

Titus 3 - Grace Changes How You Live

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[0 : 00] All right, good morning, everyone. If you have a Bible, turn with me to Titus. This morning, we're going to finish this book, this letter of Paul.

And so just in time for us to go into our, I nearly said Christmas season, our Easter season. So I'm going to read Titus chapter 3.

And Paul writes this in verse 1. He says, 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 towards 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 of 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.

[1 : 27] The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies and dissensions and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

As for a person who stirs up division after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful, he is self-condemned. When I send Artemis or Titicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend a winter there.

Do your best to speed Zenos, the lawyer, and Apollos on their way. See that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need and not be unfruitful.

All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Let me pray. Father, thank you for your word and we pray, Lord, as we look at these things and we consider these things.

Lord, we pray your spirit's blessing on us, Lord. Lord, we just ask, Lord, that we would hear your voice this morning. Lord, no one wants to hear my voice. We want to hear your voice. Lord, and so we pray.

[2 : 39] Speak to us. Lord, give us ears to hear what you have to say. Lord, we don't want to be people who, like, assume that we know, Lord, and come with ego or pride.

Lord, we want to, again, Lord, be confronted by your word, Lord. And, Lord, come to again realize the grace that has been poured out on us, Lord. And so help us, we pray.

Lord, there's so much, Lord, that we can be thinking about this morning. Lord, so much on our agendas. Lord, so much on our schedules for this coming week. And we pray, Lord, that we would learn to cast those cares on you, Lord, and leave them there.

Lord, and this morning give our attention and our hearts and minds to you. Lord, we want to be open this morning for you to change us. Lord, and with that prayer, Lord, we know comes risk. Lord, but it's not a risky thing to place our lives in your hands. Lord, and so we ask again, Lord, would you help us and teach us and transform us by your grace in Jesus' name. Amen.

[3 : 43] All right. Well, this morning, we do come to the last session this morning. And before we kind of crack open into verse one, I do want to ask a question.

And you know I like questions, mainly because I don't know the answers to most things. And so it's just good to ask a question and hopefully someone will fill in the blanks. So this morning, I've got a question for you.

And it's not really a question, a surface level question at all. And I'd love the question just to sit with us and hang with us for a while. And so if you're taking notes, maybe you want to write this down or maybe you just want to consider this.

And the question is this. When was the last time you encountered the grace of Jesus? Now, I know what a theological answer to that is. Like, we could probably answer that quite quickly.

But notice what I asked. I asked, when was the last time you encountered the grace of Jesus? Not as an idea or something you already believe, but as someone who you've met.

[4 : 55] Because two weeks ago, we said that that grace shows up in the person of Jesus. When was the last time you met Jesus? Maybe it was a moment where you know you had fallen short, maybe this week.

And instead of condemnation, you experienced mercy. Maybe it was a season where you've just been tired or overwhelmed or quietly discouraged.

And maybe something reminded you that you were held by him. Or maybe if you're honest, it's been a while. Maybe grace has been familiar and familiarity has dulled it.

That's my first question. My second question is a little bit more confronting. If you look at your life right now, if you were to measure up your relationships and your reactions and your ordinary Monday waterfall moments, where can you see that grace doing something?

Where is it softening you? Where is it moving you towards people? Where is it showing up in the way that you serve, forgive, or show kindness? Because in Titus 3, as we've just read, it's going to press us right there.

[6 : 26] It's going to show us that grace is not just something that we received once when we were saved. Or is it a theological tick box that we managed to kind of tick and go, I believe in grace.

It's something that continues to shape us, to form us, move us forward. So maybe the most honest place to begin today is simply this.

Not, do I believe in grace? But where has grace actually changed me? Where is it changing me? Here is the big idea for today.

God's grace and mercy, not our effort, God's grace and his mercy, transform us into a people who live differently in the world. Supposed to.

When we get a hold of God's grace, this is what we were kind of talking about last week, or when properly expressed, when grace gets hold of us, it doesn't leave us who we are, it changes us.

[7 : 37] We've said before that grace isn't passive, it does something. And if you look at all of the times, six times, that Paul in this letter talks about good works, he's very, very quick to say, you're not saved by good works, you're not saved by the things you do, but now you are saved, you better get going.

Right? So, so look, and you could, I haven't got these on the screen, because you know how to flick through pages. In chapter one, verse 16, look at it. He says, unfit for any good work.

Then the next chapter, verse seven, a model for good works. Verse 14, zealous for good works. In this chapter, verse one, ready for good works, and ready for every good work.

Right? In verse eight, devote themselves to good works. Verse 14, devote themselves to good works, not to be unfruitful. Like, in three chapters, Paul is very, very concerned that the church becomes super comfortable, super lazy, just, just doesn't kind of move forward.

And actually, Paul is fairly relentless in these three chapters, and he says, look, false religion, no good works.

[8 : 51] Grace, overflowing good works. So where are we at? Because, the really super confronting thing, and convicting thing, is that, false religion, no good works.

Grace, overflowing good works. If we look at our lives, and go, well, I'm not really engaged in good works, what does that say about what you believe, and what you trust in? So, grace doesn't reduce action.

Right? Oh, grace, man, you're just grace. It's this grace. You don't have to do anything. No, no, no, that's not biblical grace. Biblical grace is, where's your life at? What are you doing? And so, Paul is now going to say, in this, this chapter, eight things about grace.

Eight things. And I know that we've got fellowship lunch today. I'm not, unaware that we want to eat. But Paul's going to say, eight things about grace. And, the, the overarching idea, is that actually, grace should transform us, so that when we, when we, I'll say when we leave here, and go out to work, or do whatever we're going to do, Monday morning, but actually, it should change us here as well, right?

Like, this isn't a bubble. It shouldn't be a bubble. But grace should transform us, into a people who live differently, who do stuff. And so, here's the first one, verse one, if you're taking notes, it's going to come on the screen.

[10:24] Grace reorientates, how we live in the world. That's verses one and two. So, remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient for every good work.

And look, to be honest, that's easy to agree with, until it isn't. Right? To be submissive to authorities, that's easy to do, until it becomes impossible to do.

Because we live in a world, don't we, where governments don't always reflect the heart of God.

Like, I don't know whether, what news you watch, but the news that I watch, I'm increasingly discouraged, by the behaviour of governments, around the world, not just our own.

And I, I think about our friends, in Ukraine, Natalia and their family, and what they're living through, and what they're living in. You know, I think of Reza's family in Iran.

And I, and I think of, our friends who are church planting, in Saudi Arabia. And I think of our own situation. Like, this verse is easy to live with, until it becomes impossible to live with.

[11:44] And recent changes around, you know, laws, as Andy mentioned, the government abortion, have raised deep concerns, for many Christians, haven't they? And sometimes laws, are passed, that deeply grieve us, as followers of Jesus.

What do we do with that? Well, look, first, we need to understand, what Paul is, and isn't saying. What he is saying, and what he isn't saying.

What he is not saying, is he's not saying, submission, does not mean, blind agreement. Okay?

That's not what submission means.

Submission does not mean, blind agreement. It does not mean, we silence our convictions. It does not mean, we stop caring about, justice and truth.

What it does mean, is that we are not shaped, by, the same things, that are shaping the world.

Anger, hostility, and contempt.

[12:49] That we are a different, kind of people. And when, when, when laws move, in a direction, that seem, to diminish, let's say, diminish the value of life, especially the most, vulnerable, that should grieve us.

And it's right, that it grieves us. Not because we want to win an argument, because that's what the world wants to do. But because we care about people. Both the unborn, and the women, who often find themselves, in incredibly complex, and painful situations.

But, but Titus doesn't just tell us, what to believe. Notice, he tells us how to live. That's different.

Notice what he says there, in verse two. He says, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, to show perfect courtesy, towards all people.

Like, and sometimes, I, I see those, those political, those political, TV shows, and I'm like, I wish they would read verse two. Right? Because, all they want to do, seemingly, is win an argument, and seemingly, win an argument, based on falsehood.

Right? And look, let's not forget as well, that the people, that Paul is writing to, are living in a time, potentially, much more challenging, than the time, we are living in.

[14:12] And, there, Paul is writing to a church, who, would, would, many would face death, for following Jesus. And he's saying, look, the way to deal with, governments, who oppose God, is that, in the one hand, you hold, what is right, and true, and just.

And in the other hand, you hold, what is gentle, and merciful, and kind. And as you are holding them, both together, you smash them together, so that neither, outdoes the other, or compromises the other.

Now, you might say, how do you do that? And I will say, I have no idea. Because, isn't that a challenge? And that's what Paul is saying. He said, if it was easy, I wouldn't need to write verse 1 and 2.

We would just be doing it. But the fact that Paul has to write, you need to be submissive to, these governing, governing authorities, even the ones, and especially the ones, that you don't agree with.

And at the same time, you've got to model, the character of Christ. Because in the same passage, that calls us to stand up for truth, and be merciful, we're also reminded in verse 3, that we, ourselves, were.

[15 : 36] Like, that is so, so powerful, right? In other words, if we're going to talk about governments, let's talk about us first. Paul reminds us that, we stand as people, who have received grace.

And look, we need to say this carefully, we need to say it clearly, because there, there are people that we know, for sure, carrying pain that feels unbearable, regrets, that haunt them, choices that seem unforgivable.

But the truth is, Christianity has not come to condemn. It doesn't come to shame. Christianity comes with mercy.

I was listening to that old hymn, just this weekend, Oh love that will not let me go. That's Christianity. Christianity. Christianity is a cross, that holds both truth and mercy, in one unshakable embrace.

And in the middle of that cross, it's not just grace, but a person, holding truth and mercy. And so, grace doesn't make us passive, but it doesn't make us indifferent either.

[16 : 59] It holds conviction and compassion together, at the same time. And we trust that even in a complex and broken world, God is still at work. And so, Paul says, in verse 3, that, that not only, is, grace, reorientates how we live in the world, that how we live should be different.

He also says, look, grace begins with an honest view of ourselves. He says, for we, ourselves, were once foolish.

And I'm like, Paul, why did you have to put the word once in? Or even were? You're foolish. You 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.

Paul says, look, before grace showed up, this was me. I was foolish. Chasing shadows, I thought, were substance, believing lies, I thought, were truth. Running down paths, I led nowhere.

I was disobedient and far too easily led. I became a slave. Passing my days in anger so that people hated me and I even hated myself.

[18 : 28] Before grace showed up, that was me. And then grace arrived. Something changed. Not as a whisper or gentle suggestion, but as a rescue mission.

And look, here's why this matters. You will, we will, we will never become gentle and gracious people if we think we have arrived there on our own.

Grace begins when we realize I wasn't just a little off, I was lost. And this is so important for the church because we often forget verse three.

And when we do forget verse three, we become harsh in verse two. If you forget where you were, you will struggle to love people who are still there.

But when you remember that I was once like that, it softens us, it humbles us, it changes how we see people.

[19 : 46] And so if we, if we really want to be the kind of people in verse one and two, we have to remember the kind of people that we were. And it seems that Paul thinks Titus needs further clarification of this.

Like he really hasn't thought this through. And so then in verse four and five, he says that grace appears in the mercy of God. That's where grace appears, in the mercy of God.

He says, but when the goodness and loving kindness of God, our Savior, appeared, that's that word again, appeared. In grace, in chapter two, grace appeared in Jesus.

Here again, grace is not an idea. It's a person. The goodness and loving kindness of God showed up and when it did, verse five, he saved us.

Not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy. Now, look, let that land because we live in a meritocracy, don't we?

[20 : 56] By that, I mean, the more you can do well, the more success that you can have, the idea is that the more you are approved of and accepted of and, you know, you're standing in society.

But Paul, Paul is quick to turn that on his head. He saved us not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy.

So it's not, we weren't saved because of our effort. We weren't saved because of our morality. We weren't saved because we cleaned our life up.

We were saved because of his mercy. And that kind of cuts against everything, doesn't it? Because we want to contribute something. We want to say, yeah, grace, I believe in grace, but I also, dot, dot, dot.

And Paul says, no, no, no, it's not because of works. You didn't earn it. You didn't deserve it. You didn't achieve it. God saved you. Why? Because he is merciful. And then even what is more extraordinary is what he says in the rest of verse five and the beginning of verse six, where he says that grace transforms us from the inside out.

[22 : 32] because we not only live in a meritocracy that wants to reward merit, but also we want to reward what we see on the outside and give really, we don't really care about what's going on on the inside of people, do we?

And Paul says, well, it's got to start somewhere. He says, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.

Like, I don't need to tell you that's a sermon series right there, that phrase, isn't it? By the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.

So, listen, God didn't just forgive you. He regenerated you. And that word just means that he made you new.

This isn't an upgrade. This isn't an improvement. This isn't like a Simon Mark 2. Right? He made new. The image is of cleansing.

[23 : 42] It's of washing. It's of renewal. Which means that God didn't just adjust your behavior. He changed your heart. Completely.

Completely. Well, how did he do that? Well, verse 6 says that he poured out on us, would you circle that word, richly. Not a little, richly.

Not barely enough, richly, overflowing, more than you need. Surplus to requirements. whom he poured out on us, richly, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

And then, fifthly, we see that grace gives us a new identity in the future because we have this new heart, this new life living in us and through us.

And that's not because of anything that we've done. It's because of his mercy towards us. He then says in verse 7 that this grace gives us a new identity and a future.

[24 : 51] He says, so that, so because of all of that, because of that, being justified, so being declared righteous, being justified.

justified. I think actually the common kind of quip, the kind of common phrase, what does justified mean is just as if you'd never sinned, right?

You've been declared that. I think that's a good way to look at it. It helps us immensely that the way that God looks at us is that it is as just as though we had never sinned.

So that being justified, declared righteous. Now, not because we are, because we're still working on that. God's still working on that. It's not because we are righteous, not because we have justification right now in this present moment, but because Jesus is.

Paul says that it's by his grace grace, we become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. So grace doesn't just, the just isn't a only or, you know, to put that down.

[26 : 11] What does grace do? Grace changes the past. Like some of us need to hear that this morning, right? Grace changes the past. It gives meaning in the moment today.

But look, what Paul is saying is that it secures your future too. So being justified, declared righteous, by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

See that identity chain? Heirs. Heirs with Christ. And then the sixth thing he says there in verse eight is that grace produces a people devoted to good works.

Now, I don't know what you've just done in your minds, but I'll confess that this week as I was looking at this chapter, I kind of got to verse seven, and I wanted to camp out in verse seven because that's theology, right?

And I'm like, yes, come on. Theology, theology, theology. I got to verse 8 and realized it was asking me to do something with that. I was like, ah, I'm less excited all of a sudden.

[27 : 32] Okay, and that can be a sin, can't it? There's a danger there. Paul is going to say in verse 8 that grace produces a people devoted to good works.

Committed to good works. Previously, he said zealous, excited for good works. The saying is trustworthy, verse 8.

And I want you to insist on these things. Okay, so can you hear me? We're insisting on these things. This is a trustworthy saying. Insist on these things so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works.

These things are excellent. And profitable for people. So, look, now we see the result.

This is the result of grace working in our lives. This is the result of, if we go back to the previous question right at the beginning, this is the result of encountering Christ.

[28 : 42] Not do good works and be saved. But because you are saved, you become devoted to good works. Grace. And this is where we need to be really clear.

Grace is not passive. Grace is not spiritual sofa. Grace is a fire. And if you think you can encounter the mercy of God and remain disengaged and remain unmoved and remain uninvolved, you have misunderstood grace.

You haven't met Christ. Grace always leads to action. Every single time.

Every single time. You see. God's showing up in the Old Testament. Just think about all of the stories. God shows up. And he says, I'm God.

You're not. I mean, that's shorthand. That's just my translation, right? I'm God. You're not. And then what do they say? I'm undone. What would you like me to do? No one turns around and goes, that's a really good, interesting theological point you have there.

[29 : 58] Right? Moses was like, what do I need to do? Take your shoes off. You're standing on holy ground. There was an action. Right? Every single time.

And yet we somehow think that now because like we are in the, let's say, the era of grace. Grace. Can I say that? Like, you know what I mean? Right? We're not in the New Testament, but New Covenant.

Right? And we are grace, grace, grace. And everybody's like, yeah, yeah, grace, grace, grace. That means that we don't have to do anything. No, no, no. If we've really, if we've really truly encountered Christ, if we've really truly encountered Christ this week, we don't come off the back of that and go, well, that's nice.

That's a nice theological point. I'm glad we have grace. And I'm glad we have grace. But Paul is super clear that grace leads to something. Grace makes us active, not passive.

It leads to serving people. It leads to loving people. It leads to showing up. It means to being present, which means what? Your ordinary, can we go back to this?

[31 : 10] Our ordinary matters. Your Monday matters. Your workplace matters. Your neighbours matter. Why? Because grace is forming a people.

Grace is forming you and me into doing something. And then look, verses 9 to 11, he says, I'm not sure what number I want.

Number 7, that grace refocuses us on what matters. I love that. Because we can focus on a whole bunch of stuff, can't we, as Christians?

We're great at that. We have our lists, right? And the things that are really important to us. And there's absolutely one sure way of disagreements and quarrels and church divisions and splits that come in church.

It is because people have different, differing priorities. Different things that matter. So Paul says, in verse 9, he says, avoid, that's not a word, avoid foolish, foolish controversies.

[32 : 24] He doesn't say what they are. He just says, there are foolish controversies and avoid them. Genealogies, dissensions and quarrels about the law.

Why? For they are unprofitable and worthless. So, how do you know what is a foolish controversy? What is a problem with genealogy? This isn't a message to cancel your ancestry subscription.

Yeah, right?

Like a few years ago, and some of you know this, you know, I went back and looked at my ancestry. This, I'm not, I don't think, unless you want to challenge me, I don't think I was in sin doing that.

God bless you. Thanks for that. I feel so better about myself. That's a weight I've been carrying for years. No. How do you know?

[33 : 27] How do you know what you're doing is a problem? Well, look, it's in that, those last two words that Paul says, unprofitable and worthless. Do they bring value to the grace, the way grace is shaping you?

Are they making you profitable to serve, to love, to help, to be kind, to be merciful to others? And let's be honest, we have, we've come across too many controversies that don't lead to profit or

value in the church.

So let's get rid of them. That's what Paul is saying. If they don't bring worth or profit fruit, then they're not worth talking about.

And so Paul says, avoid them. These are things that distract from the mission of God through the church. It's not the church's mission, it's God's mission.

He invites us into it. Right? And so these things distract us from that mission, but grace keeps us focused. Why? Because grace isn't about winning arguments, is it?

[34 : 37] Right? Grace is about loving people and serving people and being kind to people and showing God's mercy to people. That does not mean that we compromise the truth.

It means we hold those convictions one in one hand and the mercy of God in the other. And what do we do just like Christ? We smash them together. And you might go, that's a really difficult existence.

And I might go, I know. But we're called to live in that tension, aren't we? He says, look, verse 10, as for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once, and look, I don't know whether this is actually true.

I'm just going to put it out there. This is about men. Well, that got your attention, didn't it? Because he says, once you've warned him, then have nothing to do with him.

Now, I don't know whether that's true or not, but certainly in my experience, it's men that have the issue of division, not women. Anyway, that's not Bible.

[35 : 53] That's just, that's just, that's just picking a fight. Maybe that's a foolish controversy. I don't know. Maybe that's what that is. So, as for a person who stirs up division, after warning them, him, once, and then twice, warn them once, then warn them again.

After you've done that, on the third time, have nothing to do with them. I wish the church would practice that more. I think that's what I'm going to say about that.

Knowing, verse 11, that such a person is warped and sinful in his self-condemned. And so, look, this isn't, this isn't harsh at all.

I don't think Paul is kind of setting out, I don't think he's setting out law. What I think he's doing, he's saying, look, if you're going to be grace-focused and it's not about winning arguments, if there's people, and there will be people, and there's always people who stir up division, don't kick them out of the church the first time.

You don't kick them out of the church the second time. The third time, well, then God needs to deal with them. But that's not your problem. Your problem is the first and second time.

[37 : 30] And so Paul is giving us an example of how you hold that truth and you hold that mercy together and then you apply it in this situation where you've got a person who's stirring up division.

You go to them and you go, there seems to be an issue, there seems to be a problem, let's sit down and talk about it. It's coming across as being really divisive.

how can we fix this? How can we help you? How can we support you? Is it me that needs rebuking? Let's go, let's talk.

And it happens the second time. And instead of getting frustrated, instead of gossiping about that person, instead of going to the elders and getting them kicked out, what do you do? You do that same thing again. And you might go and I might go, well it was a waste of time the first time.

But you see Paul's point. Paul's point is actually we need to model the very character of Christ. And then finally in verse 12 to 15, the eighth thing, Paul reminds us that grace sends us out together, not alone.

[38 : 44] he sends us out together. And he closes with some practical instructions as he often does. He says, when I send Artemis or Tychicus to you, do your best, come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.

Do your best to speed Zenos, the lawyer, and Apollos on their way, see that they lack nothing. Christianity is not supposed to be a solo sport, is it?

There are so many, I think we would agree that see it like that, and sometimes we see it like that.

I'm just going to do this on my own, put my head down, I'm British, I'm not going to ask for help, and nobody knows I'm going to struggle.

And yet, Paul is quick to remind Titus that we need each other. He says, let our people learn to devote themselves to good works.

Wait, haven't we read that before? And he says, let our people learn. So, Paul is honest enough to be able to say that we have to learn how to do it, and we might not be there, we might not be there yet, but we're learning how to do it.

[40 : 12] And so, for the reason, to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful. And so, this is the vision, a church that is active, and present, and fruitful, not just believing the gospel, but embodying the gospel.

And then he closes, verse 15, all who are with me, send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for your word, we pray. Lord, that we would learn and be devoted to and be zealous for good works.

Lord, that we wouldn't be unprofitable or unfruitful. Lord, that we would live our days Lord, encountering Jesus, knowing Jesus, loving Jesus, trusting that as we do, that grace is at work in our lives.

Lord, we would ask, Lord, you to forgive us again, Lord, of all the times we've just stopped short of good works, where we've reveled in knowing about mercy and knowing about grace and not really to let that flow and settle in our hearts so that it becomes profitable for others.

[41 : 55] And we would ask, Lord, as a church, Lord, we just want to, we want to be good for you, Lord, like we want to be good for your mission, Lord, we want to be good for your cause. Lord, we want to be, Lord, we want to be worthy for you, Lord, and so we pray, Lord, would you help us to learn good works?

Lord, would we be confronted again by this word, Lord, that grace isn't passive in our lives, Lord, it needs to flow out of our lives, otherwise it just becomes dead in us.

And Lord, none of us want to be dead, Lord, none of us want to be that church you rebuked in Revelation, the lukewarm church. Lord, we want to be zealous for you and zealous for good works. Lord, and we don't want to just kind of pick up and just kind of go, well, give me a list. Like, we all have lists, we have too many lists. Lord, what we need, what we want, what we have to have is an encounter with Jesus.

Like all those people in the Word, who when they encountered God, they just said, tell me what to do, where shall I go, send me. Not because they necessarily wanted to go anywhere or do anything, but they encountered God, their lives had changed so radically.

[43 : 28] And so, Lord, would you give us again an encounter with your grace. Lord, would you do that work in our hearts, Lord, when we realize, Lord, that we were once foolish, but you saved us and changed us and washed us and regenerated us and poured out your Holy Spirit on us.

That's just incredible. And so, Lord, give us that this morning, we pray. Give us that this week, Lord, as we open your word in our quiet times.

Lord, would your words cease to become words on a page, Lord? Would they become words in our stomach that make us sick? Lord, that we would be people who cry out, Lord, send me.

Where shall I go? What shall I do? Lord, help us to learn this, we pray. Lord, we thank you for your salvation.

Lord, thank you for rescuing us. Lord, thank you, Lord, that it was by your mercy and not by our works. Not because of our goodness, but simply because of our badness, you saved us.

[44 : 49] Lord, as we close our time this morning, as we come before you in singing, Lord, that transformative work that is from the inside out, Lord, we pray, Lord, that we would worship you from the inside out.

Lord, that you would know the cry of our hearts, be well pleased with the cry of our hearts. And so, Lord, we just spend some quiet few moments and just reflect, Lord, on whether we've met Jesus or not.

And whether we have or we haven't, Lord, would you come and meet us here again? Lord, we ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.