

“The Believer’s Motivation”

Penetrating a Dark World

Titus 3:1-7

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Bruce: Men, let’s go quietly before the Lord and know that He is God. *(Music)*
What wondrous love is this,
O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this,
O my soul!

That You would send Your Son to die for us to redeem us from those things which we have committed against you in unholy treason. Father, we just pray that You would bring us awareness of Your grace and Your mercy this day, and remind us of the wondrous love that caused You to send Your Son to die for us for Your glory. And may it be so for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

Men: Amen.

Bruce: Let’s open up our Bibles, please, men, to Titus chapter 3. We’re looking at verses 3-7. You have an outline there on the desk. I’ll be reading from the English Standard Version. Titus chapter 3, and I’ll be reading from verses 1-7.

“Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

“But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior; so that being justified by His grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” This is the word of the Lord.

Men: Thanks be to God.

Bruce: Amen and Amen. Well Paul’s concern in these verses is to give us the reason why we can be different. He has been teaching us through the letter that he wrote to Titus to the people at Crete that they needed to be different in order to penetrate a dark environment, penetrating a dark world.

The thing that I love about Scripture so much is that not only does doctrine precede practice, but also it always gives the reason for your conduct. In other words, it not only says, “This is what you need to do,” but “Here’s how you can do it, and how it’s possible to do it.” That’s what we’re going to see in these verses today.

Now notice. There’s a contrast of the seven virtues in verses 1 and 2 with the seven vices of 3-7. Notice the difference. He gives us seven vices that we need to understand so that we can live out the seven virtues.

Now notice the seven virtues that are in verses 1 and 2. We talked about that last week. Those are the believer’s obligations. We have an obligation because of what Christ

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has done for us. And he gives us the obligation in the context of those seven virtues in verses 1-2. And then he goes through seven vices in verses 3-7 to remind us that this is what you used to be. Here’s how I want you to act. You can be different. But you’ve got to remember who you were.

And after these verses 1-2, which is the believer’s obligation, he now takes us through chapter 3, verses 3-7 and gives us *the believer’s motivation*. Here’s the motivation, the reason why you need to work on these seven virtues in verses 1 and 2. So there’s a huge contrast between these seven virtues and the seven vices.

Now you can organize these verses in several different ways. The believer’s motivation is this. *Forget not your past, function in the present, and focus on the future*. Forget not your past, function in the present, but focus on the future.

Now another way of looking at that would be this, the same outline. He says, “Remember who you were.” Then he says, “Remember who you are.” And then he says, “Remember who you will be.”

Another way of looking at it would be this. Three words describe those outlines I just gave you. The first one is *gratitude*. The second one is *grace*. And the third one is *glory*.

Now however you choose to organize it,—I just gave you three different ways—but they all fit together in this way, because it’s saying this. You’ve got to not forget your past. Remember who you were. And when you do that the response will be one word—*gratitude*, because you’re no longer that person anymore.

The next thing Paul tells us is this. *Function in the present*. That’s going to tell us who we are. And the one word that describes who we are is all of—

Participant: Grace.

Bruce: It’s all of grace. Then he says to *focus on the future*. This is who we will be. And that tells us about glory. Three great words that outline these verses for us, the believer’s motivation—gratitude, grace and glory.

Now Paul has already taught us in the things we’ve learned previously in chapter 2, that one of the things he encourages us to do that we need to apply in our lives is in chapter 2 verse 10—“*to show good faith so that in everything we may adorn the gospel of God.*” In other words, he’s saying that your good works are going to give evidence of your true saving faith. And by your good works you’re going to adorn, or make beautiful, the gospel of Christ. That’s chapter 2 verse 10.

He told us this previously. The way you demonstrate that is by three things—by your *conduct*, by your *conversation*, and by your *character*. The way that you and I adorn the gospel of God, or make the gospel beautiful, is through three things in our lives.

It is through our *conduct*, how we act, how we respond to situations. Secondly, it’s our *conversation*, how we communicate with each other verbally. How do we communicate with each other? What do we talk about? “*Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.*” One of the greatest barometers of our spiritual maturity is what we talk about. What words do I use?

And thirdly, it’s your *character*. Conduct, communication and character.

So let’s take a look at this motivation for us to be different in the world. Remember, we started off with these seven virtues. And the way that you’re going to understand how

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to live out these seven virtues is to really understand the motivation for how we do this. Forget not your past, function in the present, and focus on the future. Let’s explore this together. It’s a marvelous passage on motivation.

First of all, *forget not your past*—verse 3. These verses describe who we were before we became united with Christ. This is who you were before you became a Christian. This is who we were before union with Christ took over our lives. I want to describe this for you because it’s also what the world is like. This is what the world is like today apart from Christ—verse 3. It’s exactly who you and I were prior to our salvation. But it also describes what the world is without Christ. Men, this is what the world is like without Christ.

Verse 3. Let’s take a look at this item by item. First of all he says this. You were *“foolish.”* Now what does that mean? It means that we were without understanding. It means we were senseless. It means not only that we were ignorant, but by nature we were unable to discern the things of the Spirit. Because of our nature we were unable to distinguish the things of the Spirit. The summary verse for that is that we were foolish.

Here are some cross references for us. Look at 1 Corinthians 2:14. *“The natural person”*—the person apart from Christ, not in union with Christ—*“the natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are all spiritually discerned.”*

How about Romans chapter 1 verse 21? *“For although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, nor give thanks to Him, because they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”*

Men, that’s the way the world is. That’s exactly describing the world. That’s exactly describing who you and I were. It’s not who we are now, but who we were. Paul says, “Forget not your past.” You’ve got to remember where you came from.

How about Ephesians 4:18? *“They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.”* First of all, we were foolish. Men, the world is foolish.

Secondly, we were *“disobedient.”* We were disobedient to both divine and human authority, heeding neither the voice of our conscience nor the admonition of our parents, or the laws of civil magistrates.

Look at Titus 1:16. Here are a couple of other references to help us understand what it means to be disobedient.

Transcriber’s Note: Titus 1:16. *“They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.”*

Bruce: 2 Timothy 3:2. *“For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents.”* Where do we learn to be disobedient? It starts in the home by being disobedient to your parents. That’s what the world is like. *“Disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy.”*

Romans 1:30. *“Slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents.”* You see, or disobedience not only goes to civil authorities but to our parental authorities, as well as our spiritual authorities. We just have a spirit of being disobedient. That’s what the world is like.

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The world is just like these verses we’re describing. I mean that’s who you and I were before we were in union with Christ.

But it gets worse. This is just the beginning; it gets worse. We were “*led astray*.” The words mean *deluded*. It means to wander from the truth, living in a world of unreality, imagining that license is liberty, thinking that we have freedom and that license is liberty. We were just led astray by a world of unreality. Men, this describes what the world is like without Christ.

2 Timothy 3:13. “*While evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived*”,--led astray. You see, when we considered ourselves to be free, we were really slaves because of our sin. That’s who we were.

We’re told that we were “*slaves to various passions and pleasures*.” That means allowing these strong evil desires to dominate our lives and to dictate our conduct.

2 Timothy 3:6 is a good cross reference. “*For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sin and led astray by various passions.*”

Luke 8:14. “*And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their own way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.*”

James 4. “*What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this: that your passions are at war within you? You ask and you do not receive because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.*” We spend it on our passions.

Here’s a quote about these verses from one of my Puritan friends. “*The world apart from Christ passes in review.*” He’s saying that this is what you see in Titus chapter 3 verse 3. The world is just being passed in review of us. It’s what the world looks like apart from Christ.

“*The world apart from Christ passes in review. And what a sorry spectacle it is! Now here we come*”—describing us—“*the glutton and the topper, the miser and the spendthrift, the madcap and the dotard, the sports worshiper and the sluggard, the fraud and the fop, the sadist and the rapist, the tiger and the wolf. Some serve one master, some another. But by nature all are enslaved to those terrible drives which they have never learned to control. And according to some modern psychologists, they should not even try to do so.*”

That’s what the world is like, friends. That’s the world that you and I have been called into to make a difference and to adorn the gospel of God by our conduct, by our conversation and by our character.

There’s another one. We’re told in the Scripture that “*passing our days*” is one of these seven vices. Literally, that means leading a life of malice and envy, leading a life understood with malice and envy.

Now this malice that he’s referring to is not mere mischief, as with malice towards some. It’s much more than that. Malice means badness, perversity, wickedness, especially the evil disposition of the mind. You see, malice is the evil disposition of the mind.

One of the most destructive, soul-destroying manifestations is *envy*, an evil which, as the probable etymology of the Greek word implies, causes one to waste away. Envy causes one to waste away.

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Proverbs 14:30. Listen to this about what envy can do to a person. *“A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot.”*

Our English word *envy* is taken from the Latin word *invidia*, meaning *to look against*. And so it means to look with ill will at another person because of what he has or who he is. It means to look at them with ill will. That’s what envy is.

Jealousy is being afraid of losing what you have. Envy hates to see another person have something that you don’t have. There’s a difference between jealousy and envy. Jealousy says, “I don’t want to lose what I have.” Envy says, “I’m angry with what you have because I don’t have it.”

That’s what the world is like, men! But that’s who you and I were prior to being in Christ, prior to the wondrous love of God. That’s who we were.

It is envy which caused the murder of Abel and threw Joseph into a pit. It made Saul pursue David and gave rise to the bitter words which the older brother said in the parable of the prodigal son. And it crucified Christ. Remember the words of Pilate in Matthew 27:18. *“For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered Christ to him.”* It was out of envy.

And we’ve got two more that we need to look at: *“hated by others.”* That word means *detestable, odious, fulsome, offensive, disgusting, repulsive.* This is the only time in the New Testament that this word is used and it occurs right here—*“hated by others.”*

It means that the unconverted sinner by means of his attitude toward God and man causes loathing. And as a result of that, we hate one another. The Scripture says, *“hating one another.”* This is the natural result when detestable people in their natural state come together and relate to each other. Yes, Don?

Don: Now Bruce, how would you respond to somebody who the world would say is a pretty nice guy, but not a believer? “Well, I never hated anybody,” they would say.

Bruce: That’s interesting. *(Laughter)* You’re not going to convince them of anything.

Don: Right.

Bruce: All you can do is just say that’s an interesting comment, because there is nothing you can do to change that person apart from what?

Men: Grace.

Bruce: Grace! Pray for the grace of God. We’re going to get into a conversation next week and the next couple of weeks about how you handle those situations that Don is talking about, because you don’t want to get involved in quarrels. You don’t deal with needless speculation and other things of that nature. You just don’t get involved in that discussion because you can’t change that person’s mind. So we’ll learn how to do that more effectively later.

Now one of the things that Paul is teaching us, men, is this. And the reason I want to go through this so critically is that it is so important for us. Just as I described what the world is like without Christ, such we were at one time. That’s who we were.

So I think that one of the applications is this. Don’t be so hard on people who are still in that condition.

Participant: Amen.

Bruce: Because you and I were just like that apart from the grace of God.

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Participant: Amen.

Bruce: We can’t take a high road approach and say, “I’m not like that anymore.” We need to grieve. We need to pray for that person. We need to have sorrow for them. We need to be involved in sharing Christ with them. You see, he is describing what the world is like without Christ, and we need to have pity on those people—sorrow because of their condition in their natural state. We do something so that we can make a difference and so we can adorn the gospel of God by what? By our conduct, by our conversation and by our character.

Remember your old life before you were saved. Paul tells us this. This will help you understand your unsaved friends a bit better and have pity on them and pray for them.

This is what the world is like, men. That’s what the world is offering us. And in the midst we’re called to be different, to penetrate a dark world.

Now humanly we can control the power of the atom. But we cannot control passions and envy and malicious tongues. We can keep a little child alive outside the womb by marvelous technology. But we cannot keep God’s commandments.

This is the old life. We see it all around us. Forget not your past.

But it is possible, as Paul tells us, to be different. For God has built a bridge into a new life in Christ Jesus. He makes it possible for us to be different. The bridge to a new life is all of God’s construction. It’s all of God.

Paul tells us that it was God’s mercy that brought about God’s motives, and results in God’s method of changing lives. It’s His mercy that is the motive for changing lives.

Notice this. Man destroys in verse 3. But something wonderful occurs in verse 4. *“When the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Savior appeared,”* something happened. It was all of God. Man kills in verse 3, but God saves in verse 5. That’s the bridge.

Men, never forget your past, because when you go from verse 3 to verse 5, the only legitimate response we can have is gratitude, because I’m no longer there. That’s what I used to be.

I grew up in Fairmont, W.Va. Years ago, when I came back to Pittsburgh, I drove back to my home town. My folks were both deceased. And I just went back and I had to look at the three houses I lived in as a child because I never wanted to forget my past. Not that I was trying to escape it, but I never wanted to forget my past and the sacrifices that my parents made for me in those three houses.

And I just went to one house and I knocked on the door and talked to those people. And I said, “May I introduce myself? I used to live here when I was three years old.” And I went to the second house and I said, “May I introduce myself? I used to live here when I was fifteen.” And at the last one, “May I introduce myself? I used to live here when I was twenty-one.”

You see, I just didn’t want to forget what my parents had done for me. That’s the point that Paul is making here. You and I have certain obligations, to live out these seven virtues in Titus chapter 3, verses 1 and 2. We’re called to live out those seven virtues. But you can never do that if you don’t remember your past, and remember what happened and what God did for us, the bridge that He made from verse 3 to verse 5, because you’ve

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got to remember this: that the world kills; man kills. But God saves. And men, our response is this—gratitude.

The second thing to motivate us is this. *Function in the present*—verses 4 and 5. Now these verses tell us who we are in Christ. I just spent some time telling you what the world is like apart from Christ and what you and I were apart from Christ. Now he goes into this bridge and says that because God does something,--He saves us; man kills in verse 3; God saves in verse 5. Now he says, “This is who you are.” You don’t function in your past. You don’t forget your past; you’ll always be grateful so that you can function in your present.

Salvation came not only because of God’s kindness and love, but also because of His mercy. It’s because of this men: you cannot save yourself. If it were not for the mercy of God, you and I would be functioning in our past. But we do not do that anymore because of God’s marvelous grace.

He saved us. He sent His only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the epitome of God’s love, kindness and mercy. He sent Him to us to take our sins away and to deal with them at Calvary. And while sin was taking us to the destination of eternal hell, God intervened because of His mercy. It was God’s move. It was God’s love. It was God’s mercy that saved us.

In verse 3 man kills. In verse 5 God saves. Jesus came and saved us singlehandedly, without any help from us. He dealt once and for all with all of our sin and all the consequences, and set us free to live our lives on a totally new basis. And by our conduct, our conversation and our character we can adorn the doctrine of God. By His atoning death in our place all of our sins past, present and future are paid for. We’ve been reconciled with God. We are fully forgiven.

Forget not your past, but function in your present—who we are. His motive was mercy. We were not rescued because we deserved it, but because God’s motive for doing it was pure love and pure mercy.

What wondrous love is this,
O my soul, O my soul!

Now the mercy of God is equivalent to His faithful covenant of loving-kindness. It is dependent upon His unshakable faithfulness alone, and nothing else. This is the origin of our salvation in Christ. It’s God’s unshakable faithfulness.

So here we see the method. It’s the miracle of the new birth. It’s the work of the Holy Spirit. Look at verses 5 and 6. *“He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.”*

Now this work of the Holy Spirit is called *regeneration*. The Spirit first works by regenerating the soul. He makes us alive and no longer dead in our trespasses and sins.

Next, notice what he says. Not only were you first regenerated by the work of the Holy Spirit. The heart of stone was removed and the heart of flesh was given to you. Now you have a different desire. You have the willingness to be willing because of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, an internal cleansing. Next he says that we’re

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justified. He declares us righteous because of the finished work of Christ. Not only does He regenerate us, giving us new life in Christ. He now says, “I look at you differently. You’re going to get credit for the sinless perfection and perfect obedience of Christ that He finished on the cross. That’s who I say you are now.” That’s who you are. It’s not who you were, but who you are.

The next thing we notice in these verses is *adoption*. First of all you see that there is regeneration. Then there is justification. And then there’s adoption. He adopts us into His own family, the family of God, a people of His own possession.

And next, *He sanctifies us*. It’s the work of the Holy Spirit, freeing us from the power of sin and setting us apart to be holy.

Now men, this is who God says we are in Christ. Take a moment to look at the contrast. Here’s who He says you are in Christ. You’re regenerated! You’re justified! You’re adopted! And you’re sanctified! That’s who you and I are now.

Look at the contrast! In verse 3 man kills. In verse 5 God saves. He now says, “Function in this reality.” Here’s the reality of your new life in Christ. You were regenerated by an act of the Holy Spirit. God gave you new life in Christ. That is not something you can do on your own. You were passive in regeneration. It is done by God alone. In regeneration God acts alone. You had nothing to do with that.

In our conversion we are active and we believe. But in regeneration God alone acts. You and I were passive in our regeneration.

Then He justified us. Because He regenerated us and gave us new life in Christ, He says, “I’m going to give you the accomplishment of the finished work of Christ at the cross. You are now sinlessly perfect and perfectly obedient. That’s how I view you.”

That does not mean, men, that we live a sinlessly perfect life. It means that you get credit for one. You get credit for His sinless perfection. You get credit for His perfect obedience. That’s how God views you. Function in the present reality of being regenerated, of being justified. Then He adopts us into a family. We’ve been adopted into the family of God’s own possession. Why did He save us? Because He wanted to create a people for His own possession. That’s who we are. We’re adopted into the family of God.

And lastly, he says this. You’re sanctified. The Holy Spirit is going to continue to work in your life and free you from the power of sin and help you become holy, so that you can do good works to adorn the doctrine of God by our conduct, by our conversation and by our character. You see, God does that for us. We need to function in our present reality.

Forget not your past, men. But function in the present reality of who we are. We are regenerated. We are justified. We’re adopted. And we are sanctified.

We’ve also become reborn. A new life has been planted within us. It’s not simply an earthly life. It’s a new life from heaven. The powerful Holy Spirit has taken up residence in us, men. God is no longer simply God above—the Father, or even Christ with us—the Lord Jesus. But God is in us—the Holy Spirit.

So men, we need to function in the reality that we have a new heart. And we have a new desire. We have a new status. We have a new relationship and a new future. And it is all of—

Men: Grace.

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Bruce: Grace! It’s all of grace! The reason that you don’t forget your past is because it will motivate you to be grateful. When we understand who we are in Christ, it will help us to understand that it is all of grace.

God’s love to you is always the same. He cannot love you more. God cannot love you more. And He will not love you less. Do you understand that because of who you are? God cannot love you more. He cannot do that. But He will never love you less.

A dear friend of mine, Dr. Don Kistler, made this statement recently in a sermon. It was about Christ in the book of Hebrews. Christ saves us to the uttermost. Here’s what my friend Don said. *“The Bible never tells us that we can sin to the utmost. As sinners, there is always room for our de-provement.”* (Laughter)

Participant: Wow!

Bruce: *“You never yet have been all the sinner that you can be. But Christ has never been anything less than the Savior that He can be. He’s better at what He does better than I am at what I do at my best.”*

Friends, we need to be very, very grateful that the Lord Jesus Christ is a better Savior than you and I are sinners. It’s all of grace.

Function in your present, men. Don’t dig up the past. The only reason you think about your past is to be—

Men: Grateful.

Bruce: Grateful. Be grateful. That’s not who I am anymore. That is not me. And the real battleground is this. *“Do not be conformed to the system of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.”* Transform yourself by remembering this. I’m regenerated. I’m justified. I’m adopted. I’m sanctified. It’s all of grace. Function in that reality.

The real battleground is this, men. Who are you going to believe? Are you going to believe what the world says, what you were? Or are you going to believe what God says, who you are? Forget not your past, so you’ll be grateful. But function in your present, because it’s all of grace.

And lastly, *focus on the future*—verse 7. Our former state, described in verse 3, has ended. It’s over. The blessings described now in verses 4-5 have been and are being received. Their purpose and result is now stated for us in verse 7. You see, men, verse 3 is ended. And the blessings that you receive because of God’s grace are described in verses 4-6. And the purpose of that grace is now revealed to us in verse 7.

Our future, as a result of God’s saving work, is that Christians have been reborn by the Spirit. And this rebirth means that something has already happened to you. Something has already happened to us. But it also points to something that will happen to us. Something has happened, but something will happen to us because we’ve been reborn by the Spirit. And we see that in verse 7. *“So that, being justified by His grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”*

Heirs of the hope of eternal life, we’re told. That’s what we focus on. That’s our future.

So what is the result of the kindness and love and mercy and grace of God? It’s hope. It’s hope that we are heirs of God. And the believer has been justified. That means we

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have a new status of being totally forgiven and counted as righteous in God’s sight. And we have become heirs of the hope of eternal life. We’ve been accepted as God’s children in God’s family. We have a new relationship with God as our Father. Because of this we are able to look forward with certainty to the future, heaven and eternal life that God promises to those who follow the Lord Jesus Christ and believe.

This means today, men, that we can draw from all of His resources, the riches of when He comes. And we shall share in His wealth. When He comes, we will share in them because we are heirs with Christ. We have been *“transferred from the dominion of darkness into the kingdom of the Son He loves”*, as Paul wrote to the church at Colossae. We’ve been transferred from the dominion of darkness into the kingdom of the Son He loves.

Here’s how 1 John describes that future. *“Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared. But we know that when He appears we shall be like Him.”*

We shall be like him. Forget not your past. Be grateful. Function in the present. It’s all of grace. But focus on the future, because one day, men, in the process of our earthly life we are going to be like Him.

Participant: Amen.

Bruce: We’re going to be like Him. You see, men, it’s this. We now live in grace. But we will soon live in glory. We live in grace now, but we will live in glory.

Now when we take stock of all that Paul has taught us, the fact that we have a new heart, a new power, a new desire, a new status, a new relationship, and we also have a new future, all of this adds up to the newness of life that we have because of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. And we can be different from other people. We can be different because of God’s grace.

Now this does not mean that we will be perfect in this life. That’s not what I’m saying. We have not arrived in heaven yet. It does mean that when we have the resources to fight against the sin of this world, we will make progress and be different from the world. And we will make a penetration in a dark world because of God’s grace.

The Puritans had a great view of heaven. That’s one of the reasons that we spend so much time talking about them now, and the great impact they had upon the world. Here are a couple of comments about focusing on the future.

From Matthew Henry. *“Our duty as Christians is always to keep heaven in our eyes and the earth under our feet.”* Keep heaven in your eyes and the earth under your feet.

Thomas Watson. *“No man can go to heaven who has not set his heart there beforehand.”*

And Obadiah Sedgwick. *“The more of heaven we cherish, the less of earth we covet beforehand.”*

Now men, how do I draw this to a conclusion? I told you before when we started this that this is the believer’s motivation for us to accomplish the believer’s obligation in verses 1 and 2, those seven virtues in chapter 3, verses 1 and 2. So what is it that really motivates us? What is it that motivates us to penetrate the darkness of this world? Is it something that you must achieve? Or is it something you have received?

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Participant: Received.

Bruce: It’s something we have received. And what is that? That is your salvation. You see, Paul’s summary statement is this. If you want to make an impact in the world, you’ve got to realize that you’ve been given all the equipment you’ll ever need because of your salvation. That’s the point Paul is making. Your motivation is an understanding of your salvation.

Now here’s a summary of what he writes in these verses to remind us of the need of our salvation, but also to remember it. The motivation for us to do anything is gratitude for our salvation that was given to us by grace because we know we will live in glory.

So here is what we need to remember: our salvation. First of all, *the need for salvation* in verse 3, our treason against God.

Secondly, *the source of our salvation* in verse 4. God alone is the source of our salvation.

The basis of our salvation is verse 5—mercy. *The means of our salvation* is verses 5 and 6—regeneration; new life in Christ.

The goal of our salvation is verse 7—heirs with Christ. And *the evidence of our salvation*, verse 8—good works.

What motivates us to have good works to penetrate a dark world to the glory of Christ?

Participant: Grace.

Bruce: It’s remembering your salvation. Men, just remember your salvation. And when you and I remember our salvation, we are motivated by gratitude, grace and glory. Our conduct will be different from the rest of this world. Our conversation will be different from the rest of this world. And our character will be different from the rest of this world. And we can penetrate a dark world for the glory of God. Don’t forget your salvation!

Let’s pray. Father, this is so practical, so powerful, so logical, so clear. And yet we make it so difficult. Father, help us not to forget our past, that we will always be motivated by gratitude. Help us to function in the present so that we know that it’s all of grace. But have us also look forward to focusing on the future. We now live in grace and we will soon live in glory. And may it be so, Father, that those three things will always remind us of the motivation for us to do good works. It’s remembering our salvation in Christ Jesus. And may it be so for His sake. And all the Brave Men said, “Amen!” (*Applause*)