

12.6.22 pm

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Date: 12 June 2022

Preacher: Phil Pickett

[0:00] Good evening everyone and welcome to our service this evening. It's a real pleasure to have Phil Pickett here with us tonight who is a minister in training and he's based at the Carloway Congregation for the next while so it's a pleasure to have him down here to preach with us tonight.

And usual notices through the week for the various meetings, emphasize once again prayer meeting on Wednesday night at 7.30 and each night through this week 7.30 over in Lochs is the faith mission and everybody is welcome to attend the meetings there if they're available.

Looking forward to next Saturday as we said this morning the Congregational BBQ down at Schillabus 1 o'clock at Schillabus Macha and if you haven't volunteered yet to provide something for that there's a sheet at the door which you can do so.

One wee thing on the car parking, it was quite haphazard up outside the garage today and the gate was locked to go around the back of the garage.

And just encourage folk if you arrive early if you can park right up at the garage doors and then we can get two or three cars in and that makes parking a good bit easier for everyone and we'll keep the local constabulary happy as well.

[1:19] That would be great. So I'll now hand over to Phil who will lead us in worship. Thank you very much. Well as I said my name is Phil Pickett and I'm based at Carloway Free Church.

Just I'll get the question of where I'm from out of the way quickly. As you can tell I'm not Scottish. I was actually born in Nepal where my parents served as missionaries. I lived there for 12 years then was in Wales for 8 years.

Then I went to university in St Andrews, stuck around there doing some training for ministry at St Andrews Free Church. And now while, well and I started doing ETS, Edinburgh Theology School Seminary part time there.

Now I'm continuing in my studies while working with Thomas in Carloway Free Church. So there you are now I don't have to say that however many times when I say hi to all of you. But it's a real pleasure to be here.

It's wonderful to partner together in churches across Lewis and Harris and across Scotland. And it's wonderful to gather around God's word as we praise him as one body, as one people.

[2:23] And this evening, the theme of our time together is the centrality of the gospel of grace. Let me just read these words from Luke chapter 5 which is our call to worship.

Where Jesus says, those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Doesn't that just reveal Jesus' heart of grace? Those are the people he's come for, not the people who have everything sorted. The people who realize they need him. And in recognition of that, we're going to begin our time by singing a Gaelic psalm, verse 4, Psalm 84.

And then Callum will continue in leading us in prayer. So let's join in in song as that begins. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[4:12] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Selah laughs yes yes watching ...

[8:17] But even tibia in Eastern strong lakesh winds came, Oum ■■■■■■■■in in Eastern hills unto Him The man webs from hast ordered.

The old prophet hired me ■ deeply This has been made today. I bekqual■ ■m ancient hala phall godo Yok■■ dev needles to crocodiles So Monashines had proposed to me I will be the beloved of God, because the realized, by tradition, the Holy Spirit again is our teaching so much.

I will be theener of the work of His Jehovah. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Let me read another verse from God's Word. In 2 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul says, For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

And we gather because of the grace of God that has been poured out on us through Jesus Christ. That's the reason we're here at all. That's the reason any of us come here. That's the only reason why we gather to praise God.

[9 : 57] And so we're going to do that now by singing our next item of praise, You're the Word of God the Father. So let's stand and sing as we sing together You're the Word of God the Father.

You're the Word of God the Father From before the world began Every star and every planet Has been fashioned by your hand All creation holds together By the power of your voice Let the skies declare your glory Let the land and seas rejoice You're the author of creation You're the Lord of every man And your cry of love Rings out across the lands Yet you left the gaze of angels Him to seek and save the lost And exchange the joy of heaven For the anguish of the cross With a prayer you fed the hungry With a word you still foresee Yet how silently you suffered That the guilty may go free You're the author of creation You're the Lord of every man And your cry of love Rings out across the lands With a shout you rose victorious Resting victory from the grave And ascended into heaven Leading captives in your wake Now you stand before the Father Interceding for your own

From each tribe and tongue and nation You are leading sinners home You're the author of creation You're the Lord of every man And your cry of love Rings out across the lands Well will you turn with me now To 1 Timothy chapter 1 We'll be reading the whole chapter And then in a little bit And we'll be looking especially At verses 8 to 17 But let's first read the whole chapter 1 Timothy chapter 1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus

By command of God our Savior And of Christ Jesus our hope To Timothy, my true child in the faith Grace, mercy and peace From God the Father And Christ Jesus our Lord As I urged you when I went into Macedonia Stay there in Ephesus So that you may command certain people Not to teach false doctrines any longer Or devote themselves to myths And endless genealogies Such things promote controversial speculations Rather than advancing God's work Which is by faith The goal of this command is love Which comes from a pure heart And a good conscience And a sincere faith Some have departed from these And have turned to meaningless talk They want to be teachers of the law But they do not know what they are talking about Or what they so confidently affirm We know that the law is good If one uses it properly We also know that the law is made Not for the righteous But for lawbreakers and rebels The godly, the ungodly and sinful

[14 : 15] The unholy and irreligious For those who kill their fathers and mothers For murderers For the sexually immoral For those practicing homosexuality For slave traders and liars and perjurers And for whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine That conforms to the gospel Concerning the glory of the blessed God Which he entrusted to me I thank Christ Jesus our Lord Who has given me strength That he considered me trustworthy Appointing me to his service Even though I was once a blasphemer And a persecutor And a violent man I was shown mercy Because I acted in ignorance and unbelief The grace of our Lord Was poured out on me abundantly Along with the faith and love That are in Christ Jesus Here is a trustworthy saying That deserves full acceptance Christ Jesus came into the world To save sinners Of whom I am the worst But for that very reason I was shown mercy So that in me

The worst of sinners Christ Jesus might display His immense patience As an example For those who would believe in him And receive eternal life Now to the king Eternal, immortal, invisible The only God Be honour and glory Forever and ever Amen Timothy my son I am giving you this command In keeping with the prophecies Once made about you So that by recalling them You may fight the battle well Holding on to the faith And a good conscience While some have rejected And so have suffered shipwreck With regard to the faith Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander Whom I have handed over Satan To be taught not to blaspheme May God bless the reading of his word Let's now turn to God in prayer Heavenly Father We give thanks That we can gather this evening Around your word And Lord as we Look outside And we see The clouds starting to part

And the sun coming out again We thank you For the beautiful creation
That you've given us Thank you for all the Many Things that you've given To us to enjoy These
small means of grace That We often forget But that are so vital The air we breathe That keeps us
alive The homes you give us To live in The families Friendships And all these things Lord That you
graciously Give from your hand Lord thank you For all your generosity Lord And we thank you Most
of all though That while you've Revealed yourself In creation You have also Revealed yourself
Particularly And especially In your word Lord we thank you That it's in your word That we can hear
The very words of God That we're not simply Reading the words of men But that you have spoken
And inspired scripture By your Holy Spirit So that we may know you And we may hear from you
Lord we thank you That as you reveal yourself In your word So you do so To change us And to
teach us And to conform us Into the likeness of Christ

Lord we thank you That you haven't Left us to ourselves Trying to scratch around And work out
How we might be saved But Lord we thank you For sending Christ Jesus That we can read of Christ
We can meet Christ In the scriptures That in the In the gospels There is testimony Born to him To
who he is To why his death On the cross Matters for us And so Lord we thank you For giving us the
gospel We thank you That Christ Jesus Came into the world To save sinners And that we can now
know that truth For ourselves As we read your word We can share that truth With one another As
we open up The bible together Lord thank you That we have your word In our language And Lord
even as we Read your word Lord it also Exposes our hearts It exposes the way We've ignored you
The ways we've Gone astray like sheep The ways in which We've sought to live For our own Under
our own rule And not accepted yours And so Lord We come confessing Our sin We come
recognizing

That we are We are sinners In need of salvation Lord we thank you That you have not Left us on
ourselves But that in your Great mercy and grace You sent Christ Jesus To die for us Lord it's a
gospel That we hear so often And yet it can become old So Lord we pray That as we look At your
word This evening You would excite us By the gospel You would impress Those truths Upon our
hearts And you would Give us a greater And greater joy From your word Lord please Fill us up
Please change us So that we'll Overflow with the Grace that you Have poured into us And Lord we
pray For those who Don't know you And for our loved Ones family members Friends Neighbors
Those who don't Yet know that Wonderful saving grace Of Christ Jesus And Lord we pray That that
would Change Lord we pray That you would Have use our words Use our actions

[19:19] Use the Opportunities that we Have And the opportunities Ultimately that you Make As a
chance to Witness to the Greatness of our Lord Jesus Christ To point people to You Lord we thank
you That your word is Indeed words of Eternal life And so we pray Lord that people Will come to
Read and see And meet Christ In the scriptures And be saved Lord we pray For this church In
Tarbot We pray And the surrounding Areas We pray for Its witness We pray that as People As are
filled up And encouraged By a word Week by week And go out In their Various jobs And going to
School And all kinds Of things Lord that you Would be Going before them By your spirit You would
be Preparing fertile soil On which the gospel Can land As they speak it And share it With everything
In their lives And their attitudes Lord we pray That you would Use this church

To great blessing And growth Of your kingdom That you'd equip Men and women Here to be a
great Witness for your word In this place We pray for those Especially who can't Be here this
evening We pray that you Would encourage them Especially those Who may be able To listen
online Lord we thank you For that opportunity And Lord So we pray Now your blessing On your
word Please make us Fertile soil Lord Give us ears To hear And hearts To understand And may
you Bless it to us We pray all this In Jesus name Amen Well before we come To look at God's word
Again we're going to Sing Psalm 19 Verses 7 to 11 A psalm that As we've just been Praying A
psalm that rejoices In God's word And that God's word Reveals to Reveals to us The character of
God Himself That's why it is Sweeter than honey That's dripping from the comb So let's stand now
And sing Psalm 19 God's testimony is most sure

And makes the simple wise The standards of the Lord The Lord are right And do rejoice the heart
The Lord's command The Lord's command Is pure and doth Light to the eyes impart Unspotted is
the fear of God

And doth the Lord And doth the Duke Forer The judgments of the Lord Are true And righteous
altogether They more than gold Gave much fine gold To be decided on Than honey Honey From
the comb That drop And sweet That drop And sweet Her fire More Hope But they Thy servant

Born How he His life Should Play A great Reward Provided Is For them That Keep The Same Well if you'll turn back with me in your Bibles to 1 Timothy we're going to spend the next few minutes looking at verses 8 to 17 Now you may know that the vision statement that has been adopted by the free church over the I think it's over a year now has been to have a healthy gospel church in every community in Scotland and it's a it's an ambitious vision it's an exciting vision we see the the need for the gospel across Scotland we see it in our communities and it's exciting to have all of that energy coming together seeking to make Jesus known seeking to grow healthy churches but the question is what does that look like on the ground what does it look like to be a healthy church and most importantly what does the Bible say about our identity in that case and our mission how does that fit with scripture and because of all those questions that makes the book of 1 Timothy very very relevant you see in 1 Timothy

[25 : 01] Paul is writing to his right hand man Timothy who has he sent along to Ephesus and Timothy is there to instruct the church to correct the church and bring them back on track to living as a healthy church you might say just so we can get our bearings in the letter if you'll flick with me across to chapter 3 verses 14 to 16 just briefly because this is this is the very heart of the letter and it helps to just understand why Paul is writing so in chapter 3 verse 14 Paul says although I hope to come to you soon I'm writing these instructions so that if I'm delayed you'll know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household which is the church of the living God the pillar and foundation of truth or the pillar and buttress of the truth both you read both translations in other words Paul is saying the church's identity is the family of God and the reason God has placed the church on this earth is so that it will hold up and hold out the gospel like a pillar like a lamp on a stand you know protect and proclaim

God's truth everywhere so that's that's what's going on in Paul's mind as he writes this letter that's what he wants the church to be but you'll know that foundational to protecting to proclaiming the truth is actually knowing what the truth is you know we can't share the gospel properly if we don't know what it is we can't guard true doctrine if we're not sure what it is and so that's why Paul begins this letter by warning against false teaching and we read a little bit of that in the first seven verses because Paul's warning Timothy because this false teaching you might say is eating away at the foundation and it has a risk of causing that pillar to topple it was subtle but deadly and as we'll see that at its core was a wrong understanding of law and grace and so as we come now to our section we're going to focus on verses 8 to 17 the question for Timothy is what what should he be teaching well they say the question for us as readers is well what should we make sure we're hearing what should the elders in the church make sure they're guarding what is this gospel what is how should we preach it how should we explain it how should we teach it that's an answer we all need to have whether we're whatever part we have to play in all our gifts in God's church if we're going to be that church that's a pillar and buttress of the truth we need to understand what God's truth what the gospel is and so our aim this evening is really to see that a healthy gospel church holds out up and holds out the gospel of grace that's the focus of this passage the gospel of grace and we're going to look at that under two points the law is useful but salvation is by grace alone they're probably things we thought about we might know before but let's just look at how Paul explains that to Timothy and the church in Ephesus so first of all the law is useful we're going to go back in at verse 8 and actually just before verse 8 just so we get a little bit of the context in verse 7 we learn that the troublemakers in Ephesus were people who thought they knew the law so we read that these are people they wanted to be teachers of the law but they don't know what they are talking about or why they are so what they so confidently affirm so these people are strutting around teaching and telling people what to do and saying oh this is this is what God's word says but really they don't have a clue you can see why this was why this caused some trouble and it resulted in the abuse of the law you might say in being heavy in laying it down as a necessity for salvation well we'll see what it should be and so I imagine it would have been tempting for Timothy to think you know after hearing all this abuse of God's law thinking okay look we're going to have nothing to do with this if we want to be a healthy church we need to just get rid of God's law but notice actually what Paul responds notice how Paul corrects

Timothy in verse 8 he says we know that the law is good if one uses it properly now the question is what does Paul mean by that and you see because it's easy to think common it's easy to think when we've maybe been in a church or have and other times we might have witnessed the law being thrown around badly we might think actually look I don't want anything to do with God's law that's

kind of to slip into what might be called an antinomian position but Paul's trying to correct that to not make us go on either extreme lawlessness you might say or legalism but actually bring us into the center line and when Paul goes on to say he says that we know that the law is made not for the righteous but for the law breakers and rebels and then he goes on at the very end of verse 11 he said it conforms to the gospel of the blessed God so just in summary Paul is saying that Timothy don't throw out the law because it does accord with the gospel let's see how that works though let's look at first of all the right use of the law and very simply

Paul is telling Timothy that the right use of the law is that the law shows us our sin you might say the law is like a mirror or an x-ray and when we look in a mirror what do we see we see what we're really like if we haven't if we've woken up in the morning and our hair is all a mess or I don't know the kids got mud on their face you look in the mirror and you see it exposes it shows us what we're really like doesn't it when we read God's law it does the same thing it reminds us what we're like it shows us that we're sinners by exposing our hearts it exposes the ways in which we've stepped over the line the ways in which we've broken God's rules the ways in which we've fallen short of his standard and that's why verses 9 to 10 are there it's a rough summary of the Ten Commandments let me just read them again Paul says we know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels the ungodly and the sinful the unholy and irreligious for those who kill their fathers and mothers for murderers for adulterers and perverts for slavers traders and liars and perjurers and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed

God which he entrusted to me now every one of us has broken God's law that's in there we might think oh really but all it takes is for us to remember that to remember Jesus' words that anyone who has committed lust anyone who's lusted has committed adultery in their heart anyone who is hated has committed murder in their heart you know we don't basically Paul's point there is that every one of us has fallen short of God's law when we look in the mirror of God's law every one of us comes out looking messy comes out looking dirty so the law exposes us all for the sinners that we truly are and so it reminds us that we can't come to God because of our sin that's the first use of the law that the law reminds us it shows us our sin it shows us the human problem of sin however the false teachers had twisted the law and they've not made it just to something that shows us our sin but they've made it part of the solution you see the law shows us our sin what the law doesn't do it's a mirror that shows us sin what it isn't though is a mirror that shows us when we're good enough when we're good enough for God you see Paul says verse 9 we know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels see the law what the law isn't is a mirror in which we examine ourselves each day and say am I presentable to come before

[33 : 23] God am I good enough today however that's actually how sadly how we can use it that's probably that seems to be how it's being used in Ephesus in Ephesus it seems that obedience to God's law was being used as a condition to come to Christ so people are looking at what God's law said and thinking either I've had a pretty good day you know I've my week's been pretty good I've been I've been pretty obedient yeah I think I can come pretty confidently to church I think I can pray pretty confidently to God and left other people thinking I just keep messing up I just see my sin all the time how on earth I know I'm trusting Jesus but how on earth can I come before God and pray see that's that's the problem that comes when you start using God's law is not a mirror to expose sin but a mirror to show when you're good enough and so people were being told by these false teachers they were being made to feel that they had to sort out their lives before they came to

Christ to be saved so let me just illustrate that a bit if you have kids who play outside or maybe remembering back to when you're a kid and you get mucky you might be told look you have to hang up your jacket or take out the rocks and bugs out of your pocket that was probably me before you come inside you have various rules maybe you give the kids so they don't track in all the mess when they come in after playing outside and those are good rules to stop the house getting mucky but I think the problem is that we can think that like the muddy child we can't come to Christ until we're cleaned up we look at God's law and we think okay I've got to fulfill these criteria before I can come to God and we make actually obedience a requirement for salvation rather than an overflow as we'll see in a bit see this is that's the root that's the type of legalism that Paul was dealing with in Ephesus legalism we might think you know first we might hear the word legalism and we think oh that's that's someone's giving that's legalism is saying you have to obey God's commands or you have to do x y and z to be a

Christian but legalism can be much more subtle than that and I suspect it was a much more subtle version because Paul doesn't just call it out the same way he does in his letter to the Galatians he addresses its root and as we'll see here corrects them on grace and just to illustrate that a bit just illustrate how subtle it can be imagine you've got a nephew or niece who started university in Glasgow that's where that's where most people go isn't it Glasgow or Edinburgh but and over lunch maybe you ask them about their faith you ask them how's it going have you settled into a church yet have you made friends and you know maybe they reply look I'm going along to church and you know I want to be a Christian but I just don't feel I'm there yet I trust in Jesus but I believe he died for sinners but I'm just not sure I'm ready to come to God yet you know I need to repent first and I'm working through that but there's still so much change that needs to happen I and what's more there's there's so many godly people there I just don't see how I could call myself a Christian because I'm nothing like that see that actually I think sounds much more realistic that's that's actually someone who's subtly been have been subtly affected by an idea of legalism that they have to reach a certain standard before they can call themselves a Christian or before they can repent or before they can feel can call themselves a child of

God let's just take taking for example even just that phrase repent and believe that's something we're commanded to do in God's word when the Philippians when across all throughout Acts the apostles preach and tell people to repent and believe how many times have you heard that phrase we hear it again and again but what does that what does it mean to repent repentance is that act of turning away from sin isn't it and turning back to God you know it's a hundred and eighty degree turn we've gone we're going the wrong way we have to turn around and go back the other way I often find myself doing that because I'm not very good at looking at signs in the road and I'll realize five minutes too late that I need to turn around repentance is turning around and going the opposite way instead of going away from God turning back the problem is that we can sometimes make the phrase repent and believe an order of actions does that make sense rather than one thing that's combined we can make it repent and then believe now in order to believe and come to

Christ well I first have to repent and a couple problems come then the first question is how repentant do you need to be we can think well you know how have I truly turned away from sin am I am I really you know and have I you see your life and you see well I'm still struggling with this sin am I am I really repentant enough now to believe and come to Christ and actually at that point we're equating obedience with repentance we may as well have written at the top of that mirror of God's law this is what it looks like to repent and we've given ourselves an impossible task of keeping God's law and second that just leads to the problem is however hard we try we're never going to be repentant enough chances we'll just look at other people well that's going to be our standard of repentant enough when we make repentance a qualification for belief as I said legalism can be subtle it can be deadly when we make true repentance or something like that a requirement for coming to

[39 : 38] Christ and as a result a person can spend years aware of their sin hating their sin wanting to come to Christ wanting to grasp hold of the gospel trying to fight sin and feeling unable to do it because the reality is none of us can repent without God's help if we're standing back and trying to trying to repent making ourselves ready to come to God on our own well we're never going to be truly we need to come to Christ we can only it's only when we are in Christ we can face and deal with sin legalism can be very subtle it can twist our way of thinking a Christian is ultimately not someone who is a Christian isn't someone who is obeyed enough was reached a certain standard and a Christian is someone who is in Christ legalism is deadly we mustn't fall into that trap the law is a mirror that shows us our sin the law is not a mirror for us to look at and see when we're good enough to come to Christ when we're

Christian enough even you might say the law shows us the problem and what I want to see what I want to look at now in Paul's next words is that only the grace of Jesus Christ is the solution so let's let's turn on and look at verses 12 to 17 grace is the word we're on our second point now but salvation is by grace alone you see grace is the word the Bible uses to speak of God's unmerited favor grace is at the heart of salvation from the very start to the very finish we and we see that in Paul's testimony in verses 12 to 17 here Paul is recounting his own testimony of how he of of how he became a Christian and it's worth remembering that this is in the face of this legalistic teaching let's just read those words again verses 12 to 17 Paul says I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has given me strength that he considered me trustworthy appointing me to his service even though I

was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief the grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the worst but for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me the worst of sinners Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life now to the king eternal immortal invisible the only God be honor and glory forever amen you see the false teachers have been using God's law like like a catwalk catwalk as it were to display how outwardly good they were you know they used churches and opportunities to say look at look how great I am I'm keeping God's law they used it as a mirror to admire yourself themselves in even they used it to create a crowd of law keepers around us you'll see that if you continue to read in one Timothy in contrast though Paul presents himself Paul gives his testimony not to point to himself but to point to Christ Paul presents his life you might say as a showcase of God's grace just look through those verses again Paul doesn't list the ways in which he's kept God's law does he he lists all the ways he's broken it verse 13 he was a blasphemer persecutor an insolent opponent twice Paul says I was the worst of sinners I am the worst of sinners Paul doesn't speak about himself of as worthy of serving God but of as unworthy he doesn't list his achievements he lists Christ's achievements he says the grace of the Lord overflowed to me Christ came into the world to save sinners it's all about Christ for Paul it's not about himself he doesn't speak of himself as an example for others to follow do you see do you notice that he says he speaks of himself verse 16 as an example of Christ's perfect patience as an example of what Christ can do he doesn't praise himself he praises God Paul's point is very simple he is nothing and that Christ

Christ is everything his salvation is a result of Christ's mercy in Christ's grace his life as an apostle the life that he lives is all or a continual result of God's grace being poured out in other words we are saved by grace and we live by grace it's grace from start to finish and we need to remember that both those things let's just look at both those things a little bit more closely that we're saved by grace alone see God saves us not when we're sufficient but when we're sinners verse 15 is at the very heart of the gospel isn't it that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners and Paul says of whom I am the foremost we don't clean ourselves up to come to Jesus we come to Jesus still with that stench and filth of sin on us it's only him that cleans us up what was Paul before he came to Christ he was a blasphemer a persecutor an insolent opponent twice Paul tells us he was the worst of sinners and now God didn't say to

Paul look Jesus didn't appear on the road of Damascus and say to Paul look Paul okay you need to change all these things and then I'm going to commission you as an apostle Jesus came while he was still a sinner Paul will write in Romans that while we were still weak Christ died for the ungodly while we were still sinners Christ died for us while we were enemies of God Christ died to reconcile us with God Paul doesn't say well Christ appeared to me and so I well I repented I turned from my evil ways and after that the grace of God overflowed from me no God had mercy on Paul and God has mercy on us in the midst of all our unbelief it's in the midst of that in the midst of the mire that God plucks us out and pours out his grace on us and saves us God takes us as we are not as we should be and so it is all about what Christ has done there's no one too bad to receive God's grace that's that's the point that's why Paul says that he's the worst of sinners he's saying you can't get worse than me you can't say that you you you're out of the reach of God's grace God's grace can reach down even to the to the depth of the person who thinks they're furthest from him you don't need to bring yourself up to a certain level for

[47 : 02] God's grace to save you through obedience God's grace does it all God's grace is enough for anyone and everyone I just love how expansive the language is don't you verse 14 the grace of the Lord overflowed for me grace isn't like a wet flannel that just you know rubs off the muck in our life grace is like a fire hose in verse 16 Paul speaks of the perfect patience of God God doesn't give us I don't know x number of chances to and then says that's it you know sorry I gave you you heard God's word you heard the gospel three times there's three strikes and you're out you didn't repent then he speaks of the perfect patience of God it's never in other words it's never too late to turn and put your trust in Christ and you might agree with verse 15 you might think okay yeah it's true Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners but the big question is can you say the next line can you say with Paul of whom I am the foremost can you say yeah Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners and that includes me sometimes that's the hardest bit isn't it we can know in theory that Jesus came to die to save sinners it could be much harder to recognize it for

ourselves to say it for ourselves salvation is by grace alone and that should affect how we speak about the gospel what we see of the gospel it affects how we should how we should speak about the gospel as we go about our daily business you see you know the Lord does show us how far how far short society falls of God's standards we're all often aware of that it can often be something we think of and we can we can say oh you know look at this look at the state of the country look at the state of society however if that's all we say we're only preaching half the gospel because Paul goes on to say speak of God's grace so can I challenge you just on that to never speak of one half without the other to never comment on how on how God's law exposes us or exposes society without also recognizing that God's grace is sufficient and God's grace is what people need just as God's grace is what we need Christ Jesus is the hope for all mankind the law is the diagnosis yeah it shows us that we need Jesus but let's hold out grace to people because that's that's the cure that's what saves people in our final few minutes on what we've talked about we're saved by grace alone let's look at how we live by grace alone because

Paul isn't just the example of that of how we're saved by grace alone he also is an example of living by grace and Paul knows that his point in verses 12 to 14 if you look at it is that his life as God's apostle isn't a result of him being super great it's a result of Christ's mercy and grace do you notice that he says for example the Lord who has given me strength he's considered me faithful he appointed me to the service all of Paul's language is pointing to everything that God has done to equip and strengthen him to live as a Christian not that he became a Christian and then he summoned up his courage and he you know and got ready and it was him from then and Paul was you know super apostle all on his own we're saved by grace we live by grace and we need to understand that because we can sometimes just fall into the trap of thinking okay we're saved by grace but you know now I've got to make sure I live I've got to make sure that that I stay on the right track otherwise I could fall out of God's favor and that again this might be seems to be something that was maybe happening in one Timothy that again is a subtle type of legalism I think it could be again due to a wrong understanding of God's laws you see we've mentioned that God's law as a mirror to see our sin not to check whether we're good enough but we can also treat God's laws as a condition for which we remain in God's favor so almost like Jesus gets us into the courtroom of the king but then we've got to be really careful that we don't break anything or we've got to be careful that we just don't suddenly go on God's naughty list and you know and then we have to keep a certain standard otherwise we'll get exiled as it were we're not constantly treading around as if we're on broken glass when we come to God when we're a child of God we don't have to somehow try to be really careful to remain in God's favor yes God God hates him it grieves him but when we're saved by Christ when that's not kind of dangling on a thread that's easily cut we are safe in him we are bound to Christ inseparably bound you see when we see the law as some way of having to try to remain in God's favor suddenly that also twists our understanding of God God becomes at that point a policeman a parole officer just waiting for us to mess up God's law becomes a weight on our shoulders a burden that we have to bear if we misunderstand God's law we misunderstand the character of God himself and actually that can easily embitter us as in Christian life becomes a burden it becomes a drudgery if we think that we're constantly having to maintain a certain standard especially outwardly in order to keep in God's favor that's the divorce the law of God ultimately though from the character of God himself it's to forget that the one who tells us how to live is first and foremost our father if we're trusting in Jesus that we remain in his favor not because of how we live but because Christ lives because he has fulfilled the law on our behalf we gain identity into God's family through Christ and then we are family family doesn't just suddenly get broken apart if you you know when when a child is born or a child is adopted they don't have to act a certain way in order for the parents to keep calling them their son or daughter it's the same with us we call God our father it's not any point in which God's like now you can't call me father anymore you've lost that privilege because you've just you've behaved too badly it's only Lord for the next two weeks we can always come and call God father and always come to him and he loves to hear us come to him in prayer even if that's coming on our knees and telling him how we've fallen short we come because Christ has cleansed us not because we look clean enough we come we're saved because of grace we continue by grace that means a Christian isn't someone who obeys God we need to understand that we can easily think a Christian equals someone who obeys God no a Christian is someone who is in Christ in Christ should naturally overflow into obedience and of course we should always be putting sin to death however obedience

is the fruit of grace it's not the root of grace we shouldn't be motivated by fear and judgment but of the love of our father it is the grace of Christ that should overflow in wanting to live like Christ not a fear of losing God's favor that should motivate that we live by grace and there's so much that we could say about how that should go on and affect our relationships that even as God has shown us such unmerited grace so that should affect the way we treat one another and Timothy we love to go through more of that and you can you can read that more of that for yourself and one Timothy where Paul works out throughout the life of the church how God's grace how understanding the gospel of the grace should transform the family life of the church in summary though grace should be at the heart of the life of the church and the message of the church the healthy gospel church holds up and holds out grace we are saved by grace we live by grace nothing that we have done nothing that we can do nothing that we'll ever do but everything that Christ has done is his perfect patience his overflowing grace that Christ came into the world to save sinners that's the gospel we believe and that's why to Christ belongs all the praise because it's all his grace and so to the king of all ages immortal invisible the only God be honor and glory now and forever amen let's come to God in prayer heavenly father we thank you that while we were still sinners Christ died for us lord we know there would be no gospel there would be no hope for us if we had to reach a certain standard before we were good enough to come to you lord we thank you that Christ does everything please remind us of that please remind us of that especially when we see ourselves and we know that we're out our worst remind us of that when we see in your when your law exposes how how serious our sin is lord please help us to remind one another of that may we be a people who are always pointing one another to the grace of Christ soothing one another with that balm of grace so that we keep turning back to him and living in light of it and so lord go with us now encourage us build us up by your word make us more and more into your people who are the family of God holding up and holding out this gospel of truth this gospel of grace we pray this all in Jesus name amen well we're going to close now and sing um grace by city of light i think it's somewhat well david said it was one that you had sung before so it's a wonderful um song wonderful hymn that speaks all about how life from start to finish is one of God's grace in our lives so let's stand and sing your grace that leads this sinner home from death to life forever and sings the song of righteousness by blood and not by merit your grace that reaches far and wide by grace i am redeemed by grace i am restored and now i freely walk into the arms of christ my lord your grace that i cannot explain not by my earthly wisdom the prince of life without a stain was traded for this sinner by grace i am redeemed by grace i am restored and now i freely walk into the arms of christ my lord my lord praise rise up and oh the flow my song resound forever your grace never for grace will see me welcomed home loved to walk beside my savior would you have nations of earth grace will see you welcomed home to walk beside my savior by grace i am redeemed by grace i am restored by grace i am restored by grace i am restored And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

[61 : 05] By grace I am redeemed, by grace I am restored. And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

Here is a trustworthy saying that is deserving of full acceptance. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst.

And so may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forever. Amen.