in the West Indies owned by a British planter who was an atheist who put a cell down on the wharf so that any preacher ever arrived that he would spend the night in that prison jail cell because he didn't want to have his good African slaves contaminated by religion. And two Moravian boys heard about it and they got in touch with a representative of the man in England and they so offered to sell themselves as slaves and go as lifelong slaves. And he said, I'll buy you but I won't pay anymore and I'll pay for an African man the same age.

So these two young men signed the papers and sold themselves and then said you'll have to pay your own way out. And so they paid their own way out to the island and were let off and became slaves. Why?

Because that was the only way the people in the island would ever have a chance to hear of Christ.

The day came when the Moravian friends in Germany gathered down at Hamburg at the port to see them go. You can imagine the tears knowing there would be no furlough and no return. They'd never see their loved ones again.

The two young men were at the stern of the ship as the canvas was unfurled and as the wind caught it the houses were cast off and the tide began to carry the vessel. Foggy day and as they were there they could hear the people singing down below on the wharf, the friends, and praying and weeping. And one of the young men with his arm around the shoulder of his companion raised his hand for silence.

And the people on the wharf became silent. And the last words they heard from these two young men were these, May the lamb that was slain receive the reward of his suffering. And that became the watchword of the Moravian.

That's what this text teaches us. The great God and Savior Jesus Christ gave himself that he might purify unto himself a purchased people. Zealous is a good word.

Father, that the grace of God that brings salvation may so teach us as it's taught others. And we may understand that we in turn may teach others also. Lord, that we could cooperate fully and completely with the Holy Spirit in this great work thou art doing in bringing to thy son this reward of his suffering, which is in the saints.

These will one day make up his body and will be unto him a bride, as lovely bride is adorned for her husband. Father, we thank you and we praise you that we have been made partakers of so great salvation. And we ask that thou will in turn enable us to teach others.

In Jesus' name and for his sake we ask. Amen.

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