

'Knowing Grace - Showing Grace'

Welcome and Opening Scripture

Hymn: MP 476 My Lord what love is this

Bible Reading: Ps 145

Prayer of adoration and praise.

Children's talk "free Money" Is 55 "free Cash", Buriton shop

Notices Conv. therapy, 7:30 pm on Wed at Chapel, Nu 32:23

Choruses/Open time MP Bonfire trip, Men's conf.

MP 66 Broken for me broken for you

Communion

Main reading: Titus 3:1-8 (page 1199), Matthew 18:21-35 (page 985)

Hymn: MP 799 All I once held dear

Sermon 'Knowing Grace - Showing Grace'

Hymn MP 349 It passeth knowledge that dear love of thine

Close -----

Listen to today's sermon by clicking on the link at www.knbc.org.The audio file is [21_11_07.mp3](#).

MP 676, 880

Nu 32:23

But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the LORD; and you may be sure that your sin will find you out."

*Exordium*

■ In a small town in the US there was a café dinner. A group of rough rednecks were around a table laughing and joking loudly as they ate their meal. A man walks in and sits at the bar and orders his meal. They immediately recognise him as one they knew well, but was now in the church. The mockery starts, "Holy Joe", "Where's your cross" why don't you come and join us" Oh he's too good for us now" the insults continue, but there is no retaliation from the man at the bar. To the contrary he is calm and composed as the taunts fly around. Eventually he pays and goes. After he has left the others slowly get up to go, at the counter the owner says there's nothing to pay. "What?" No, there nothing to pay, this man who sat here paid, he paid for all of you. That man showed Grace - because he knew grace - He was once like them.

The title this morning is 'Knowing Grace - Showing Grace' x2

Today we are continuing in Paul's letter to Titus and looking at Ch. 3:1-8.

Titus first addresses the specific and hot issue of how a Christian should relate to authority **"1 Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, that requires Grace - and then on to the general, that is how to relate to everyone around. - to be ready to do whatever is good, 2 to slander no-one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility towards all men. That requires Grace! x2**

Those who know His grace - are the ones empowered to show His Grace x2.

If you are aware of how much you needed Grace - and that Christ freely gave it to you - then you will be able to deal gently with others who have yet to receive it.

■ For example - Take Samuel learning to ride his bicycle, I remember the day. He learned quickly but there was a time of holding him steady and being patient while he learned, it is the same with swimming.

I'm patient because that was once me. As parents we are patient with our children because we were all once children. We remember the difficulties!

■ How easy it is to be sitting in your arm chair and be critical of a missed goal on TV. If you have played football and know how difficult that shot is you would be sympathetic.

■ Many are quick to criticise our nation's leaders. If you had been in their shoes and faced the same pressures - your attitude should be different.

- If you were brought up with parents who were always putting you down – you will be able to sympathise with those in the same situation.
- ✦ The general experiences accrued in life, the many difficulties and pressures we've faced, should produce grace. It should bring a mellowing, a sympathy for other going through what you went through.

So in the things of God, now as a Christian and changed by Christ's power I remember how it was before, yes there is a 'before and after'. I remember what it was like being unsaved – before receiving grace from Jesus.

So Timothy is saying to Titus the pastor, and as your Pastor I say to you, be gracious to one another because you were once there - once unsaved. My attitude is different to those around having experienced the same as them.

Look at v3 this is what we were all once like: **At one time we too x2 were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.**

That is how we were, - all of us – yes all of us in some way – before Grace came. If you have now received grace – the result must be grace – thus you **show true humility towards all men.** “There but the grace of God go I” x2

The unregenerate man or woman

Hence Paul's reminder '**At one time - we too**' - were foolish. To live a life without recognising God for who he is - is to be a fool, yes a fool.

Those without Christ have replaced the true God with a false one, an imagined god, a god fashioned as they chose, That is idolatry and sin.

To live without giving God his rightful place is to live years in **disobedience**.

That is why it is foolish. Just like Adam and Eve and we are all like them until Jesus opens my eyes to the true God and changes me to be like Him.

Before that everyone he says is **deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. Deceived** because a life following my **passions** promises to be good and fulfilling - but it is a deception - and a trap. The one who sins is the one enslaved. The natural man is led by his mind and heart, his **passions and pleasures.** “*This is what I feel like doing now*” he says to himself and goes off and finds entertainment or some food. He is being led by his 'wants'. Those 'wants' will never include finding peace with his maker

To the deceived we tell the truth, - to the enslaved we point to the rescuer our Saviour Jesus, only he can free them – so we pray he will.

We lived in malice and envy, do you remember when you only looked at others in envy, to see his success or what he is driving, or she sees what she is wearing there is no interest in the person except as to how it benefits me.

being hated and hating one another. Now that sounds a bit strong, we do not go round hating one another, no it certainly does not seem that way on the surface, although it is increasingly there to be seen on the surface.

- Amazon rang just as we were all about to go out of the door on Monday morning. Did I want to renew my account? If not then we will send you an online form and you will receive a refund. No it wasn't Amazon but someone trying to trick me – that is hatred.

We hear of hate crimes, every crime is a hate crime, stealing from someone hates that person. – and hates the lawmaker / lawgiver

- It is not just wanting someone dead or gone that is hatred, and who honestly hasn't done that - but pushing in front of someone in the queue is also hatred. So also ignoring someone, or being indifferent to someone. **Not to love a person - is to essentially hate the person.**
- A colleague was saying that he went to Poland and saw Auschwitz. He said it was unbelievable that anyone could do that.

No, I now quite understand how men can do that – I know my own heart and its wickedness. Every human on this planet no matter how well brought up has the potential to do just the same – put them in difficult circumstances and you will be shocked.

- Watch the bargain hunters in the post-Christmas sales. See people push and shove each other to get the best dress or the latest flat screen TV. How would you be if the shops were empty and there was no food left?
- Or if there were too few lifeboats? –

What would you be capable of?

- The Milgram Experiment - The American social psychologist Stanley Milgram, New York City, 1974. Researched into whether apparently decent people can commit atrocities by setting up an artificial situation in a laboratory where volunteers from 'respectable' backgrounds were given to believe (wrongly) that they were administering electric shocks to other experimental subjects in a neighbouring room. No voltage was actually applied: the subjects were actors who feigned agony. Amazingly, the majority of these people were prepared to give fatal shocks to the subject (who could often be heard screaming for mercy.)

in the cause of science, when requested to do so by a seemingly respectable academic scientist. **How revealing of my heart.**

Would you do it? ? The conclusion was that that 'ordinary' people will inflict pain on innocent people when commanded by an authoritative figure.

Jesus who had done nothing wrong but was being lead to death said: **if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"** Lu 23:31

We have hardly scrapped the bottom of the depravity of man but let us...

Turn to the work of God

4 But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.

Why - because of his mercy. Why? because of his mercy. Why? because of his mercy again – The Lord says: **“I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy”**

That is how God is – He is filled with mercy to the undeserving.

And how can he show us mercy while still being true to his Holy character? The Cross. **There wrath and mercy meet**

Martin Luther said: Out of pure grace God does not impute our sins to us, He want to impute righteousness to us. This can only happen when there has been complete satisfaction of His law and His righteousness – and that was made in Christ - on the **CROSS**. Impossible for me, God ordained for me, in my place, One who took upon Himself all the punishment I deserve.

He fulfilled the law for me. - He averted the judgment of God from me - and appeased God's wrath against me. Grace, therefore, costs me nothing, but it cost Another much to get it for me. Grace was purchased with an incalculable, infinite treasure, the Son of God Himself." *Daily Walk*, May 5, 1992.

He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Now that has happened it can be applied to me. washing of rebirth - Oh how I needed washing, - How I needed sin washing how I need heart washing.

Like the washing machine - the dirty clothes go in and out come the clean.

Rebirth, Nicodemus you can't go back into your mother's womb but you can have a new start, a restart, a hard reset, that wipes away everything.

- My recently deceased Godfather wrote a number of books, his memoirs, one is called "being young again"

If only I could put the clock back >1hr but 10 years, or more. But that is exactly what Christ does in the new birth

And **renewal** he says the ability to keep going in a new way. This is not an event as is rebirth, this is ongoing, the Holy Spirit is constantly renewing me on and on and on, **inwardly we are being renewed day by day.** 2Co 4:16

Paul tells Titus - 8 **This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, And why? so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.** i.e. they produce good results in people.

Now - having received Grace - I must show grace

Remember v2 **to slander no-one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility towards all men.**

That is how all of us should be – This is how a man or woman who has received Grace from Christ must be – That is why Grace is given!

The Bible is not some gold standard, a rarefied life to for the Apostles and a few select others, NO – it is the standard life for every Christian. And it is in living this out that you show yourself to be heaven bound.

I am not saying the Christian life is easy, NO it is harder than the non-Christian life because we do not take the easy line on things – yet we have power. Power to do what I formally could not do. Power from Jesus in me, power to love – power to forgive.

- A lady I spoke to last week recalled what a Curate had said to her in a church she once attended, and another comment she received from someone else which meant she never went back. She recalled the exact words that were said. - and that was over forty years ago. – She had not forgiven - and she would not forgive, she did not want to forgive.

✚ **It was clear she had not been forgiven for her own sins. Sadly the way she was this lady would never be forgiven by God for her many sins.**

There are many like her who stand outside court - you have heard them “I hope they rot in Hell”

There is one group of people who forgive – it is perhaps the Christian's greatest witness.

1. In the Bradford Kings Academy stabbing the headline went: “I forgive school pupil who stabbed me”, says teacher. Vincent Uzomah said: 'As a Christian, I've forgiven this boy who has inflicted this trauma and pain on to me and my family.' BBC 10 Aug 2015
2. In 2013 the papers cited “A Christian forgives driver who killed her husband”

3. Remember the vicar who forgave dead daughter's bullies (20 November 2009)
4. A 2009 Newspaper headline reads "Parents can forgive son's killer with God's help" goes on to quote "We forgive our boy's hit-and-run killer" Grieving parents speak out as driver is locked away (22 December 2009)
5. Remember the church bombed in Sri Lanka where some 100 people were killed or injured on Easter Sunday? Pastor Roshan the church leader said "We offer forgiveness to bombers". saying he wants to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. He said "the congregation was hurt and angry, but offered forgiveness because we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ".
6. Then there was the mother whose husband and children were burned to death in a car by Hindu nationalists in the State of Orissa in India. She went public to the whole country saying she forgave them.
7. Not that long ago on the front page of the Times was the man whose wife was murdered in a clinic in Jordan as she served local people. He publically forgave the assassins and why? Because he knew forgiveness himself.

All these knew their own sin and that Christ's Grace had covered it over.

It's ignorance of our own faults that renders us unwilling to forgive others. Paul reminds them, and us as Christians, what sort of people we once were. As he did the church at Corinth that before they were saved some of them were **sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy, drunkards, slanderers, swindlers**. But he says: **you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**" 1Co 6:9-11

If that is what Christ has done for you - how can you and I not be gracious to those still were we once were? So we pray "*Lord extend you had of grace to them – just as you have done to me*"

So however much insult or rudeness you face do not retaliate, No. We **slander no-one**, instead positively we are **peaceable and considerate**,

- Derek as a young man was once often out on the streets and a heavy drinker. Now he is a street pastor. He deals patiently with the drunks fighting or trying to get home – because he was once like that.

A Christian is a peace maker, just as Jesus is the Prince of Peace so his people are peacemakers. Before we liked to make something of a situation, it is the devil's way. How Pride was offended and just too hard to swallow.

Not now - If you have been humbled and now received grace from the Lord, don't forget what he has done - and how we were all once proud.

A Christian is to **show true humility x2 towards all men**. Humility is the clear Hallmark of a Christian. It is not an internal disposition that some have no it is the evidence of the humbling that comes from Christ alone. A man or woman who has **fallen on that stone** (Christ Jesus) will be broken. Broken to be remade – to be remade to be like Jesus the most humble of men.

Rehoboam the king of Judah responded harshly to the people when they came to him, why? Because he did not see how privileged he was to be the king's son, Solomon's son. Rather than realise he was a man under authority and therefore serve the people humbly - he was proud and hard on them.

✚ How rare it is - and how attractive to see humility in those in authority.

It is grace known in my personal experience and an empathy with the weak that enables me to respond as Jesus did. That person who loves to talk but not listen, we bear with patiently, the one who pulls the conversation always in their direction, we go there with them and bear them graciously. How can I? Because I know, don't I know the wicked inclinations of my heart. The Lord has pointed them out to me long before I read Jer. 17:9 or any other scriptures that tell of the desperately wicked heart, they tell me what I know.

✚ Not to respond with grace is to say I have forgotten the grace that has come to me – or it is showing everyone you have never received it.

Paul said **When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly.** 1Co 4:12-13

Grace overlooks an offense, Grace understands the battles. Grace or the Holy Spirit who brings Grace is often referred to as oil in the OT. Oil smooths over. It also heals. Oil today allows machinery to work...

- That car engine under the bonnet looks tame enough from the outside but inside rough toughed metal violently tumble round at high speed, There are some strong and powerful forces at work. It all happens well and quietly because of oil. Oil lubricates the moving parts, no oil and these part fight and crash each other. Lose the oil and once the oil has gone the engine will last no more than 50 sec. Have plenty of oil and all those parts can work together for many years.

We as a church need that oil of grace with our strong wills and passions, as we like those lumps of metal hurl around. Oil make things happen well.

Yes a church can look tame enough, but inside as we interact we need grace.

Brothers and sisters let us be known for our gracious dealing with everyone around, all those we meet, and with each of our brothers and sisters here. E