

Series: *Titus: The Gospel for Godly Living*
Lesson: *Gospel-Made Garments*
Text: Titus 2:11-15 (L5)
Date: Sunday, December 4, 2011

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Key



= Teacher Information



= Discussion Starter

INTRODUCTION

Last week, we considered the first 10 verses of Titus 2 under the heading “Godly Garments.” We were reminded that genuine belief will be authenticated by godly behavior, and we learned that Paul wanted Titus to teach the Cretan believers what behavior fits with belief, what practice matches with a Christian profession, what good deeds complement good doctrine. Titus’ message was to be, “Believers, wear an appropriate outfit! Put on godly garments!”

We now move to part 2 of Paul’s fuller discussion in Titus 2, and in verses 11-14, he provides instruction on how to get dressed. While the first 10 verses discuss behavior that matches belief, Paul now demonstrates that such behavior is designed by the gospel.

Life, according to Paul in Titus 2, can be summarized by one main objective: *adorn (vv. 2-10) your Savior (vv. 11-14)*. We should strive to make our Savior God compelling and attractive. And this objective should never be minimized and this call should never be disdained (vv. 1, 15). The believer’s mission statement in Titus 1:1-4 is given as a result of God’s mission statement, now discovered in Titus 2:11-14. Let’s take these thoughts further:¹

[1] Throughout this little epistle, God is primarily revealed to be a saving God (cf. Titus 1:3, 4; 2:10, 13; 3:4, 6). That role is His chief manifestation to man throughout Scripture (cf. Isaiah 12:2; 43:11; 45:21; Matthew 1:21; Luke 2:28-30; 3:6 [Isaiah 40:5]; 19:10; John 1:14, 16; I Timothy 2:3). And the major message God wants to communicate to the world is that He can save.

[2] The way He communicates that is to demonstrate it through saved people (Titus 2:1-10; cf. Romans 1:16-17²), and if saved people don’t act like saved people then God’s not getting His message across—they are hindering it (Titus 2:5, 8, 10). Saved people, then, become the evidence that God can save.

[3] God wants to reach the lost with convincing evidence, and the key to that evidence is in transformed lives. As we live saved lives, we will be lights to

¹To help the reader follow the flow of thought that follows, numbers in brackets have been supplied before each progressing idea. These thoughts are mainly a summary of John MacArthur’s teaching in his sermon on Titus 2:11, entitled “Saving Grace, Part 1,” preached May 2, 1993 and his commentary *Titus* in *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996), p. 105.

²The power of the Gospel is that it provides salvation that is based on righteousness. Such righteousness, then, vindicates God’s ability to save.

God's salvation (cf. Daniel 2:3; Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:15).³ Obviously, we must speak the truth (Titus 1; cf. Romans 10:14-17), but getting someone to listen to it is dependent upon the demonstration of its power they've seen in the life of believers.

[4] To summarize, Paul says in Titus 3:8, "They which have believed in God [should] be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men" (cf. Titus 2:14; Ephesians 2:10). The Lord saved us, then, with a view to creating within us a zeal for good works so that we may impact those around us with the reality that God saves!

So, while it is incumbent upon us to develop the behaviors, etc. of Titus 2:2-10 (cf. I Timothy 4:7-8), we are reminded in Titus 2:11-14, that these behaviors are part-and-parcel of what God has already done in our lives through His gospel of grace. They go hand-in-glove with His fuller redemptive plan of which we are now a part through faith. Truly, these godly garments are gospel-made garments.

In this second part of Titus 2, Paul delineates four ways in which God's saving grace overcomes sin and issues us these godly garments. Using the exhortation of Jerry Bridges in *The Discipline of Grace*,⁴ we should preach these four aspects of the gospel to ourselves daily in order to be motivated and empowered to put on our godly, gospel-made garments for the glory of God and the evangelism of the world.

First, we should preach to ourselves that...

GOD SAVES US FROM THE PENALTY OF SIN (v. 11).

Verse 11 can be literally translated, "For the grace of God showed itself, bringing salvation for all men." Notice three observations about this saving grace of God.

1. *Saving grace is revealed in the Person of Jesus Christ.*

"God's grace" is His undeserved favor toward corrupt, unworthy sinners by which He rescues them from condemnation and grants them Himself. God's grace is not simply an attribute, attitude, or force. It is also a Person,



What are some biblical illustrations of someone listening to the truth after they've seen it lived out in another's life? *The Philippian jailor after He witnessed Paul's and Silas' confidence in prison*

³ "It is faithful believers who know, live, and reflect God's redeeming truth so that others are led to belief who will shine like stars forever in His heavenly kingdom. It is God's gracious plan to demonstrate His saving power through His saved people. Just as 'the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost' (Luke 19:10), so should the purpose be of those whom the Son has already sought and saved. The sovereign purpose of all exhortations to holy living in Scripture is to honor and glorify God through the righteous living of His people, leading to the salvation of more sinners" (MacArthur, p. 105).

⁴ Bridges, Jerry. *The Discipline of Grace*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2006. P. 26.

for in Jesus Christ, grace became incarnate. The word "appeared" is the Greek verb *epiphaino* and means to show, reveal, manifest, or bring to light, especially with regards to that which was previously unseen or unknown. The word is passive, here, indicating that this Grace was showing itself or making itself known, further demonstrating the personality of this grace. In Jesus Christ, God's gracious plan of redemption was clearly revealed in full light.

With only one exception,⁵ this word is used throughout the New Testament to refer to Jesus' advents (i.e. first or second⁶). In II Timothy 1:9-10, Paul reminds Timothy that God "hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing [Gk. noun *epiphaneia*] of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Likewise to Titus, Paul would write that we were saved "after...the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared [*epiphaino*]" (Titus 3:4-5). So, Jesus Christ is grace incarnate, kindness incarnate, and God's love incarnate (cf. John 1:14, 16). Jesus Christ revealed to us many things about God, but primarily He wanted to communicate the saving grace, kindness, and love of God our Savior.

2. *Saving grace is expressed in the deliverance from sin.*

Our passage tells us that when the Gracious One, Jesus Christ, appeared, He brought salvation, deliverance, and rescue. While the passage will go on to emphasize three subsequent aspects of God's saving grace, this is the starting point of the gospel of grace. Jesus died to save sinful human beings from the penalty of sin.

God is not merely concerned with our physical well-being. While He certainly has the power to deliver from physical harm and death (cf. Daniel 3:24-27; 6:19-22; Mark 4:39), He came to save people from sinful harm and death (Matthew 1:21). Since "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), our greatest problem is that we are in danger of judgment from the One who "is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). It is from such eternal danger that God's gracious salvation in Jesus Christ delivers us, paying the penalty by taking our place (v. 14) and granting us eternal life (v. 13).⁷

⁵ Acts 27:20—"And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared [*epiphaino*]..."

⁶ First advent—II Timothy 1:10; Titus 2:11; 3:4 (also cf. Luke 1:79). Second advent—II Thessalonians 2:8; I Timothy 6:14; II Timothy 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13. Because of this consistent usage, we refer to Christ's comings as epiphanies of Christ.

⁷ John MacArthur summarized, "The single word salvation sums up the longing of God that is manifested in His redemptive work, because it denotes deliverance, rescue, and release from sin" (MacArthur, p. 107). Furthermore, "The very point of the redemptive grace of God through Jesus Christ is to save men from the corruption and damnation of sin—sin that debilitates and

While God's Word assures us that such salvation is ongoing (cf. Romans 6-8) and permanent (cf. John 6:37; 10:28; Romans 8:28-38), the emphasis on the evangelistic purpose of God's saving demonstrations in people also argues for such eternal security.⁸ On the one hand, if God's salvation could be forfeited by one's lack of faithfulness or practical righteousness, then it would be evident that God's grace lacks eternal keeping power, and our testimony to bring unbelievers to God would be undermined. On the other hand, if a professing believer persists in sin, casts aside his faith, and rejects God's lordship, his testimony is also impaired because it testifies likewise of a God weak in total saving ability.⁹

So, while God's saving grace begins with the manifestation of Christ to rescue us from sin's penalty and condemnation, His redemptive power does not end there, as we will clearly see in verses 12-14.

3. *Saving grace is available for all people.*

"To [or better for] all men" demonstrates that the offer of this deliverance is extended to all people. This does not refer to the universality of salvation, but to the universal opportunity for salvation. God is "not willing that any should perish" (II Peter 3:9) and desires for "all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4). Thus, He commands "all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

I Timothy 4:10 teaches that God "is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe." This verse teaches that God's salvation could be seen as universal in one sense—that is, God universally delays judgment and grants temporal blessings (Matthew 5:45; Acts 17:25; Romans 12:2; I Corinthians 10:1-5).¹⁰ However, when it comes to the actual salvation from sin and death, God's redemption will be more specifically applied. The gospel is good news to "all men" because it declares that the means of salvation has been provided for all men, but they must believe to have it personally applied (John 3:16; 5:24; 6:35, 37; 10:9; Romans 10:11, 13). Some are not saved and are therefore condemned under sin's penalty, then, because they

crushes human life, that separates sinners from a holy God, and that persists in unredeemed mankind like an incurable and fatal disease" (Ibid., p. 106).

⁸ Ibid., p. 107.

⁹ "Those twin truths have significance not only in regard to personal salvation but also in regard to world evangelization. If God is unable to keep a believer saved or to purify his life after he is saved, He has nothing by which to demonstrate His saving grace to a lost and condemned world" (Ibid., p. 108).

¹⁰ "Christ's sacrifice has certainly purchased for the whole human race a merciful postponement of the doom incurred by our sins, including all the temporal blessings of our earthly life, all the gospel restraints upon human depravity, and the sincere offer of heaven to all. For, but for Christ, man's doom would have followed instantly after his sin, as that of the fallen angels did" (R. L. Dabney, quoted in Ibid., p. 109).

"have not faith" (II Thessalonians 3:2; John 5:38, 40; 8:24).¹¹ The extent of Christ's atonement is not limited (Isaiah 53:6; John 1:29; I Timothy 2:5-6; I John 2:2); mankind's response is (Mark 16:16; John 3:18). Thus, we conclude with the classic statement: "Christ's atonement is *sufficient* for the whole world, but is *efficient* only for those who believe."¹²

Illustration: Most of us do not even stop to think about what happens inside our car when we turn the key in the ignition. However, the mechanics of how an automobile engine works are quite intriguing. Located within that engine 4 to 8 cylinders containing the pistons and the spark plugs. As the pistons move downward, air and fuel is drawn into the cylinder. The pistons then move upward compressing the fuel-air mixture. The spark plugs at the top of the cylinder finally ignite the mixture causing the engine to start. Without the spark plugs, you'd have a lot of fuel, but no power to use it.

Application: Many folks effortlessly attempt to don the godly garments of Titus 2:2-10, but consistently find themselves frustrated and defeated. Those garments seem all too foreign to them. It may be that the spark to such distinct change has never been lit by the incarnate Grace of God in their hearts. Others never seem too concerned that their lifestyle match the fitting wardrobe of the first half of this chapter. It may also be they've never experienced God's gracious salvation from sin's penalty, and so sin's power doesn't seem too haunting either. At the very least, they've taken such grace for granted and have failed to recognize the poor testimony their gospel-less garments bring to the saving nature of God. A third group of people find themselves habitually living a lifestyle of vv. 2-10, but it is generated more out of duty than anything else. They would be wise to recognize the God-ordained energizing power of the gospel spoken of by Jerry Bridges in his book *Respectable Sins*:

The gospel motivates and energizes me to deal with my sin [and positively practice righteousness]....The assurance that God no longer counts my sin against me does two things. First it assures me that God is for me, not against me (see Romans 8:31)....Further, [it]...produces within me a strong sense of gratitude for what He has done and is presently doing for me through Christ. This twofold effect of encouragement and gratitude together produce in us a desire to deal with our sin. Make no mistake: dealing with our sin is not an option....It is our duty to do so. But duty without desire soon produces

¹¹ Not because they are not elected—"Men are not condemned because God has not chosen them but because they have not chosen Him" (Ibid., p. 110).

¹² Ibid., p. 112. NOTE: Those who believe will be shown to be those who were chosen by God in eternity past. While there is mystery surrounding God's election of believers, it is a wonderful doctrine intended to fuel the worship of believers, not determine one's methodology of evangelism. While this is an issue you may want to avoid with your table, John MacArthur has a tremendous discussion over universality, election, and double predestination in Ibid., pp. 108-112.


drugery. *And it is the truth of the gospel, reaffirmed in our hearts daily, that puts desire into our duty. It is the gospel that strokes the fire of our motivation to deal with our respectable and subtle sins [and to live righteously]. It is the gospel that motivates us to seek to be in our daily experience what we are in our standing before God.*¹³

Transition: Our godly garments have been gospel-made, and to help us get appropriately dressed daily so that people will be drawn to our Savior God, we will need to preach the gospel to ourselves regularly. The first aspect of God's saving work to rehearse is that God saves us from sin's penalty. Moving now to verse 12, we discover secondly that God saves us from sin's power.

GOD SAVES US FROM THE POWER OF SIN (v. 12).

In verse 12, grace is pictured as a teacher, trainer, guide, or counselor instructing us how to live. That's the meaning of the word "instruct" (*paideuo*), from which we get our English word "pedagogy." Immediately after rescuing us from sin's penalty, the incarnate Grace of God begins to disciple us (I Corinthians 2:12-16) through God's Spirit and God's Word (II Corinthians 3:18) so that we continue to be transformed from the old to the new (II Corinthians 5:17). See, in one sense, God's salvation is already complete—that is, we've been completely saved from sin's penalty and dominion, and our position in Christ is final; but on another level, our salvation is still waiting completion—that is, we're still being saved from sin's power on a daily basis, becoming in practice what we are in position.

By way of illustration: "By His divine grace, [when we believe] Jesus Christ completely reprograms our computers, as it were. He throws away the old disks and deletes the previous programs and files—all of which were permeated with errors and destructive 'viruses'—and graciously replaces them with His own divine truth and righteousness" (cf. Galatians 2:20).¹⁴ Nonetheless, on a daily basis we need to cooperate with such grace and "present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification" (Romans 6:19; cf. Colossians 3:9-10). This process that we call sanctification—or salvation from sin's power—is the ongoing saving work of God to separate us from sin and unto righteousness. This process provides the personal proof of salvation from sin's condemnation and the evidence that authenticates God's awesome saving ability to those who are still lost.

 Whose responsibility is one's sanctification? It is a cooperative work between God and us—"dependent responsibility" as Jerry Bridges puts it (cf. *Philippians 2:12-13*)


¹³ Bridges, Jerry. *Respectable Sins*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2007. Pp. 35-36.

¹⁴ MacArthur, pp. 113-114.

As we consider the lesson plan of our saving Teaching (cf. I Corinthians 1:30), we notice two aspects of His agenda.


1. *Saving grace's lesson plan: the negative aspect*

Negatively, God's grace teaches us how not to live. It teaches us to "deny," refuse, or say "no" to certain characteristics. The verb here suggests a disdain of those qualities (cf. Hebrews 11:24) and thus a disregard and renouncing of them (cf. Luke 9:23). The picture is not a Daniel who "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat" (Daniel 1:8); rather, the idea is a Daniel who pushed the plate away, even when there were no encouragements to do right.

 How are we prone to display ungodliness in our daily lives? *Discovering that a prayer at lunch is the first time we thought about or talked to God; making choices without prayer or "if God wills"; leaning unto our own understanding; ignoring His Word & conviction; rejecting His people; etc.*

What grace teaches us to renounce in this passage is "ungodliness and worldly lusts." "Ungodliness" refers to a lack of reverence for and devotion to God, and it decisively earns God's wrath (Romans 1:18). There can be different degrees of ungodliness (II Timothy 2:16), and ungodliness can be expressed externally (Jude 15) as a manifestation of an ungodly heart (Jude 18). However, a much more mundane, but just as sinful expression is seen in the one who doesn't give God any consideration in his daily choices, plans, and pursuits. As one version translates Psalm 10:4, "In all his thoughts there is no room for God" (NIV). This, I believe, is the root of all other sins.¹⁵ Such a mindset is completely antithetical to the grace of God, and it undermines our profession and evangelism.

"Worldly lusts," while including the so-called "serious" sins of passion (cf. II Timothy 2:22; I Peter 2:11; I Timothy 6:9), also include any desire that is grounded in this temporal world apart from God. Both concepts ("ungodliness" and "worldly lusts") address our hearts, demonstrating the genuine transformation that grace will accomplish from the inside out, recreating us into a new kind of person—one like Jesus Christ.

 What would some of these worldly lusts be? *materialism; overinfatuation with clothing, recreation, videos, sports, etc.; overindulgence in work; etc.*

2. *Saving grace's lesson plan: the positive aspect*

It's easy to focus on what we should avoid in the Christian life, but sometimes we fail to understand that a failure to positively do God's will for our transformed life is also sin. Such a failure is what God's grace

¹⁵ Bridges, *Respectable Sins*, pp. 53-61.

teaches us to overcome, for “as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 5:21).

In particular, God’s grace teaches us to actively live “soberly, righteously, and godly.” “Soberly” refers to having “understanding about practical matters and thus be[ing] able to act sensibly—to have sound judgment, to be sensible, to use good sense, sound judgment.”¹⁶ Someone who is “sober” has control over the issues of life, exercising discernment so that he is not distracted, impaired, or led astray by that which is sinful or simply trivial. This quality was foundational to the wardrobe expected of believers earlier in the book (cf. 1:8; 2:2, 5, 6), and is now shown to be cultivated in us as we cooperate with God’s saving work.

“Righteously” simply means living in accordance with the standards God sets forth in His Word; in other words, living obediently and blamelessly. “Godly” stresses living that is in close communion with and devotion to God, opposite the ungodliness that is in the fabric of our sinful nature.¹⁷



What does such discerning, righteous, and godly living look like? What are some general manifestations of it? *a carefulness rather than hastiness in one’s priorities and choices; an attempt to bring every aspect of one’s life into conformity with God’s Word; a regular desire to know what God thinks about such and such a matter or decision; etc.*

Notice further, though, that Paul asserts that we can and must live this way “in this present world” or age. These godly and gospel-made garments are a living and powerful testimony that our God is a saving God.

Illustration: The Television series, *Monk*, highlights a renowned former homicide detective for the San Francisco Police Department, Adrian Monk, who suffers from severe obsessive-compulsive disorder and multiple phobias. In every episode, there is a scene in which he is in a room that has a noticeable blemish (i.e., curtains hanging at different levels, blinds messed up, crumbs on the table, etc.). Such imperfections drive Adrian crazy, and the humor is watching him try to ignore those messes, which he is always unable to do. When Adrian gets put in an unorganized, untidy room, he always goes to work to straighten things out. That’s just what he does; he’s a perfectionist.

¹⁶ Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*. Electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996.

¹⁷ “Our gracious instruction could be seen as three dimensional. The first, living sensibly, could relate to the divine and continuing change within us. The second, living righteously, connects with our changed relationship toward others, both saved and unsaved. The third, living godly, may refer to our changed relationship to God Himself” (MacArthur, p. 116).

Application: In the same way, God’s grace in the life of a redeemed “student” is a changer; that’s just what it does. We are not saved by grace and then just left there. Saving grace is also sanctifying grace—it’s the same thing! God’s grace continues its work in our lives, teaching and empowering to live saved lives. But, while God is ultimately the One who creates change in us, it is our responsibility to learn and practice the lessons that grace teaches us—in other words, to do our homework.

The importance of this homework—this distinct lifestyle detailed in 2:2-10 and summarized with five phrases in 2:12—cannot be overemphasized. If the lessons of the great and gracious Teacher are never learned, the absence of those attributes demonstrates that the individual was never a student (i.e., recipient) of grace in the first place. Rather than humbly submitting to Christ by faith and allowing God’s continuing saving grace to teach him a salvation-laced lifestyle and clothe him with a gospel wardrobe, such an individual merely professes what he has denied in practice (cf. 1:16). Contrariwise, a genuine recipient of God’s salvation from sin’s penalty and power will live out that glorious new position in Christ (cf. Ephesians 2:1-3, 4-6), because he is a fundamentally new creation (II Corinthians 5:17), being regularly renewed into God’s image (Colossians 3:9-10) of discernment, righteousness, and godliness.

Furthermore, the gospel’s lesson plan has been ordained to be a powerful evangelistic tool. The gospel-wardrobe was always intended by God to be a strong attraction to His saving power (Matthew 5:16; I Timothy 1:16; I Peter 2:11-12). A failure to do our homework or wear the garments—that is, a failure to live a gracious, distinct, godly life—undermines the testimony to God’s saving desire and ability.

While some will charge this conclusion with legalism, it maintains integrity when compared with God’s Word.¹⁸ Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:8-10, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves—it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *for* good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them” (NASB, emphasis added).

Transition: We’ve considered two metaphors now that help us understand what life is all about. First, as a result of the personalization of the gospel through faith, we have been issued a new wardrobe with godly garments, with which we should be daily clothing ourselves so that the Designer is promoted. Secondly, our Savior has become our Teacher, guiding us in continued salvation-living so that His ability to completely save is underlined when we do our homework and live like a new, saved creation. As we progress into verse 13, we discover another aspect of the gospel that we should preach to

¹⁸ Cf. especially Matthew 10 and James 2:14-26.

ourselves regularly so that we are motivated and empowered to “walk worthy of the calling with which we’ve been called” (Ephesians 4:1). In verse 13, we learn thirdly that God has saved us, not only from sin’s penalty and power, but also from sin’s presence.

GOD SAVES US FROM THE PRESENCE OF SIN (vv. 13-14b).

What tremendous hope the apostle records for us here in verse 13.

1. *This hope provides confidence for believers.*

Considering the usage of the Greek word translated “looking for” (*prosdechomai*) in other similar New Testament passages,¹⁹ we learn that the word indicates both an eager and expectant awaiting. The object of such anticipation is our “blessed hope” in the return of Christ. Biblical hope is not a whim or a wish; it is an assuredness, a confidence that what we are hoping in will come to pass. This hope is a “blessed” or happy hope in that it is beneficial,²⁰ for it promises the return of Christ and a victorious conclusion to His saving program.

2. *This hope culminates God’s saving program.*

The verse records that our blessed hope is literally the “appearing [*epiphaneia*] of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” In his first epiphany, Christ personified grace; in His second epiphany, He will personify the brilliance of divine glory (cf. Matthew 17:1-8). The phrase “our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ” is one of the clearest declarations in Scripture of the deity of Jesus.²¹

John tells us what will happen at Christ’s return: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know

that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2). God’s recreation of sinful human beings will be completed when those who have believed in Christ will be “changed, for this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Corinthians 15:52-53; cf. Philippians 3:20-21). The glory of that age is detailed in Revelation 22:3-5 and is highlighted in verse 14 in our text by the phrase, “that He might redeem us from all iniquity.”

Illustration: Several years ago, a rather unfamiliar unsung hero walked down the aisle of fame in Super Bowl XXXVI. He had been with his team for almost seven full years already and had been a valuable asset. But on February 3, 2002, as his game-winning field goal soared between the uprights, Adam Vinatieri became one of the most familiar players to all New England Patriot fans. In a later interview, Vinatieri told how he had come to handle pressure so well. As a rookie, Vinatieri had his work cut out for him. The Patriots already had a great kicker, Matt Bahr, and in order to win the job, Vinatieri had to prove to coach Bill Parcells that he could make kicks when they counted. In practice Parcells would constantly challenge Vinatieri to see if he’d let distractions get to him when he kicked. Parcells would either stand right in front of Vinatieri or give him what he called a “ground whammy.” This forced and motivated Vinatieri to concentrate on the fundamentals of kicking and not on the situation. Throughout his career, that training paid off as Vinatieri came through with almost twenty high-pressure, game-winning kicks, and when his field goal clinched the win in Super Bowl XXXVI, those pressure situations were all forgotten in the glory of that exciting victory.

Application: Today, the pressures we face and the realization that one day those pressures will be removed per the message of the gospel provide great motivation for us to live lives that adorn our victorious Savior. We, too, need to focus on the goal—one that is not tentative, but assured—and keep our eyes ahead (cf. Philippians 3:11-14; II Timothy 4:8).

Have you allowed your focus to be diverted? Have you wavered in your evangelistic responsibility to magnify the saving ability of God through a lifestyle that evidences such power and purpose? Perhaps financial hardships, family difficulties, health concerns, or job insecurity has caused you to fall back from faith-filled gospel-living and become apathetic in your gospel-mission. Put your focus back on the “blessed hope.” Motivate yourself in the realization that what Christ began in your life when you accepted His salvation, He will complete in the future when He returns (Philippians 1:6; cf. Psalm 73:24).

Transition: As we’ve considered the saving grace of God in this passage and been impressed with a big picture of the gospel, we’re overwhelmed to consider everything Jesus meant when He cried, “It is finished!” from the cross (John 19:30). In a display of unmatched power and love, God has saved us from sin’s penalty, He is saving us from sin’s power, He will save us from sin’s

¹⁹ Cf. Mark 15:43; Luke 1:21; 2:25, 38; 23:51; Jude 21; see also a synonym in Romans 8:22-23

²⁰ Cf. Matthew 13:16; Acts 20:35

²¹ “The terms ‘God and Savior’ both refer to the same person, Jesus Christ. This is one of the clearest statements in the NT concerning the deity of Christ. The construction in Greek is known as the Granville Sharp rule, named after the English philanthropist-linguist who first clearly articulated the rule in 1798. Sharp pointed out that in the construction article-noun-καί-noun (where καί [*kai*] = ‘and’), when two nouns are singular, personal, and common (i.e., not proper names), they *always* had the same referent. Illustrations such as ‘the friend and brother,’ ‘the God and Father,’ etc. abound in the NT to prove Sharp’s point. The only issue is whether terms such as ‘God’ and ‘Savior’ could be considered common nouns as opposed to proper names. Sharp and others who followed (such as T. F. Middleton in his masterful *The Doctrine of the Greek Article*) demonstrated that a proper name in Greek was one that could not be pluralized. Since both ‘God’ (θεός, *theos*) and ‘savior’ (σωτήρ, *sōtēr*) were occasionally found in the plural, they did not constitute proper names, and hence, do fit Sharp’s rule. Although there have been 200 years of attempts to dislodge Sharp’s rule, all attempts have been futile. Sharp’s rule stands vindicated after all the dust has settled. For more information on Sharp’s rule see *ExSyn* 270-78, esp. 276. See also 2 Pet 1:1 and Jude 4” (NET Bible note #20 on v. 13).

presence, and finally God saves us from the purpose of sin. This is the final aspect of the gospel that we should preach to ourselves daily in order to cooperate with God in His saving plan for our world.

GOD SAVES US FROM THE PURPOSE OF SIN (v. 14).

Verse 14 ends in such a way as to tie together the whole theme of “the gospel for godly living” that has been emphasized in Titus 2. Paul records that our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ “gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Note two observations about our new purpose in Christ.

1. *God’s purpose starts with a change of possession.*

Prior to God’s grace, we were in total bondage to sin (Romans 6:5-7, 16; Ephesians 2:1-3; Hebrews 2:15). When God’s grace appeared in Christ, we were “redeemed” (Gk. *lutroo*) from that bondage. This word means to rescue someone from captivity by payment of a ransom (cf. Luke 24:21; I Peter 1:18-19; also see its usage in the LXX). According to this verse, we were enslaved to “iniquity” or lawlessness (Gk. *anomia*), which earns only death (cf. Matthew 24:12; II Thessalonians 2:3; Hebrews 1:9; I John 3:4). However, incarnate grace, kindness, and love appeared on our behalf to pay that ransom by giving Himself for us. This refers to the sacrifice of Christ upon Calvary in which He gave His life so that we wouldn’t have to give ours—He experienced death and sin’s penalty so that we might enjoy life and God’s presence (cf. Gk. *didomi* in Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; Luke 22:19; John 10:15; Galatians 1:4; 2:20; I Timothy 2:16; also see Acts 20:28; I Peter 1:8-19).

Because of that redemption, Christ is securing a special people that will be uniquely His own (cf. the LXX usage of *periousios* in Exodus 19:15; Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2; 26:18). I Peter 2:9 echoes this reality, showing the evangelistic purpose of it, while Ephesians 5:25-26 reiterates that this unique people are such through the cleansing (Gk. *katharizo* as in v. 14) work of Christ.²² When grace appeared, we were transferred from darkness to light, from corruption to righteousness, from the dominion of Satan to the kingdom of heaven—our position was changed and our possession was purchased by the Savior.

2. *God’s purpose is gospel-works.*

Because we are the people of God now, our lives have been infused with a new purpose summarized by the last phrase of verse 14—“zealous of good works.” Alluding to the cleansing power of Christ’s sacrifice, Hebrews 9:14

asks, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Good works—godly, gospel-made works—“are not to be an adjunct to our Christian lives, something that we do at our convenience, but are to be a natural, integral, and zealous part of our daily living.”²³ These works, originating from a heart of delight not duty, testify to the contemporary power and ability of our great saving God.

Application: The application can be convictingly summarized in a couple of verses: “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body” (I Corinthians 6:19-20, NASB). To do this, “Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation” (I Peter 2:12, NASB). There is no greater reality than a God who is ready to save. We must proclaim that with our lips, and authenticate it with our lives. That has been God’s plan throughout the ages.

CONCLUSION

God’s marketing technique to make His saving nature known is through the manifestation of His saving power in the lives of believers. If we miss that, we’ve missed the gospel, and our professions may ring hollow. To help motivate and enable us to don our godly, gospel-made garments and practice the homework that the gospel has given to us, Paul offers us four rich verses with a four-fold sermon to preach to ourselves—God is a saving God from sin’s penalty, power, presence, and purpose. Now, since God has so gloriously adorned you,²⁴ you should adorn your Savior with your life.

²² This word can refer to physical (Matthew 8:3; Mark 1:42), ritual (Acts 10:15; 11:9), or moral/spiritual cleansing (Matthew 23:26; John 4:8; Acts 15:9; Ephesians 5:26; Hebrews 9:14; 10:2).

²³ MacArthur, p. 122.

²⁴ “Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness / My beauty are, my glorious dress; / ‘Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed, / With joy shall I lift up my head” (*Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness*, a hymn by Nikolaus L. von Zinzen-dorf).