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## Titus – Making Things Right

### Chapter 2 - (vs. 11-12)

Turn in your Bibles to Titus. We're going to be in chapter 2 and looking specifically at verses 11 and 12 tonight. This is a book about putting things in order; setting things right. How do you set things right that are chaotic and upside down? Well, it starts with God. So, this book starts with the God of all order. One of the passages that we read earlier was found in 1 Corinthians 14:33 as well as verse 40. 1 Corinthians 14:33 says that "God is not a God of confusion." He goes on to say in verse 40, he wants all things to be done in an orderly fashion. "An orderly fashion" and putting things in order really is an act of love. If you think about the antithesis of that, we're dealing with chaos and turmoil which would be unloving. So, to have things in order is loving. It's one of the things that a father should be doing in a household. That's why Scripture says when it talks about those that are going to be leaders and overseers in the church, you have to first be one that manages his own household well. It's talking about putting things in order in the house so that things aren't in disarray and people are living an orderly life.

When we begin to think about "orderly," it is clear, according to the book of Titus, that you have to begin with what is called truth. This truth is then directly connected to godliness. In other words, everybody has their own idea of what would create some kind of order, but there is only one truth and absolute. So, once you get into that realm of the truth of God, then you begin to realize as well that it's directly connected to godliness. In other words, godliness is more dealing with your reverence towards God than it is actual action; it's your perception of God. So, godliness begins with you seeing God as the source. God says certain things in His word, and He says, "You need to do this" and you go, "You're the righteous One. You know best." Then you do it, but it's because of godliness and a sense of reverence in your mind and your heart that you submit to the things that God tells you to do. Then, you wake up one day, and you find your life in order. As Isaiah says, the wicked are like the tossing sea. They can't be quiet, and they have no peace. They can't know peace because they're pursuing all the things that are disruptive and hurtful in their lives.

When we come to this book, we begin to see that God is the author of order. We not only see that, but as we go on, Paul begins to reveal the specific things that need to be done. So, he goes through this list which is one of the things that we're going to be looking at here starting with Titus 1:5 and going into Titus 2:10. He actually talks specifics. In other words, this is what you need to do. First of all, you need to establish godly people that will lead you in a godly way, and he gives character references within the passage. So, you look at this list of the characteristics of these people, this is the heart, and it begins with integrity of the heart. Once again, following

that which is the pattern of Jesus Christ. So, you see this all the way through. Then, he clearly goes into the realm of older men needing to teach the younger men and older women need to teach the younger women, and he tells you what to do. Now, this is an oversimplification, but it brings us to the point where we are now which is talking about the motivation. Why do you do what you do? What will get you to do the things that God is telling you to do? What causes this sense of godliness? What causes this sense of respect and honor towards God that you would submit to God anything and everything that He says? Where does that begin?

These two verses are paramount for us to understand that motivation and what moves us to do these things. It's a very important part of our faith. It is literally the foundation of our gospel because it the Spirit of God that moves us to receive or proclaim Jesus as Lord. If you remember, Romans 10:9-10 says, "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Once again, in 1 Corinthians 12:3 he says that you're not going to be able to confess this unless the Spirit does. So, it's the Spirit of God that begins to move us. The question is what is this movement of the Spirit that so energizes us to then submit to the things that God tells us to do and to get our lives in order? Look, a lot of people have read the Bible, but their lives are not in order. You can read a lot of things and do a lot of study about what creates order, but what is it that moves you to do that?

So, we're going to pick up in Titus 2:11, and look at verse 11 and 12 to see this wonderful motivation as he now turns into the realm. It's interesting that he sandwiches all the "dos" with the beginning verses, 1-4. He establishes God as the source of truth and godliness. Then, as he comes to the end of verse 4, he talks about grace and peace with you. So, that "grace" and "peace" is that motivation and impetus that begins to move us in the right direction. In Titus 2:11, we begin to read in this wonderful passage about the motivation that God gives us.

(Titus 2:11) "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,"

That's a mouthful really within the passage. Now, if you understand what just happened, he just said "older men," "older women," "young men," and "young women" are to do these particular things. He's given specific things that you and I should do. Now, he puts in this passage that refers to what moves us to do that; to live sensibly in this world. The one word that has been repeated over and over again is "be sensible." Clearly, as we've been talking about; it's the emphasis of reigning in your appetite and desires to do the right thing. Discipline is a hard thing, isn't it? It is to be noted that discipline is one of the fruits of the Spirit. A part of the fruit of the Spirit that is mentioned is self-discipline. Scripture is saying that there's something that causes us to reign in our cravings and do the right thing instead of what feels good. What in the world would do that? It's clear that the Cretans are basically just doing whatever they want to do. They're liars, cheats, and gluttons. It's telling us that they're over-indulgent and thinking, "Why shouldn't I have whatever I want?" Who is it that reigns in it? Who would do that? Well, the passage says that "the grace of God has appeared" to do this.

Now, I want you to note the word “grace.” It’s a word that is probably almost over understood in people’s minds, but the emphasis of this word, “*charis*” in the Greek, not only has a sense of God’s favor and His kindness upon us, but it has this interesting mix of that which effectually motivates us. So, every time that he talks about “grace and peace be with you,” he’s talking about not only that the favor and kindness of God is upon you, but that it’s an efficacious kindness and mercy that comes upon you and motivates you to do things. That’s pretty interesting isn’t it? The passage then begins to describe this as, “For the grace of God has appeared”; been made manifest, obvious. Now, it’s this “appearing,” this manifestation that then moves us.

If you look at the end of the verse, it reads this way, “bringing salvation to all men.”

So, now we know exactly what he’s talking about, don’t we? It’s about the salvation that we embrace which is the motivating factor that moves us. It’s interesting that this isn’t the first place that this has been used. If you look with me in Romans 12, Paul will begin to talk about urging people to present their bodies as a living sacrifice. If you look in chapter 12, the way that he puts it in verse 1, “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God...” Now, he’s talking about a sense of pity or compassion; a feeling. Actually, it oftentimes is directly connected with another word, which is “bowels.” So, you have the word “bowels of mercy.” You’ll see that more specifically in King James translated as such, but it literally has that word in there. It’s talking about your stomach being turned over, your feelings and emotions are really ignited. This particular verse is talking about the fact that you and I are motivated to present our bodies for this reason. In other words, we’re willing to sacrifice ourselves. What is it that motivates us? Well, the compassion of God that breathes within us. You have to remember that when you and I receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the Spirit of God comes and lives within us. It’s the Spirit of God that is compassionate.

If you’ll read with me in Matthew 9 so that you can see the Spirit of Christ because it is the Spirit of Christ, as Galatians says, that we have received it.

(Matthew 9:35) “Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.”

(Matthew 9:36) Seeing the people, He felt compassion...”

That’s the Spirit of Christ, isn’t it?

“...He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.”

His concern is for these people. Why is He concerned and other people aren’t?

If you look in Matthew 14, you'll see the same thing being emphasized. It says this in verse 13, "Now when Jesus heard about John, He withdrew from there in a boat to a secluded place by Himself; and when the people heard of this, they followed Him on foot from the cities.

(Matthew 14:14) When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them..."

It's not an unusual thing. This is the way Jesus worked.

(Matthew 14:15) "When it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, 'This place is desolate and the hour is already late; so send the crowds away...'

(Matthew 14:16) But Jesus said to them, 'They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat!'"

I like the phrase in verse 18, "And He said, 'Bring them here to Me.'"

When you look at Matthew 25:31, Jesus begins to talk about the day that He's going to come on the earth.

The way that it's put is "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

(Matthew 25:32) All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;

(Matthew 25:33) and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.

(Matthew 25:34) Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'

Watch verse 35; what is that which distinguishes those who are His? Compassion.

"For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in;

(Matthew 36) naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'

(Matthew 25:37) "Then the righteous..."

Why are they called "righteous"? Because they were compassionate and merciful.

"Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink?'"

(Matthew 25:38) And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?

(Matthew 25:39) When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

(Matthew 25:40) “The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’”

Oftentimes, it has been strange to me when I consider the grace of God, we read about how compassionate and merciful Christ is, and we almost get used to it, cold and indifferent about it because that’s what He does. He heals people, He’s kind and compassionate. We say, “I’m not Jesus” and look for a kind of escape.

By the time you come to Matthew 27, and you read about the crucifixion of Jesus, I’m looking all around, and I can’t find anybody compassionate; not for Him. It is an interesting thought that He could have easily said at this point, “You’re going to have your opportunity to be compassionate to Me,” but He didn’t. He said, “If you want to follow Me, you’ll be compassionate to others.” So, He immediately takes the limelight off of himself, but how cruel the world is that wants Him to be crucified though He was compassionate to all in His life. It demonstrates how that is not a part of our nature; especially if we want something or crave something, and we perceive somebody is in our way.

Romans 3 will talk about “the grace of God that appears,” if you’ll turn there with me. As I’ve oftentimes reflected upon this particular passage, it is a very poignant verse in the sense that it gives you a visual, and that’s the point.

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men.” (Titus 2:11)

You actually see it. If you look at the passage, it reads this way in Romans 3:21,

“But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

(Romans 3:22) even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

(Rom 3:23) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

(Rom 3:24) being justified as a gift by His grace...”

Once again, I want to emphasize that it’s His merciful kindness that begins to move in the hearts of people that are receptive. “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12), right? What is it that moves us? See, that’s the question that you have to ask yourself. What is it that the Spirit is doing? What is He tugging at? How is He moving us?

If you look in the passage, “even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ...”

Then verse 24, “being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.”

Now, this is the key verse in verse 25, “whom God displayed publicly...”

Now, the grace of God has appeared. How? Publicly. We don't just have somebody telling us that He's gracious; we have somebody showing us that He's gracious. So, it's this graphic picture of the cross that should be moving us. The fundamental point is that it's not my righteousness; it's His. Even though I was a sinner, he would die for me, really? Peter would talk about this in the sense of we were all straying, but he who knew no sin, as Paul will emphasize as well, became sin for us. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

"Whom God displayed publicly as..." our atoning victim; that's the "propitiation" in the passage.

"...in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness..."

If you could picture yourself literally there at the foot of the cross realizing that He was doing that for you, and could remain emotionless, there's something wrong with you. This is what God is saying, "I'm moving in the realm of compassion. Do you have any? Do you care for anybody?" It is often during the times in which we are going through the most difficulty that we're the most sensitive to compassion. It is in those times of great need that we would cry out to God, and say, "God, be compassionate on us." God is using that in our lives for us to understand what He's done for us.

When you go back to Titus 2, he not only emphasizes the fact that this grace of God has appeared and brought salvation to all men; which is once again giving us that wonderful picture of His love, and something that's undeniable, but the way that he phrases verse 12 is that it's "instructing us to deny ungodliness." Now, you're going to be surprised by the word he uses for "instruct" because the normal word would be "*didáskalos*" which means teacher or teaching. He doesn't use that word. He uses a word that would describe "scourging." It would be the picture of "whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son." The passage is talking about a heavy sense of discipline; "paideuō," a sense of correction, and this is what His grace does to us. That's an interesting point. You never think of grace as being a disciplinarian, but the kindness, graciousness, and the mercy of God should move us. It should inflict a sense of pain upon us. It's one of the reasons why James will say "weep and howl." It is at the cross that we begin to realize just how sinful our sin is. Paul is going to specifically emphasize that as you go through the book of Romans, that the grace of God has appeared that it might literally discipline us to godliness. We start off with that first question, what would cause us to want to do the right thing? What would cause us to be godly? Once again, to clearly define godliness, it refers to good respect, good honor, or good reverence towards God. It's basically a compound word. So, it's saying that grace of God that appeared to me through the cross created a sense of respect, honor, awe, and reverence for God. You see, the motivation to follow God, according to the law, was fear, but according to grace, it doesn't mean you still don't feel bad; it means that you feel bad for different reasons. The law, as Paul will write in Galatians, was a tutor to lead us to Christ. It's a picture of a teacher with a stick chasing you saying, "You better do the right thing." It's probably painful when you have to deal with the ramifications of the law, but there is a different kind of teacher in grace that is just as intense, if not more so.

I can give you an interesting picture in Romans 12. We see this picture of a mindset; this grace that takes a hold of us. Once again, it starts off with, "present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice." What is your motivator? Do you remember? The mercy of God. It is reflecting upon not only what He has done for you, but it is also emphasizing how this is the thing that motivates you now. It moves in your heart. So that, if I could put it this way, the merciful Spirit of Christ now moves me. The question would be why would you give your body to serve others? According to this passage, the answer is very clear; it's because you care. You're not going to stand back and see him hurt. You're not going to stand back and see him suffer. You're not going to stand back and not care.

1 Corinthians 12 talks about the fact that we have these gifts that God has given us, and God wants us to use them to build each other up obviously. Then, he goes on and says, look, if somebody is weeping, you need to weep with them; if somebody's rejoicing, you rejoice with them. What is that talking about? It's talking about the feeling and emotions of being involved with them. What causes that? It's the Spirit of Christ that comes within us, and it's the moving of that Spirit that causes us to care for people. So, when he's talking about presenting your bodies a living sacrifice, you're not doing this under duress in the sense of somebody's twisting your arm; you're doing this out of a broken heart because you know what it feels like to go through this pain and suffering. So, you're not going to let them do that because the Spirit of God won't let you. Have you ever had that happen to you? You pass by somebody, of course your natural inclination is "I don't want to be bothered by that." Then the Spirit of God goes, "You can't pass by that person. They need you." In particular, as John will talk about as well as James, you can't walk up to a brother that has a need and say, "Be warm, be filled, be clothed." John will say, "How does the love of God abide in you if you don't help your brother?" Well, that's what we're talking about. The motivation is mercy; the motivation is the compassion that you feel for this person.

When you think about Hebrews 12, as it talks about you have a brother and he's been disciplined by the Lord. Then, you and I help mend him. So, it is rallying around that person. It is that which moves us to do this. Now if you keep reading this and look at Romans 12:9, it's that love that has to be unhyprocritical. Once again, if it's motivated by compassion and mercy. It's not hyprocritical, is it? It goes on and says, "Be devoted to one another..." (Romans 12:10) Be diligent in spirit. (Romans 12:11) "Contributing to the needs of the saints..." (Romans 12:13) Then, it begins to talk about what if somebody does something against you?

So, it reads this way in verse 17, "Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

(Romans 12:18) If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

(Romans 12:19) Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,' says the Lord.

(Romans 12:20) “BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK...”

Why would you do that? Well, go back to verse 1, “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God...” What is urging you? The mercies of God. Not only that He was merciful to you, but it’s the merciful Spirit that now resides within you. Paul is calling upon the Spirit to move you, not the “have to” or the legality, but he’s saying, “I want you to be moved by the Spirit” in this. What’s the result?

Look in verse 20, “FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD.”

That sounds like scourging to me. It’s hard to imagine that an act of grace or mercy is so powerful that it literally scourges; it literally corrects behavior. It causes somebody to see God for who He is, and out of sheer reverence they set their life in order. That’s what Paul is talking about.

If you look with me in Titus 2, it instructs us, it disciplines us; you can actually put the word “scourges” us to deny our wants and ourselves; the things that we perhaps want to do. We’ll put it in the sense of reigning in our desires because you’re going to see within the passage, “instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live...” There’s that word again, “sensibly” which is the word *“sōphron”*, meaning to reign in your desires and your cravings. What’s causing us to do that? Well, it’s the grace and mercy of God upon us. His mercy and love for me has so touched my heart that I’m going to die to myself and the things that I want out of sheer reverence for Him. That’s your motivation.

So, “instructing us to deny ungodliness...”

Instructing us to deny our lack of reverence for God. Why is it that people don’t do what God tells them to? They don’t reverence God or perceive Him as God. That’s basically ungodliness.

“... and worldly desires...”

The things that we would naturally crave.

“...to live sensibly...”

Reigning in those desires.

“...righteously...”

Would be doing the right thing.

“...and godly...”

Having a reverence for God.

“...in the present age,” today.



As I was going through this, I was thinking, and there's so many passages that deal with this issue. Clearly, when we think about that denying of ourselves and the motivation that is spent in this. I think of the Old Testament when God was pointing to this as a tutor and was leading us to the right way of thinking, but how that always fell short until Christ came. You begin to see, well, the grace of God appears. So, you realize that's what mercy, grace and kindness and love really look like. As you go through the Old Testament, there are striking examples that display people that are hurt. They are also striking examples of how people hurt other people. Have you ever noticed that as you're going through? The very first one that jumps off the page is Adam and Eve. Here, God has done all this good for them. He's placed them in the crown of creation, and they believe He's a liar. Now, if you've ever done something for somebody, giving them your best, demonstrated nothing but love for them, and they turn on you like that, how do you feel? So, it's one of the reasons why Ephesians 4:30 says, "Don't grieve the Spirit of God."

We oftentimes can think in the realm of "I was hurt" or maybe even someone else was hurt, but who thinks, "Maybe I hurt God?" I know people think "You can't hurt God. He's God." Well, if that's true, then why does it say, "Don't grieve the Holy Spirit"? So, God can be hurt, and you see throughout the Old Testament God crying out. Yet, it's almost as if once again, we're indifferent to that. God is calling upon our mercies. He's calling upon our compassion. So, in the Old Testament, He takes us to a scenario or situation such as 1 Samuel 1 where you have this husband that has two wives. Now, right off the bat, you've got to think, "Who would do that to his wife?" How cruel is that? She doesn't feel loved, and she doesn't have any children. So, the other wife seems to have the children, and I guess in some cases, perceives that she's more loved; even though the husband says to his wife, "I really do love you." She's not feeling it because he has somebody else there. She's wrestling with it. This is interesting to me because I think one of the most hurtful things that people have to deal with is when somebody is hurting you and they have no concept that they're hurting you. So, here's this husband hurting his wife, and he goes, "You have me. Why shouldn't you be happy?" As you continue to read in 1 Samuel 1, you realize that wasn't any comfort. Then, Hannah goes in prayer, and as she begins to pray, she makes commitments to God. She finds that like 2 Corinthians 1:3 says, "the Father of mercies and God of all comfort" begins to move on her behalf. Her own husband couldn't see it. So, where did she find mercy?

Continually throughout the Old Testament, there are scenarios of people hurting people. I think the most graphic one is there in 2 Samuel where we have David. Our thought is that he's the king and good shepherd, but he kills a friend to take his wife. The picture that is given is in 2 Samuel 12. Once again, we're all familiar with these stories, but in 2 Samuel 12 you begin to read that David is going to be made aware of this. Although, his callousness at this juncture was preventing him from feeling. It reads this way in 2 Samuel 12:1,

"Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said,  
'There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor.

(2Sa 12:2) The rich man had a great many flocks and herds.

(2Sa 12:3) But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb Which he bought and nourished; And it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, And was like a daughter to him.

(2Samuel 12:4) Now a traveler came to the rich man, And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.'

(2Samuel 12:5) Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, 'As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die.

(2Samuel 12:6) He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion.'

(2Samuel 12:7) Nathan then said to David, 'You are the man!'

Scripture gives us story after story of the inability of man to feel compassion simply because he can't seem to reign in his own personal desires.

If you look with me in Ruth, there's another interesting story as you begin to read it. Sometimes you read these stories, but we don't feel them. I would encourage you to feel with them because Scripture is tugging at your heart as well as your head. In Ruth 1, the story goes, a woman by the name of Naomi has sons. I guess her husband is the motivating factor to move out of Bethlehem during a time of famine, and maybe go to a place that's better. They end up going to the Moabites. They know it's the wrong place to go and that they shouldn't go there, but they go. Apparently, under the husband's bad direction, the family then finds that they have to deal with the ramifications of bad decisions. Our thought is "If I make a bad decision, it only hurts me," but it hurts everybody around you. It's sad to say that we don't have compassion about how our decisions affect others; we could really care less. I mean, who wants to reign in their desires? You want to get what you want, right? So, her husband does this. Well, not only does her husband die, but her sons also die after they had married Moabite women. We come to a picture of Naomi as Ruth is saying, "I'm going to stick with you no matter what." She's heading back to Bethlehem. Everything she's ever loved is now gone. So, now they're trekking back. If you pick up with me in Ruth 1:19,

"So they both went until they came to Bethlehem. And when they had come to Bethlehem, all the city was stirred because of them, and the women said, 'Is this Naomi?'"

Now, the name Naomi means "pleasant".

(Ruth 1:20) "She said to them, 'Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara...'"

"Mara" means "bitter." It's where we get the name Mary from.

“...for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.”

There's a lot of bitter people out there. Did you know some of the hardest people to be compassionate towards are bitter people? They are people that have been extremely hurt. It is a wonderful picture of Ruth showing compassion to her mother-in-law in this whole story; because of all the people in the world to be compassionate towards, why a bitter old lady, right? As you understand the story, it's almost as if she's been a victim of the circumstances of her husband's decisions. How wonderful it is that God's going to take and bring somebody that's going to show mercy and bring Naomi out of that as she'll become part of the lineage of the Messiah with Ruth. It's just a magnificent picture, but all because somebody decided to show some kind of mercy.

You look at the book of Job, and somebody that really needed somebody to be merciful to him. I mean, good grief. Could anything else happen? It just couldn't get any worse, right? It does get worse, and Job begins to suffer. I would say at that juncture, probably the most comforting thing you could have would be the comfort of the wife. Yet, the way I read it in Job 2:9, his wife just simply said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die.” Obviously, at a time when he needed the most comfort. Have you ever wondered how long Job went through all this suffering? Hard to know, isn't it? Actually, there's a verse in Job 29:1,

“And Job again took up his discourse and said,

(Job 29:2) ‘Oh that I were as in months gone by...’”

So, he'll go through suffering for months.

As he goes on, he begins to describe, “As I was in the prime of my days...” (Job 29:4) “And my children were around me...” (Job 29:5) Everything was good until months went by.

The one thing that you really need is friends, right? In fact, one of the statements that Job makes in Job 6:14 is “For the despairing man there should be kindness from his friend.” “Well, some friend you are” he says. Unsensitive friends, unsympathetic wife.

You read a passage such as the prophetic book of Hosea, and God will turn to Hosea and He'll say, “You're going to marry this woman, and she's going to turn into a harlot.” God is saying to him, “You're going to feel what I'm feeling,” because literally, what God was feeling was somebody that had abandoned Him even though He had loved them greatly. In fact, the picture in Deuteronomy 32 begins to describe this. In this chapter, God is beginning with this interesting picture of how He took care of His people. He's saying, “I've been there like a rock. I took care of you” all the way through. It's a grand picture in verse 11,

“Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions.

(Deu 32:12) The LORD alone guided him...”

“But you scorned the rock.”

You can't really understand this until you become a parent, but I think one of the most hurtful things is when a child turns on a parent that has always loved the child; always tried to do their best. Were they perfect? No, they weren't perfect. When a child turns on their parent, the hurt that comes from that is excruciating. If you look in Deuteronomy 32:18, it says,

“You neglected the Rock who begot you, And forgot the God who gave you birth.”

Can you imagine how painful that is? God is wanting us to feel. He wants us to care. He wants us to understand.

Psalms 106 conveys the same thought. There are multiple passages that deal with this. Of course, to me, one of the most touching is Ezekiel 16 saying, “You were there in your blood, and I rescued you.” In Psalm 106, we'll start at the very beginning because I want to show you something very unique about this Psalm.

It starts off, “Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

(Psalm 106:2) Who can speak of the mighty deeds of the LORD, Or can show forth all His praise?

(Psalm 106:3) How blessed are those who keep justice, Who practice righteousness at all times!”

Now, why does he put that in there? He's saying that the lovingkindness of God is an impetus for me to do the right thing. His kindness to me has energized me to do the right thing. Then it reads this way in Psalm 106:4, “Remember me, O LORD, in Your favor toward Your people.” It sounds like the guy next to Jesus on the cross, right? “Remember me.” We want to be remembered by the people that we love. That's an act of love, to remember people.

It says in verse 13, “They quickly forgot His works...”

Isn't that just like us? We want God to remember us, but “they quickly forgot His works.” Yet, in spite of that, “He gave them their request.” (Psalm 106:15)

(Psalm 106:19) “They made a calf in Horeb And worshiped a molten image.

(Psalm 106:20) Thus they exchanged their glory For the image of an ox that eats grass.

(Psalm 106:21) They forgot God their Savior...” The one that saved them.

You see, what draws us is the mercies of God. It draws us like no other; not like a law, it's “I can't believe He would do that for me.” If that's your motivating factor, you will live godly, and your life will become orderly. Strangely enough, oftentimes I have found that the world gets it sometimes even better than believers. I remember the saying that we had in Moody, “All truth

is God's truth." Even an ungodly person can proclaim truth. God showed that with Nebuchadnezzar.

I was reflecting upon a country song. Country songs are oftentimes very emotional, and they deal with emotion. I wrote the words down, and some of you will probably recognize the song. I'm not going to get into all the words, but there's one phrase that's repeated over and over again; it's kind of a chorus. The title of the song is "*If I Needed You*", and it goes this way,

*"If I needed you  
Would you come to me?  
Would you come to me?  
And ease my pain?"*

*If you needed me  
I would come to you  
I would swim the seas  
For to ease your pain..."*

It's an interesting song because it beckons the person to love them back. When I first heard the song, almost immediately my mind went to "that's God talking." That's God saying, "If you needed Me, I'd be there." And He goes on the cross, and He goes, "If I needed you..." and you realize that all of us have failed Him. If we needed Him, He would go to the cross for us, but if He needed us, I think Scripture says that all of His disciples ran; no one was there to ease His pain. Now, if Him being there in spite of our rejection doesn't motivate you to revere Him; if that doesn't move you, then you can't be moved to godliness. It's one of the reasons why Paul wants to emphasize that the grace of God has appeared to us; the salvation to all men. All you have to do is look and you can see this mercy that beckons us and causes us to deny all ungodliness. It causes me to think, "Why would I ever not be reverential towards God. Why wouldn't I do everything God tells me that He wants me to do?" It's very important in this particular setting that Paul puts this here because the tendency is to think "There's a bunch of things that you have to do" and he lists those things you have to do; but it has to be this motivation, or you'll never do it.

The final passage is in 1 Timothy. It's a unique passage to me because it actually became a common confession of the church found in 1 Timothy 3:14.

"I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long;

(1 Timothy 3:15) but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth."

Now, I just want to say this, the truth is not only that which is not a lie, but the truth is that which is sincere and genuine. That's why it says, "let love be without hypocrisy" (Romans 12:9); it's the truth.

(1 Timothy 3:16) "By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness..."

Do you know what he's saying in this? What would cause anybody to do the right thing all the time? That's a mystery. Yet, the mystery has appeared to us. The mystery that has appeared to us is God's love. That's the motivating factor causing me to be godly.

So, it reads this way, "He who was revealed in the flesh..."

Why is that so important? Once again, man was denying the reality of how good could ever come out of the flesh; that in the flesh you couldn't do anything good. Well, Scripture says, "In me dwells no good thing." There's no doubt about that, and by the works of the flesh there's no righteousness. However, they were denying that true faith has nothing to do with you actually doing good; it has to do with your talking, philosophizing, and thinking about good things like "Be warm, be filled be clothed." But if in fact the Spirit of God comes within you, then you present your body a living sacrifice. As Paul puts it, "Therefore glorify God in your body." (1 Corinthians 6:20) It's an amazing thing that one could come to earth, and in the flesh, do good; never sin. Man wants to deny that. "It's not possible!" And God says, "It is if you know Me." There have been moments that I have been so touched by God's love that have literally caused me to abandon every single desire of my own. I have found that it is possible; not me, but Christ in me; it is possible for me to live a sinless moment. In fact, it is possible for us to live a sinless life. This is why Paul will write, "being filled with the Spirit." How many times have I said to myself, "What would cause a husband to be faithful to his wife? Is it because his wife is always more attractive than anybody else in the world?" Well, we will tell our wives that, but the real reason is we never want to hurt them; we love them too much. If you love somebody enough, whatever that craving is, it will go away. There's not enough power on earth to move you away from that one thought, "I would never bring hurt to this person that I love." You see the cross, and He begins to move you. Look, great is the mystery.

"He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit..."

(Justified and proven right in the Spirit)

"Seen by angels..."

Angels are necessary in this mix because they demand perfection. People will say, "Oh, He was perfect maybe according to man, but according to God..." No, no. Angels, "Check, Perfect."

"Proclaimed among the nations..."

Why would people embrace Him to this degree? Why would people be willing to die for Him? It's a mystery, isn't it? Great is the mystery of godliness. Paul wants to motivate and move those who are in Crete in an appropriate way. I think one of the hard things in parenting is that

you start off with remedial teaching, and as a parent you have to discipline. Scripture tells us that we need to do that, but as the child then grows old, the hope is that the child will begin to own this. Then there is a point when the parent begins to release and talk about things like love, loyalty, and integrity; hoping that the child would embrace those things. There's nothing that will cause the child to do that more than when they see the parent doing it. So, it's a time in the young person's life that they're watching. I would say, probably why young people are probably the most critical on the face of the planet is because God has made them so. God has made them to the point that they're no longer just doing what you tell them to do; they're doing what they need to wrestle is right. They blatantly see the contrast between what is right and what family is doing, and they go, "You're not perfect." Now, it's an epiphany to them, not to us, and they become hyper-critical. Of course, at this juncture, they're not looking at themselves. They can see you clearly, but they can't see anything that they've done as being wrong. They're just in that judgement, but God is using that in their life. This is the time when the parent needs to, yes, hold firm to their beliefs, but they have to demonstrate the reality of their faith in front of those kids. This is where the parent needs to start living in reality and truth. If the kid sees that, they'll come back. God will use that in their life, and it will be so powerful that they'll begin to reverence the same God. Then, their life will start being godly. When it says, "as many as received Him" (John 1:12), it's talking about receiving the love of God. As Thessalonians says, receiving the love of God so as to be saved. That's what you're receiving. Once you do that, change happens.

**Closing Prayer:**

Father, thank You for this encouragement in the book of Titus, and Lord, help us to be motivated by Your grace and Your mercy. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

