The Good God

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[0:00] My name is Warren Martin. I serve as one of the pastors at Providence Church in Frisco, Texas.! Raise your hand if you've heard of Frisco. If you're not familiar with Frisco, it's the home of the! Satan's team, the Dallas Cowboys. It's where their, all their facilities are. I'm not, I'm not a Dallas fan. I just live there. I feel like Jonah, who was called to go to the evil city of the Ninevites. I'm from Houston, so I'm going to the evil city of the Dallas, whatever you call them, to, to preach the gospel.

Which is great. Also, if you play golf, the home of the PGA. So their new headquarters is there with a bunch of golf courses. If you like Dude Perfect, anybody heard of Dude Perfect? They're in Frisco as well. So that's fun. I actually have three of the DP guys who are, I'm giving some street cred here, members of my church. And I get to meet a disciple, meet with a discipleship group at the DP headquarters every week. So that's fun. We get to go study the Bible, read good books together, and then go to the church.
Go play around, which is awesome. My boys love it. It's a joy to be with you. I also serve as professor of Christian theology at Southern Seminary at Boyce College. So, you know, no, I don't want to take any shots to OBU, but Boyce is where it's at. Again, no offense. OBU is a great college. Some of my best friends teach there.
But if you're considering Christian college, Boyce, which is the undergraduate college of Southern Seminary, would be a great option. So if you want to talk more about it, I'd love to talk to you about that.
More importantly, I'm the husband of Cindy. We've married 27 years tomorrow. Thank you. And we have three kids, a junior, sophomore, and a seventh grader. I guess they're going to be senior, junior, eighth grade, which is crazy.
[1:46] Okay. If you want to open your Bibles to Titus chapter 3, that's where we'll be. Titus chapter 3. As you're turning there, you know, I got to sit down on a couple of sessions yesterday. I was so encouraged. My soul was fed from God's Word.

And one of my quotes that I often think about when I think about God's attributes is a quote by Michael Allen. He says that God's attributes are revealed in the ups and downs of history and in the nooks and crannies of life.
I'll repeat it. What does he mean by this? What he means by this is we don't just encounter God's attributes or we don't primarily encounter God's attributes in theology books.
We don't study God's attributes merely for the sake of knowledge. No, we want to study God's attributes so that we can trust him, as we heard last night about George Mueller.
It drove him to do what he did. As we heard yesterday about God's holiness and what it means for God to be holy in himself.
[3:13] He does not need anything. He doesn't need you. He doesn't need me. He has life in himself and from himself. He gives himself in his holiness and calls us to be holy with him.

So we don't study God's attributes merely for the theoretical sake of knowledge, but so that we can trust him, so that we can proclaim him, so that we can live lives that are pleasing to him.
And not only that, a dear neighbor and colleague, Tom Schreiner, his wife was in an accident probably a decade ago and thought she was going to die.
She was in a coma for a couple weeks, and he made this comment to me in the hospital shortly after she got there. And he said, one of the best preparations for suffering is good theology.
And he said that his wife was possibly going to die. That's a really important word. What will prepare you for suffering? What will prepare you for the life that God's called you in Christ to live for his glory?

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[4:21] One of the answers is studying God's attributes. Who is like the Lord? So God's attributes are revealed in the ups and downs of history and in the nooks and crannies of life.

This was certainly true for Paul's audience in Titus. He writes to this pastor and young church and appointing elders and guarding against false doctrine and teaching God's word and sound doctrine. There are obviously troubles going on in the church and troubling people, difficult circumstances. They're living in a context filled with difficult people, yet, because God had saved them in Christ, they needed reminding how to live with these difficult people, how to live with and in these difficult situations.
They needed this reminder in verses 1 and 2 of chapter 3. 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, to show perfect courtesy toward all people.
Why? Because 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.
[5:47] This church needed reminding of who they were and who they are in order to live faithfully in ways that reflect Christ.

And the same is true for you and me as well. Maybe you find yourself this morning in a difficult situation or living with difficult people. Maybe it's an unbelieving family member or a difficult relationship.
Maybe it's chronic illness. Maybe it's a difficult parent, an unbelieving parent. Maybe it's a financial situation you're faced with.
Maybe it's questions about your future that are up in the air. Maybe you're dealing with people who treat you so poorly with no regard for you and what's on your plate.
These people in Titus were dealing with some of the same issues. People who are constantly hounding them. So how can we live?
[6:56] Paul gives us two reminders that motivate and fuel us to live out who we are in Christ. Perfectly no, but consistently and increasingly by God's grace, yes.

So before we jump into these two reminders, just for my own heart, let me just pray one more time. And then we'll jump into Paul's two reminders. Father in heaven, we lift up our eyes to the hills. And we ask with the psalmist, from where does our help come? We don't exactly know what these hills were for these people in this context.
Perhaps it was these hills that they were seeking to take refuge in from their enemies instead of taking refuge in you. Perhaps these hills were obstacles that blinded them, that blocked them from seeing you.
Whatever it was, Lord, we face the same question today. We lift up our eyes to the hills and we ask where does our help come? Maybe we're tempted to seek refuge in things of the world or in a relationship or in a college that we want to go to or in a job that we want to have or in a person that we want to be with.
[8:15] We want to take refuge in those things. Find our life and value and acceptance in those things. Or maybe those hills, Lord, are obstacles or are besetting sins.

We just can't shake. We keep falling and stumbling and confessing and repenting. And we ask this morning, where does our help come?
I ask this morning, where does my help come for the grace for what I need to preach your word? And we gladly confess with the psalmist, our help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth.
So we remember your power in creation. And even more, we remember your power in salvation that you raise dead sinners to new life in Christ by your spirit.
And the same spirit that raised Christ from the dead is the same spirit who dwells in us giving life to our mortal bodies. So we pray, Lord, this morning and these next few minutes that we have that you would give us life in our mortal bodies.
[9:18] Even practically in the midst of being tired. Awaken us by your spirit. Open our eyes that we might see wonderful things from your word.

Open our hearts to receive and to delight and then to love and to believe what you say to us through your word. So we need your help this morning. We ask these things in Christ's name. Amen.

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The first thing we need to remember when we are encountering difficult people and difficult situations when we're living in the midst of it. Those things are bearing down on us. The first thing we need to remember, and this isn't always kind of, this is counterintuitive.
We need to remember the bad news. We're like, wait a minute. I thought you were supposed to talk about God's goodness. Well, before we talk about God's goodness, we need to talk about the bad news first.
It's interesting to me, and you heard me read it, right, that Paul said, remind them to display these kinds of qualities. Submission. Obedience. Being ready, eager for every good work.
[10:21] Speaking truth, not speaking evil. Avoid quarreling, not being divisive, but being a peacemaker. Being gentle. Showing perfect courtesy toward all people.

And you're like, Paul, wait. Oh, we're in the midst of difficult situations, and now you're just like telling us you've got to live this way. How do we do that? In the midst of difficult situations.
In the midst of dealing with difficult people. And it's interesting in verse 3 that he grounds this command, remind them to be these kinds of things, with this reason.
Because 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.
What's the point? What's the point in remembering that we used to be some of those same kinds of people that now we're having to deal with?
[11:31] Here's what I found in my life. A great sin killer that will help you and me live with people who are foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, who pass their days in malice and envy and sin, who are hated by others, who hate others.

is to realize that apart from God's grace, that used to be you and me. So we're not up on a pedestal saying, oh, how dare you, looking down on them.
No, we understand. That was me apart from God's grace. I used to be that kind of person. And I didn't deserve God's grace. I didn't deserve God's goodness.
I didn't deserve God's love. And that begins to melt away the pride and the anger and the bitterness. And it begins to cultivate compassion and love.
I thank the Lord He didn't treat us as our sins deserve. And often like we treat others. So it's good to remember who we were, the kind of people that we were before God saved us.
[12:45] The dead in our trespasses and sins. By nature, children of wrath. Like those people that annoy us, that frustrate us, that get in our nerves.

And God had shown His goodness to us. And that begins to work in me the kind of qualities that then, by God's grace, I can show to them.
This brings us to Paul's second reminder, which is where we want to spend most of our time. Is to remember God's goodness. Not just to remember the bad news of who we were apart from Christ. The kind of people that God delights to save. But the second thing that will strengthen us and remind us and empower us and motivate us.
To live these kinds of lives in Christ. Is to remember God's goodness that He has extended and displayed and given to us.
[13:49] I want us to see four things about who God is and what God has done to change us. So that we can live like He's called us to live and enabled us to live.

By His Spirit. Now, these are four important words. Goodness, love, mercy, and grace.
But I'm of the persuasion. Many folks hold to this. That really, the chief kind of, the umbrella, overarching attribute.
When you're thinking about these four things. It's really goodness. And that God displays His goodness in love. God displays His goodness in mercy. God displays His goodness in grace.
And we'll talk about each kind of shade of distinction when we talk about these different things. But all of this is under the goodness of God. I had to do that because that was the title of my talk.
[14:50] So, I couldn't title it the goodness, love, grace, and mercy of God. We'll talk about the goodness of God. And show us how He does that in His goodness, grace, mercy, and love. Okay.

First, I want us to see in these verses. I'll read them here in a minute. That God is good and has been good to you. That's our first point. God is good and has been good to you.
So, this is what He says in verse 4. But. Massive contrast. This is who you were.
But. But. When the goodness and loving kindness of God, our Savior, appeared. He saved us. Not because of works done by us in righteousness.

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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 grace.
[15:51] We might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. And this 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. So I want us to see here just that first phrase. But when the goodness. Of God, our Savior, appeared.
Here's the definition of God's goodness. God's goodness means that God is the final standard of value, worth, honor, perfection, blessedness.
It's kind of synonyms. Value, worth, honor, value, perfection, blessedness.
And that all that God is and all that God does is worthy of approval. No one can say to God, what have you done?
[17:04] Even Job, who lost everything. Said the Lord gives. The Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. And in all of this, right?

In attributing the loss of all things to God, ultimately. Finally, Job did not charge God with wrongdoing.
He couldn't say, God, you're to blame for this. You are culpable for this. Why? Because God is good. And everything he does is good.
It's that perfection of God in which he shares his benevolence, his goodness with all people at all times, in all places. Now, I want to break up goodness kind of generally to all people at all times, in all places, and then specially or savingly.
Because it's not just Christians who experience God's goodness, right? It's not as though like, you know, Christians walk around like we have like 70 degree San Diego, sunny weather on our heads. And then like the unbeliever, the non-Christian next to us is like under a rain cloud the whole time with like lightning striking him or her.
[18:16] Right? No. Matthew 5 tells us, Jesus tells us, that God makes the sun to rise on the shine on the just and unjust and the rain to fall on the righteous and unrighteous.

That's a gift of his goodness to all creation. Constant refrain in Genesis 1, right? God saw all that he had made and it was good.
Then it was good. Then it was good. Then it was good. Then it was good. And on the sixth day, it was very good. That's a value statement, right? It was good. And it was very good because God is good all the way down to the depths of his very being.
He can be nothing else. He can be no other. Psalm 104, verse 28. Oh, Lord, how manifold.
After going through the intricacies and the order and wisdom of creation of God, people planting plants and God causing them to grow and in the rain and the clouds and the produce and the fruit and the animals and the cows and all these kinds of things.
[19:19] He comes to the end of kind of this climactic verse and he just worships God. Oh, Lord, how manifold are your works. In wisdom, you've made them all. The earth is full of your creatures.

These all look to you. To give them food and their due season. And when you give it to them, they gather it up. And when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
Why? Because God is good. All people at all times and all places.
Paul in Acts 14 says the same thing. That God's appointed your boundaries. He's given you what you need to survive, to live. If you're alive today, it's because God has made it so.
He's given you what you need to survive. But the other way that God shows his goodness, especially or savingly, is in Christ.
[20:18] And this is what Titus 3 goes on to say. And we'll talk about it. Many Psalms praise God for a saving goodness. Psalm 100 verse 5. Psalm 106 say the same thing.

Give thanks to the Lord. Why? For he is good. For a steadfast love endures forever. That's not just that like, oh, he does good on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.
No, he is good. All the way down. That's one way God is qualitatively different than us. It's not just that he has like a, you know, 99 or 100% goodness and we have like 40%.
And then over the course of our lives, we grow to 60 and 70 and 80. No. God's not quantitatively different. It can't be measured. He's qualitatively different.

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He is good. Perfectly. Absolutely. It's his very essence, his very nature to be good. And he shows this most fully in Christ.
[21:21] How else is God's goodness expressed? Well, we'll begin to kind of fill in some of the shading that we see this goodness expressed or displayed more fully.

This is found in our second point. That God is love and has been loving to you. We see that in verse 4. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us.
So love is that perfect expression of God's goodness in which he gives himself at a cost to himself. That kind of distinguishes general goodness from love. At which he gives himself at a cost to himself.
We see this in all kinds of ways, right? For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. See, God's goodness is expressed in his love, which is self-giving.
[22:39] He gave himself in the person of his son. He gave him to all people at all times and all places. To all who would receive, repent, and believe in him.

And yet we also know that there is a, just like there's general goodness, there's also special or saving love. Yes, God loves the world.
But he loves his people in Christ in a special and unique saving way. Now, this special love has often been criticized because people think, Oh, I deserve God's love.
We all deserve the same. Everyone gets a trophy. Even though you're last place. Well, I'm sorry, but you don't. I tell my sons that when they lose. I'm like, you lost.
You're not a winner. You don't deserve a trophy. Get out of here. No, I'm sorry. I don't say that. You're like, this guy's a terrible parent. Well, you can talk to my kids about that.
[23:42] They may be counseling later. But no, we understand that just in human relationships. We have different kinds of love for one another, right? I love my wife different than I love my children.

I love my children different than I love you. If I didn't, that would be weird. There wasn't different kinds of love. Borderline gross.
We get that, right? Just in human relationships. How much more so, God? That's why 1 John 3, 1 says, See, marvel, behold the kind of love.
You see the word there? See the kind of love that the Father has given to us. The kind of love that makes us children of God. Unbelievers don't get to experience, taste, enjoy, live in that kind of love. We want them to. The kind of love. The special love. The saving love that makes us sons and daughters of God.
[24:49] Friends, what a gift. Do you marvel at this kind of love that God has shown you in Christ? That means a lot for me because I lost my father, my earthly father, when I was 18.

And I loved my dad. And I loved being his son. And it was actually through my dad's death that paved the way for God to draw me to faith in Christ. After about three years of living in sin and hopelessness and despair.
I wanted to take my own life. God saved me. And through my earthly father's death, I gained a heavenly father. And I become a son like no other. That's a gift.
That we get to call God our father. And I pray that you never, you never grow weary of saying those precious words that Jesus instructed his disciples to say.
Our father in heaven. Because the world can't say that. Only those who are in the son can say that. The son who is by nature has made us sons and daughters by grace.
[25:52] And we get to call him father. See the kind of love that the father has given to us. And this is the staggering thing that we need to be reminded of.

Over and over and over. Is that we don't deserve this kind of love. It's freely given. It's undeserved. And isn't that what we're looking for?
I mean, think about. You probably read about this and heard about this. Maybe you experienced it. The loneliness epidemic that we're in right now. It's fueled by all kinds of factors. You got the effects of COVID and social media.
The anxious generation. Broken families. Broken relationships. Isn't it good to know that we can experience a kind of love and acceptance and knowing and fellowship that the world can't even match?
And we have that kind of love to give to others. Who are struggling with these same kinds of things.
Third. God is merciful. And has been merciful to you.

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[27:07] We see that in these verses. He saved us, verse 5. Not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy.

Mercy. It's the source of his salvation. His mercy. Mercy is that perfection of God's goodness in which he gives himself to the helpless and needy.
Or those who are in a pitiful state. Pitiful state.
Notice what it doesn't say. It's always good to pay attention, to be careful with words. Notice it doesn't say, But when our goodness and our loving kindness appeared, God saved us.
Because of our works done in righteousness. No, it doesn't say that. It's quite the opposite. But we were passing our days in malice and envy. We were born dead in our trespasses and sins.
[28:14] We were by nature children of wrath. We were passing our days in sin. Not doing what's spiritually pleasing to the Lord by nature and by choice. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God, our Savior, appeared, he saved us.

Not because of our works done in righteousness, but according to his own mercy. Isn't it good to know that God was not indifferent or disinterested toward you in your sinful and pitiful state?
We're not saved because of what we've done. And so he won't discard us because of what we've done. He saves us and he keeps us on the basis of what Jesus Christ has done.
And here's kind of a trick question I used to ask my theology classes. Are we saved? I'll ask you this. Are we saved on the basis of works? Raise your hand if you think yes.
We are saved on the basis of works. Raise your hand if you think no. Tricky. Now, it is a trick question.
[29:32] Because Scripture says we're saved by grace. Through faith in Christ alone. Not by our works. But yet we are saved by works.

But it's not our works. We're saved by Christ's works. That's the trick question. So if you're kind of thinking with me, you're like, that's great. But that's really important. Because we revel in the work of Christ.
Who lived the life we couldn't live. Who died the death we deserve to die. Who paid the penalty that we couldn't pay because of our sin. And who was raised from the dead. So that we might die to sin and might live to God.
On the basis of His righteous life and obedience. So we're not saved based on what we've done. So He will never discard us because of what He's done.
I mean, think about the Israelites in Exodus chapter 2. You remember the context of the Israelites in Exodus where, you know, they lived some good days under Pharaoh.
[30:29] Under Joseph. Right? But then Joseph died. And there's a Pharaoh that kind of came who didn't know Joseph. Right? And he started treating the Israelites harshly. Forced labor. Slavery.

They were enslaved and burdened and distressed beyond measure. And Exodus 2 tells us that during those many days the king of Egypt died and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried for help.
And their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God said, I don't have time for you. No, He didn't say that. No, God heard their groaning.
God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God saw the people of Israel and God knew. God had mercy on them and acted to save them.
He saw them in their pitiful condition. Their pitiful, helpless, lowly estate. And God acted. He led them from the hands of the Egyptians and out of that land into the land of promise.
[31:35] Canaan. Where they were fruitful and multiply. Not on the basis of what they've done, but on the basis of God's grace and love and mercy.

And as great as that mercy was, His mercy in Christ is more. That song just came to me. I want to write. It's called His Mercy is More. Just kidding. It is a song.
I'll probably sing it. Y'all don't laugh at my jokes. That's okay. My kids don't either. In my head, it's really funny, though. No, God's mercy is more in Christ.
In fact, one of my favorite passages is in Hebrews 2, where it says of Jesus that, and speaking of the greatness and how the Son is greater, greater than Adam, greater than creatures, greater than angels.
It says that though He is great, He became like us in every way. He shared in our flesh and blood.

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[32:40] So the one who's highly lifted up became low. The one who is in the form of God took on the form of a servant. Philippians 2 tells us. And He humbled Himself to the point of death, even death on a cross.

So Hebrews 2 says that He shared in our flesh and blood. Why? To do two things. To destroy the devil and to deliver us from slavery. And He has this curious comment.
He says, and it's not angels that He helps, but He helps the offspring of Abraham. Right? In other words, He didn't become an angel to save angels. He became an offspring of Abraham to save the offspring of Abraham.
Now in Christ, we are the offspring of Abraham, Galatians 3 tells us. So He became one of us. He didn't become an angel. Didn't become a cow to save cows.
Didn't become a dog to save dogs. He sure as heck wouldn't have come to be a cat. Those didn't exist until Genesis 3 after the fall. Those are not in the original garden.
[33:43] No, He came to help the offspring of Abraham. And I love this comment. And He says, He had to be made like them so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God.

Do you see that? He had to. He voluntarily chose to. So that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest.
It doesn't say so that He might become a disgruntled and impatient high priest. Why do I say that? Well, if you're like me, and you sin for that umpteenth time, the same sin, and you're like, oh, again, I'm praying.
I've been seeking accountability. I put guards, accountability around me. And here I stumble and fall again. And you want to be like Adam and Eve.
You want to flee from His presence. Because do you think that when you go to God, He's going to be impatient. He's going to be like, oh. Or again. And for the thousandth time, I'm so tired of you.
[35:03] Fine. Begrudgingly, I'll forgive you. No. When you look metaphorically, when you look into the eyes of Jesus, what do you see in those eyes?

It makes me think of, I used to think, you remember the story of Peter when he rejected Jesus and fulfilled one of Jesus' words.
He betrayed Him and denied Him three times. And then he's walking later on, and his eyes meet Jesus. Do you remember this story? And it says that Peter wept. And I used to think that Peter wept because Jesus had to look at, my parents used to often have when they looked at me, because I was a terrible kid.
After every report card came out, my mom was always like, we know you can't make good academic grades. We know you well enough. Like, thanks, Mom. But at least you can make good conduct grades, and you can't even do that.
That was terrible. And I used to walk in and see the look of disappointment. I knew they loved me. But I saw disappointment and frustration in their eyes.
[36:07] And I used to think that's what Peter saw in Jesus' eyes. But according to Hebrews 2, I think Peter wept because he saw the mercy in Jesus' eyes, that he might become a faithful and merciful high priest.

And Peter wept over the mercy of God that Jesus showed him. Friend, do you weep? Does it move you? To consider Jesus and the mercy that he has on you.
Even for the thousandth time, Jesus says, come to me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. He never says, ugh, again?
No. He says, come. And I will give you out of my own abundant goodness and love and mercy and grace what you need to be forgiven, to be restored, to be renewed, to be cleansed, to be filled with joy.
Lastly, God is gracious and has been gracious to you. We see this here. He saved us, according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration, renewal of the Holy Spirit.
[37:21] Those are two, it's a literary device that's two things that denote one reality from different perspectives. Whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

For what purpose? So that, being justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. So God has been gracious to you.
God has put us in the right by his grace, not on the basis of our works. So grace is that perfection of God's goodness in which he freely, undeservedly, gives himself to us, the undeserving.

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The perfection of God's goodness in which he gives himself, freely, undeservingly, to the undeserving. We don't have time to unpack, right, this glorious doctrine of justification which sparked a reformation for Luther and the reformers.
But it set them free because for Luther, he had a tortured conscience because he knew no matter what he did, he couldn't please God. He couldn't earn God's approval because God was holy, holy, holy as we heard yesterday.
[38:37] And what set Luther's heart on fire is Romans, one of the verses, was Romans 3, that being justified as a gift by his grace through the redemption of sin in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation, as a sacrifice of atonement for our sin.

Luther knew he couldn't be justified by his own works. So Luther was set free because he was justified on the basis of the work of another.
Jesus Christ, the righteous, and we have in there that great exchange whereby Jesus says, all that I am and all that I have is yours. And all that you are and all that you have is mine.
This is 2 Corinthians 5, 21, that he made him who knew no sin to be sin in our place that we might become the righteousness of God in him. Christ says, I'll become sin for him and her and so that they can become.
In me, righteousness. They have a new identity as sons and daughters of adopted children of God. That glorious doctrine of being just, of being counted right before a holy God.
[39:47] And how has he done all this? That little phrase, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. He did that by his Holy Spirit who breaks in our blind eyes and hard hearts, opens our eyes to behold the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Who opens our hard hearts, who once were delighting in sin, to delight in the things of God. It's what Jesus said when he says to his disciples, this is the new covenant, the cup and the bread that signifies his broken body and his shed blood of the new covenant.
What's that new covenant? The new covenant that Ezekiel 36 speaks of when the Messiah would come and he would remove our hearts of stone and he would give us hearts of flesh and he would write his law, not on tablets of stone, but on our hearts.
And he would give us his spirit to cleanse us and to cause us to walk in his righteousness, to walk in his statutes. Something that old covenant believers never enjoy, we get to enjoy new hearts, new minds, new wills, so that we want to, we can, and we will believe and obey.
And the spirit works according to Jesus in ways that Jesus says he'll take from me and make it known to you and glorify me. In other words, the spirit helps us in our weakness by directing our eyes to Jesus in whom we have every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.
[41:29] That's why Robert Murray McShane says learn much of the Lord Jesus. For every look at yourself, take ten looks at Christ. He is altogether lovely, such infinite majesty, yet such meekness and grace.

And for sinners, even the chief, friend, he says, live much in the smiles of God. Bask in his beams, feel his all-seeing eye settled on you in love.
Right? That expression of his goodness. And rest in his almighty arms. So when we reflect on God's goodness displayed to us in love and mercy and grace, I have just a few concluding thoughts.
One, what does it produce? One, it produces repentance. Paul says in Romans 2 that God's kindness, right, which again, his mercy is an expression of his goodness to those in a pitiful state. God's kindness leads us to repentance. If you are in sin, if you are caught in sin, if you are living in sin, if you are struggling with a besetting sin, let God's mercy, his kindness lead you to repentance to not hold on to it but to let go of it.
[42:42] Secondly, reflecting on God's goodness produces praise. When we understand more deeply the goodness that God has shed abroad in our hearts by his spirit we're filled with praise and worship.

I mean, how will we witness to other people with our faith? Here's how, by being happy in God. Who has been good to you in Christ? That your circumstances can't change your state and your status before God?
That Christ is for you your wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

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Lastly, it produces confidence and assurance. When we rest in God's goodness we're comforted by God's undeserved free goodness, love, mercy and grace that's been extended to us and lavished upon us.
God's not stingy. He doesn't just give us just enough. No, he lavishes his grace on us. Not because of what we've done but because of who he is and what Christ has done.
[44:10] And so, how do we respond? Well, I want to read what was read before we began to sing.

One way we respond is with Psalm 67. May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us.
Can I tell you if you are in Christ God has made his face to shine upon you. You have everything you need in Christ.
to the full. Jesus says, I came that you might have my joy and that in me your joy might be made full. Where does that joy come from?
The very inner life of God, the Holy Trinity. He gives us that joy. And so, God has blessed us. God has been gracious to us. But why?
[45:09] Here's what I want us to see. That, here's the purpose. that your way may be known on the earth. Your saving power among all nations. Friend, God has blessed us with new identities in Christ.

We've died to sin. We're alive to God in Christ Jesus. We've been raised to walk in the newness of life. We've been seated with Christ in the heavenly places. We've been adopted. We've been forgiven. We've been kind of righteous. We've been redeemed. We've been given the gift of the Holy Spirit who is the down payment, the guarantee of our inheritance to come.
Friends, he's done all that we need. He's given us all that we need. But God has blessed us so that that's important. Because we have a tendency to disconnect the blessings of God from the purpose of God.
We're blessed not for ourselves and to not make ourselves look great or our churches look great. But we are blessed so that we might proclaim our great God and Savior.
and he invites us to participate in his mission of taking the gospel to the nations. And God has blessed us so that the nations might worship him.
[46:23] You've probably heard this quote from John Piper of missions exist because worship doesn't. Missions exist because worship doesn't.

Why do we worship? Well, we worship because of what you've heard this week. We worship because of our great God. Who is like the Lord? There is no other. We worship because of who God is.
You get that? Because of his attributes. Because of who he is and what he's done. So in other words, we worship because of good theology. Theology fuels worship and worship fuels missions. Do you get the connection? So don't let this theology stay here. Take it with you and let it fuel your worship and let it fuel your desire to go and to proclaim this great God and Savior who saved you so that you might be a blessing and might share this gospel with others.
So worship. Sing the gospel to your neighbors and sing the gospel to the nations because of who our great God and Savior is.
[47:30] Let's pray. Father in heaven, we thank you for your word. Thank you for who you are and all that you've done for us in Christ. Thank you for saving us. Thank you for blessing us. Thank you for making your face shine upon us.

May we hear and be stirred and motivated to hear so that your name might be proclaimed among the nations so that the nations might know you and worship you and that you would use us toward that end.
We ask in Christ's name. Amen. amen.anan. fathers. termin I am.

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