

Realities To Remember

Titus 3:1-8

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Paul is giving us, in the book of Titus, instruction on belief and behavior. If I were gonna give a title to the book of Titus, I would call it: The Behavior of Belief or Belief and Behavior. In every one of the chapters of Titus (there are only three), he talks about that. In Titus 1, it is the belief and behavior in the church. In Titus 2, it is then the belief of behavior in the home. In Titus 3, it is the belief and behavior in the world or in society. That's kind of a neat way to understand and remember the book of Titus (three chapters)—what we believe and how we behave in the church, what we believe and how we behave in the home in the family, and what we believe and how we behave in society.

It's interesting though, in Titus he first tells us how to behave, and then he gives us the doctrinal basis for that behavior. Normally, in the epistles of Paul, he starts with the doctrine and goes to the duty or the principles and the practice, but he moves it around here in Titus and talks about how we behave and then how we should believe.

We come to Titus 3, and the pattern of chapter three is the same as that of chapter 2. It begins with ethical instructions on how Christians are to behave in a non-Christian world. Then, he grounds that behavior in Christian belief. I want you to look at verse 1 for just a moment. He says, "Put them in mind," stop right there. He says remind them. Who's them? It's the believers on the island of Crete. I want you to remind these Christians. Basically, what we have from verses 1-8 are some reminders. You know, one of the things we have problems with is forgetting, especially if you're getting old. How many old people up there forget? I remember walking in a store one time and I get in the store and I'm looking around and thought, Why did I come in here? I actually forgot why I came in the store. Now, that's a scary thought, you know. It's like, "Who am I? Why am I here? What am I doing? Why did I come into this store?" In our spiritual life we tend to forget, so we need to be reminded. Paul tells Titus, who is the pastor on an island in the Mediterranean known as Crete. He's writing to him, telling him, to remind the believers. Then he grounds their behavior in what they should believe.

Now, when Paul says (verse 1), "Put them in mind," or to remind them, in the Greek it's actually in what's called the present tense. It's what's called the present imperative. That means he's commanding Titus—he's not giving him an option—"I want you to do this," and he tells him, "I want you to do it continually, ongoingly, and habitually." If you come very long to this church, you're going to hear me repeat myself. If I'm teaching the Word of God, you're not going to hear anything new because if it's true, it's not new; if it's new, it's not true. You're going to hear things repeated. You're going to hear the truth of God's Word, but it's important for us to get it down, understand it, and to have that repetition. One of our great dangers is, like Israel, they forgot God. They came out of the Exodus of Egypt, got settled in the Promised Land flowing with milk and honey and blessings, and what did they do? They forgot that God redeemed them with a strong arm.

I love what John Stott says. He says, "So also today for pastors and Bible teachers, need to be delivered from the unhealthy lust for originality, take pains to make old truths new and stale truths fresh." I love that. A lot of preachers want originality, "I have a Word from the Lord for you," and "I just heard from God, and I've got some new insight," rather than, "Let's open the Bible and let God speak through what He has spoken, His Word."

What did Paul want Titus to remind the believers on Crete of and us? Three realities (write them down). First, they were to remember their civil obligations. They were to remember that though they were citizens of heaven, they right now still lived on earth. I guess this is kind of good in light of the Fourth of July tomorrow, that we have a civil responsibility to our government and the powers that be to be obedient. I want you to notice this in verses 1-2. "Put them in mind," and here's the first thing, "to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, 2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers," it's a good idea if Christians don't go around getting into fights all the time and punching people out, "but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men." As Christians, we are citizens of heaven, but until we go to heaven, we also have dual citizenship upon earth.

Now, I've mentioned it before, but I'll mention it again. The Bible teaches that government is ordained of God. Now, there isn't a form of government ordained of God, but government is ordained of God. There are three divine institutions. The first is the family, and that's the building block of all society—as goes the family, so goes government, and so it affects the church. The other divine institution is government, and the third is the church. Those are three divine institutions. God has established marriage as a foundation for all society. He's established government to punish evil and reward good doers. I don't know about you, but I'm glad I live in a nation where there are laws, where it's illegal to murder, rob people, beat people up, and we have Police Departments. If you have a problem and need help, you should be able to call the Police Department and they can help you. You can be thankful for that. Then, we have the church. We should all be committed to and praying for a church that we're a part of, a local fellowship that we identify with. If you're a part of Revival Christian Fellowship—this is your fellowship, your church, you're a part of it—you pray, serve, give, and work together for the glory of God to build up and strengthen His church and to spread the gospel message.

Write down Romans 13:1. Paul says, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Write down 1 Timothy 2:1-2. It says that we should pray for all that are in authority. Now, I know that that's sometimes difficult. Maybe we don't like who is in authority or the people that are in government, but we should pray for them and should not be in rebellion toward them. Paul puts our civil obligations (and I know this is a challenge but it does apply to us today) into two categories: our obligation toward rulers or civil authorities and then he broadens it (verse 2) to all mankind. Look at verse 1 with me. First of all, we are to be subject to all that are in authority. "...be subject to principalities and powers," that's so important. Be subject is a statement of we are to be voluntarily choosing to submit ourselves to the civil authorities, the powers that be. I just read Romans 13:1, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

Now, I know there are corrupt policemen. I know there are corrupt politicians, yet God has given them to us for two main purposes: to restrain evil and to reward good. I heard of a pastor that was late one Sunday, speeding on his way to church...not me, but that has happened. Whenever I'm driving too fast to try to get to church, inevitably there is a car in front of me with a Revival sticker on it, and I think, Oh, I can't pass them because they might see me flying by. This policeman pulled this pastor over and he said, "I'm a pastor. I'm a man of God. I'm a servant of God. You don't want to give me a ticket, do you?" The police officer said, "I'm a servant of God, and the Bible says go to the highways and byways and bring them in, so I'm taking you in." Thank God for the police! Now, I know that when they pull you over and write you a ticket you don't say, "Thank you, officer, I praise God for you!" That's really how we should respond because your speeding might've caused an accident which would cause somebody to get harmed, so we have speeding laws for a reason. I know there are laws we don't like. I see road signs that I think are stupid, yet they are there for us and we must obey. As Christians, we are not to be in rebellion toward our government.

Just a little footnote, by the way, when Paul wrote these words, guess who was in power? The Roman government, and guess who was the emperor? Nero. He was the most wicked, vile person in history, so antichrist and anti-Christian. Paul is writing even though they are under the Roman rule and Nero was running the show. We are to be subject to the powers that be.

Now, that's to a degree, and I want to make a footnote here. Whenever the government demands of us to do something that is contrary to God's Word or God's commands, we have a responsibility to obey God rather than man (Acts 5:28); but don't use that as an excuse, "Well, I know I'm speeding on this highway, but God told me that I need to go fast." No, God did not tell you to go fast. If God says, "Thou shalt not lie," and the government tells us to lie, or the Bible does say, "Thou shalt not murder," I believe that is an application to abortion. You may not be getting an abortion, and there's an understanding there that you're not obligated or required to do that, but when the Bible tells us something is sinful, we should not be doing that in disobedience to God—we must obey God rather than man. The Bible tells us to go into all the world and preach the gospel, and if a government says, "No, you can't come here. This is illegal. You can't preach the gospel," we must obey God rather than man. We need to take the gospel to those that are perishing. I just wanted to bring that up. It's a whole other subject about being obedient to God even though the government may direct you a different way.

Notice the second thing we're supposed to do is obey. He says in verse 1 that we should, "...be subject to principalities and powers," and we need, "to obey magistrates," verse 1. We need to be obedient, law-abiding citizens not anarchists, not joining these riots in the street that are anti-government trying to create havoc in our government. Thirdly, in verse 1, we are, "to be ready to every good work," or deed. We're to be ready to roll up our sleeves and fulfill our civil duties and responsibilities and to be salt and light to the world that is around us. We're to be law-abiding, public-spirited, eager to do whatever is good. The purpose of the state, as I said, is to punish evil and promote good; and I believe that Christians should be involved, committed, and engaged in praying, voting, and participating. We are blessed to live in a country where you have a vote, a democratic society, and you're able to vote and be involved, but we need to obey

God as well.

I want you to notice the second verse. Paul broadens this to all men at the end of verse 2, but notice that we're not even, "To speak evil of no man, to be brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men," all men means all men. Break it down with me for just a moment. Paul says negatively, "To speak evil of no man." We get our word blaspheme there. It means not to slander, so we're not to be putting people down and calling them names, bad-mouthing people. It's a bad witness. It's wrong to slander God or man. Then he says, "to be no brawlers," and the word means contentious or that you should be a peacemaker. The negative there actually is you're not to go around fighting with people. Don't get into road rage and get in a fight with somebody. There's the positive in verse 2, "but gentle," and considerate, "shewing all meekness," meek, and show courtesy—to be gentle and considerate, show clemency, to be conciliatory, to get along with people, not to fight with people or to be obstinate with others, to show meekness. Jesus was meek. We want to be like Jesus and show courtesy.

Who do we show it to? All men (end of verse 2). I emphasize that because that's important to see. It's not just Christian people, it's not just people of our own color skin, our own religion or race, our own social status, but it's to be all people. That's universal. Christians are to hate no one. Christians are to fight with no one. Christians are to be opposing no one. Now, it doesn't mean that we don't confront people with truth. It doesn't mean that we don't speak the truth in love, but we're not trying to be confrontational and hateful. I think there are times when Christians sometimes become hateful toward unbelievers instead of loving them with God's love. There's a difference between love and approval, and by no means do we approve of things that God describes as sinful, yet we should be loving toward people because God loves them. As I said, I know this is difficult, but remember in Titus 2:10, Paul mentioned the fact that we're to adorn the doctrines of God. What he's saying in verses 1-2 is that if you are a good citizen, law-abiding, that you're not fighting with people. You're gentle and meek, and you get along with others. You become a person who adorns the doctrine of God. If we want to witness to others and win others to Jesus, then we need to be these kind of individuals in our public life.

There's a second remembrance, we're to remember our civil obligations; but thirdly, we're to remember our former condition. Now, interesting that this verse appears here because he just told us that we're to be kind to everyone, even unbelievers. We're not to be mean, cruel, or harsh toward non-Christians, and what he does is remind us (verse 3) of how we used to be, how we used to live before we were saved so that we would have compassion, kindness, and show mercy and love on unbelievers. Look at it, verse 3. He says, "For," which indicates the reason or rationale or because, "we ourselves also," referring to we believers, "were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." He reminds us of what we used to be.

There's a balance here. You want to be careful that you don't dwell on your former unconverted days too much. Sometimes satan will try to remind you of them and tell you God doesn't love you, God hasn't forgiven you. You need to remember that you're forgiven, you're a child of God, they're washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, you are complete in Christ and forgiven. But when

it comes to looking at the sinful world around you, sometimes even being a Christian a long time, we start losing our compassion and love for the unbelievers and become critical of them. We become judgmental and fault-finding, "Well, look at that person." I solemnly confess, one time I was kind of capping on an individual and my wife said, "You know, you actually looked like that before you were saved." I thought, Oh, don't remind me. Sometimes we're like, "Oh, those wicked sinners. They're so bad. They're so terrible." Have you forgotten how you lived, how you talked, how you walked, how you acted before you were saved? Sometimes we think, I can't believe they act that way or they talk that way. Yeah, that's the way you and I lived before we were even saved. Paul reminds them before salvation their behavior was sinful and antisocial. It doesn't mean that non-Christians are always antisocial. Sometimes they can have great manners and be very kind, but as a general rule, the unbelieving world are hateful and hating one another.

I want you to look at it here in this passage. We see human life and behavior without the saving grace of God. Let's break it down. In verse 3, "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient," it speaks of our mental state and moral behavior. We didn't understand the things of God, and we were living in moral sin and wickedness. We were living like fools. Notice, secondly, we were deceived and enslaved in all kinds of passions and pleasures. An interesting passage which so graphically describes the dark life that we lived before we were converted. Thirdly, we were, "living in malice and envy." Malice is wishing people evil, while envy is resenting and coveting their good—both disrupt human relationships. So many people go around today and they want to hurt someone. We have a whole generation of people today that are just angry, filled with malice, and just want to hurt someone. You change a lane on the freeway in front of them, and they want to hurt you. You do something, you look at them wrong, and they want to hurt you, they want to do harm to you. They're filled with malice. Then, there are those that are envious of others and the good things that they have.

Fourthly, notice, "hateful, and hating one another." That's one of the common things of the world, "Oh, I hate her," or "Oh, I hate him." You hear that all the time. "Oh, I hate that guy," or "I hate that person," or "I hate that," or "I hate that person there." I grew up in a Christian home and my dad and mom always would not allow us to say we hated something or we hated people. You know, "You don't say hate, John, that's not nice." Now, the Christian is to hate evil, but you love the sinner and you hate the sin. Amen? What happens is we start transferring our hatred to the sinner, "Oh, they're messing up the world and they're doing this and they're doing that," and we forget that we were in darkness at one time and that we were living like that, so you want to be very careful that you don't start hating the sinner but that you love them at the same time disapproving of their sinful behavior. As I said, this is society apart from knowing the Savior Jesus Christ. They don't know the grace of God, and for certain this should not be a part of us as the church. The church should not be living the way it's described in verse 3.

Now, our former life was the opposite of how we are to live today. Again, to quote John R.W. Stott, he said, "Thus a deliberate antithesis seems to be developed between the kind of people Christians should be [3:1-2] and the kind of people we once were [3:3]. It is a contrast between submissiveness and foolishness, between obedience and disobedience, between a readiness

to do good and an enslavement by evil, between kindness and peaceableness on the one hand and malice and envy on the other, between being humble and gentle and being hateful and hating.” What a contrast he paints between verses 1-2 and the way we lived in verse 3. Now, here’s the question, before we move to verses 4-8: How do we get out of verse 3? What happened to us that changed the way we lived? We were living (verse 3), “...foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving,” our lusts, our desires, and living for “pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.” What happened to us? Well, here it is, the third thing to remember (verses 4-8), we are to remember our great salvation.

This is so apropos with communion tonight—remember your salvation. Remember your civil obligations, remember your former condition, and, thirdly, remember your great salvation. Let’s read it. Follow with me, verse 4. “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour,” just real quick, lest I forget, verses 4-7 is one sentence in the Greek and written in poetic structure. It’s written with a short series of statements, and it’s one of the great pithy, amazing statements of the Bible. It’s described in verse 8 as a faithful saying. He says, “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly,” or whom, referring to the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God,” here it is, “might be careful to maintain good works,” there’s the belief and the behavior. If you believe in God, you gotta be careful to maintain good works, not for salvation but for a witness to the watching world. “These things are good and profitable unto men.”

The answer to leaving the old life found in verse 3, in the foolishness and disobedience, is found in verse 5 in the statement, notice it, “...he saved us.” Now, I’m going to go back to verse 4, but I want you to notice just that statement, “he,” meaning God, “saved us.” Did you know that you can’t save yourself? Can the Ethiopian change his skin color or the leopard his spots? The answer is no. Can you pull yourself up by your own bootstraps? The answer is no. You can’t save yourself, so we were disobedient, we were depraved, we were living in sin and darkness, hating one another, but after that the, “...love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,” and verse 5, “...he saved us.”

Paul, in verses 4-7, gives a full and comprehensive statement on salvation. The heart of Christianity is that God sent His Son to save us, something we could not ever do ourselves. I love when the angels were declaring to the shepherds in Bethlehem the night Jesus was born, “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,” not a politician, not a philosopher, not a military leader, not a scientist, a Savior. Why? Because the world needed saving. Amen? So, God sent a Savior. As we break bread tonight and drink the cup, we’re celebrating that God sent His only begotten Son that we might be saved through Him. In 1 John 4:14, “...the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.”

Now, I can’t tarry on these, so don’t freak out. I have six points from this passage in speaking

of the ingredients of salvation. The first is the need of salvation from verse 3 (we already looked at it). Because we were foolish and disobedient and because we were deceived, because we were serving different lusts and pleasures, we were living in malice and envy and being hated and hating others, we were sinners who needed to be saved. There's a lot of people in the world today that do not think they need a Savior. That's sad. What a blessing it is when God shows you your sin and your need of a Savior. There is a need for men to be saved.

Notice the source of our salvation (verse 4). "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared." Back in Titus 2:13, it talked about Him appearing in His first advent, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," and now we have another epiphany, an appearing, when He came and took on humanity. He came to save us. What was the source of our salvation? "...the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared," toward sinful man, I might add—while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Do you know what the source of your salvation is? God's own heart—God's love, God's mercy, God's grace, and God's kindness. I love that amazing statement (verse 4), "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared." God is so kind; God is so loving. By the way, that statement, "kindness and love" we get our word philanthropy from. It's tied in with the word Philadelphia, brotherly love or showing love. God cannot save us just by His love; God cannot save us just by His mercy. There had to be a sacrificial atoning sacrifice because God is righteous and just and His law had been broken, so He had to send His Son to actually die. God couldn't just say, "Hey, I'm a loving God and I just love you all so much. I'm just going to save you by my love." No. He had to send His Son to be a sacrifice to die for us on the cross. So, salvation is God's mercy, God's love, and God's kindness. What a marvelous thing that is demonstrated by sending His Son to die on the cross for us.

I want you to notice, thirdly, the grounds of our salvation (verse 5). It says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done," so we are not saved (this is the negative) by works of righteousness which we have done. This is one of the great verses in the New Testament. We also put alongside that Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Now, it says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done," remember it's God's love, God's grace, God's mercy, and the cross. So, how are we saved? Not by our righteous deeds, we're saved by God's mercy through the cross of Jesus Christ. His love and mercy led Him to send His Son to die.

I want you to notice, fourthly, about our salvation, the means of our salvation. It's in verse 5. It says, "...but according to his mercy he saved us," and here it is, "by the washing of regeneration," a super important word to understand, "and renewing of the Holy Ghost." My King James Bible has "Ghost" but it's a reference to the Holy Spirit of God. Now, I want you to notice, it's very important, we are saved by "washing of regeneration." Now, I don't believe that this is baptism. He's not saying that we're saved by a rite or ritual. He just finished saying in the text, "Not by works of righteousness," or deeds, "which we have done." If you were saved by baptism, you would be saved by religious deeds or good works. There's nothing you can do to

save yourself, so what does he mean, “by the washing of regeneration” ? I believe that he’s using the word “washing” here as a figure of speech for when we are born again. It’s a picture of us being bathed or washed.

My ten-year-old grandson was at our house on Monday. We had a birthday party for him, and he was all dirty. His dad said, “Conner, get in the shower. Take a shower. Your party is going to start.” He whined and complained and cried. He didn’t want to get in the shower. He finally got in the shower and wouldn’t get out. I thought, That’s classic. He didn’t want to get in the shower, now he doesn’t want to get out of the shower. Then he started singing in the shower! Then his dad said, “Conner, did you wash your hair?” “No. Do I have to?” When you are born of God, you are given a bath.

One of my favorite pictures of this is John 13. I know I’ve preached it before, but bear with me. Remember in the upper room the night before He was crucified how Jesus was going to wash the disciples feet? He comes to Peter, probably 13-Ds, big ‘ol honkin’ dirty feet. Peter says, “Lord, You’re going to wash my feet? No way!” Jesus said, “Peter, if I don’t wash you, you have no part with Me. You have no participation with Me. I would even go so far as to use the word “fellowship” or koinonia with Me. You can’t be in fellowship with Me if you don’t get your feet washed.” How did Peter respond? He said, “Oh, Man, if that’s what it means, give me a bath!” Sock it to me, Lord! “I want a whole bod wash,” you know, “Give me a whole bath!” Jesus, right away, said, “Peter, you’ve already had a bath. All you need is your feet washed.” You’ve already been bathed. They had the public bath houses and would get a bath and come to the house but would have open sandals on dirt paths, so from the bathhouse to the real house, their feet would get dirty. Inside the door of every home there would be a pail of water and a towel there, and the servant would wrap a towel around his waist and would wash feet. That was the badge of the lowest slave, to wash everybody’s feet as they entered into the home. Jesus said, “Peter, you don’t know what I’m doing now, but you’ll understand it afterwards. If you want participation with Me, you just need your feet washed.” I believe that is a really really great illustration of the believer’s salvation and confession of sin and cleansing and fellowship with God.

The regeneration in this passage means given new life. It’s the synonym for being born again. It’s not the same word, but it’s another description of being born again. When Jesus told Nicodemus you had to be born again...I’m not finished with my John 13 bath story yet, so don’t...I may lose you. When you are regenerated or bathed, that’s when you’re born again, but Christians sin. Their feet get dirty. As you go through life, almost everyday, you think an evil thought, you say something wrong, you have a wrong attitude, so you just need your feet washed, and for that we have 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Now, you’re not getting born again again. You’re not getting another bath. Jesus said, “Peter, if you’ve already had a bath, all you need is your feet washed.”

Sometimes people want to come forward and get born again, again, every Sunday. Did you know that you can only be born again once? You don’t have to get born again, again. “Hey, Pastor, I need to get born again, again.” If you’ve been born, you’re born! There are a lot of

Christians that need their feet washed—they need to confess their sins. They need to agree with God, “I’ve sinned,” and then He cleanses us and washes us and we have fellowship, *koinonia*, with God. We don’t lose sonship, but we do lose fellowship. That’s why Jude says, “Keep yourselves in the love of God,” keep yourself in a place of walking in fellowship with God and experiencing His love.

When Titus is told by Paul that you’re saved, “...by the washing of regeneration,” it’s a picture of when you’re born again and you’re renewed. You were dead in sin and now you’re given new life. Paul said in Ephesians 2, “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins,” it means that you were given new life. The washing is also used in the Bible as the Word of God bathing and washing us. Read Ephesians 5:26 and 1 Peter 1:23 where we’re washed in the water of the Word. When a Christian is saved, it takes the Spirit of God and the Word of God to bring the life of God into the soul of that sinner and they become a child of God.

I don’t want to get sidetracked, and I’ve probably already gone a little longer than I need to, but I want to address something that some of the more advanced Bible students are going to wonder about or you may encounter as you grow in your walk with the Lord; that is, there is a branch of Christianity known as Calvinism, also there are the reformed theologians. They believe that we are regenerated before we believe or trust in Jesus Christ. What it’s teaching is that regeneration (what we’re reading about right now) happens to you before you put your faith in Jesus Christ and that you have to actually be regenerated in order to believe. I don’t believe or agree with that or believe that it’s biblical or scriptural. I believe the moment you trust Christ, put your faith in Christ, you are regenerated or born again. I do agree that before you can trust or believe in Christ, the Holy Spirit has to convict you, and the Holy Spirit has to draw you—no one comes to the Father unless the Spirit draws them, so there is that element of God’s grace to opening your eyes and convicting you of sin.

I remember just out of high school, actually before I graduated from high school, I just all of the sudden started coming under this great conviction that I was a sinner and I needed to get saved, I needed to get right with God, and I needed to believe in Jesus. It was just the work of the Holy Spirit, and I turned to Him in faith. I believe the moment I trusted Jesus, I was regenerated. I was born again. I don’t think that regeneration precedes faith, I think it happens the moment you trust Christ in faith and believing and you’re born again or regenerated.

When John wrote (and we’re going to get it in the gospel on Wednesday night), “But these are written, that ye might believe..and that believing ye might have life through his name.” “I wrote my gospel so that you’ll believe, and when you believe, that’s when you get life through His name.” Notice verse 5 of our text, “...and renewing of the Holy Ghost,” it means to be entirely new in kind. The Holy Spirit is the agent in regeneration, and the Word of God is the instrument. God the Father chose you, God the Son died for you, and God the Holy Spirit regenerated you or gave you new life.

Now, I’ll have to finish this up. Notice the goal of salvation in verse 7. The goal of salvation is “That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal

life.” All this work of salvation in saving us—the washing of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit came to give us new life and renews us daily—is that we can be justified. The moment you are born again, the moment you are saved, you are also justified or declared righteous and that’s your standing or your position. Write down Romans 3:28, “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” And, notice that we become “heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Why does God save us? So that one day we can go to heaven.

In closing, notice sixthly (verse 8), he says the evidence of salvation is that you are believing in God and “careful to maintain good works.” He tells Titus, “These things are good and profitable unto men.” This is a faithful saying. This is that formula that you find in the pastoral epistles, a faithful saying. It was kind of a standard formula or something that was memorized and sometimes maybe even sang or prayed by the early church. Everything you read from verses 4-7, all the truths about salvation, it’s a faithful saying. I want you to affirm these things, be bold to tell and teach them, and “they which have believed in God,” so they’re Christians, “might be careful to maintain good works.” It’s so very important. Back in Titus 2:14, “Who gave himself for us,” that we might demonstrate those righteous deeds or those good works.

Let me wrap it up. Our past, we’re justified and have been regenerated; our present, we have new life and we have good works by the power of the Holy Spirit; our future, we have an inheritance of eternal life forever in heaven with our Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ. All of that is because of, “the kindness and love of God,” appeared in Jesus Christ. As we break bread tonight, we take communion tonight, it’s all because of God’s love, all because of God’s kindness, all because of God’s mercy, and God sent His Son to die for our sins so that we could be justified, we could be regenerated, we could be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and that we could have an inheritance in heaven. Amen?