

Titus-Handfuls of Purpose-James Smith

Handfuls on Purpose by James Smith, 1943 TITUS

SEVEN WONDERS. Titus 2:11-14

The novelty hunters are very numerous; like the Athenians they are always grasping for something new. But the greatest wonder in the world is the Bible. Its origin, teaching, and power are all superhuman.

I. A Wonderful Exhibition. "The grace of God that brings salvation to all men has appeared." This is an exhibition of the grace of God. This means all the attributes of God, flowing out in order to save men. An exposition of the goodness of God. This is seen at the Cross of Calvary, in the Son of God's love, bleeding and dying for guilty men. The great "World's Fair" was only a heap of rubbish compared with this.

II. A Wonderful Character. Jesus is here called "The Great God and our Savior." You may say Jesus Christ was only a man. Paul declares that He was the Great God. "His Name shall be called Wonderful—the Mighty God." What consolation is here for the Christian! Your Savior is the Great God—fear not. What encouragement is here for the anxious! The great God is a Savior—fear not to trust Him. What consternation is here for the self-righteous. You hope to save yourself, how fruitless your effort. It takes the Great God to save a soul.

III. A Wonderful Gift. "He gave Himself for us." For a man to lay down his life for his friend is wonderful. This is man at his best. But while we were yet enemies, Christ died for us. This is Divine. This is the only example the history of the world has ever given us of one willingly dying for his own murderers. He gave Himself for you. What have you given for Him? Oh, you say, "I have no time." What, no time to thank your God for such a Gift.

Room and time now give to Jesus,
Soon will pass God's day of Grace;
Soon your heart be cold and silent,
And your Savior's pleadings cease.

IV. A Wonderful Work. The work of Christ as here stated was to redeem and to purify, to purchase and to cleanse. When a woman buys a set of china, she does not think them fit for use until they are washed. They are bought, then washed. The Lord uses us, not because we are great and gifted; not because we are clever, but because we are clean. It is not enough that we be redeemed. If God is to be glorified in us we must be cleansed.

V. A Wonderful People. The redeemed and the purified are to be "a peculiar people." Some Christians are afraid of being peculiar, lest they should be talked about. They wish to mar the very works by which they ought to be known. Christians are a peculiar people. They have a peculiar citizenship. Their citizenship is in Heaven, because they have been born from above. Such a birth is not a thing to be ashamed of. They speak a peculiar language. The ungodly don't care about their conversation any more than for one speaking in a foreign tongue.

VI. A Wonderful Life. The life of the redeemed man is to be a resisting life. "A denying of ungodliness." It is to be a sober life, not only a teetotal life. This is implied, but much more. Be sober in your eating, in your clothing, in your speech. It is to be a righteous life. The Christian should be the most punctual business man, the most trustworthy of all men. It is to be a godly life. A life beaming with the gentleness and truthfulness of Jesus, reflecting back on a dark world the image of the invisible God. It is to be an active life, "zealous of good works."

VII. A Wonderful Prospect. "Looking for His glorious appearing." That the sun will rise tomorrow is not more certain than that Christ will come again. It may seem strange that He should say, "Behold, I come quickly," nineteen hundred years ago, and not to have come yet. But we must remember that 1000 years are with the Lord as but one day, so that two days have not yet passed according to His reckoning. He will come. Are you ready for His appearing? God grant that you may be prepared for that great day.

FULL SALVATION. Titus 3:3-7

It is easy to say that there is fullness of water in the ocean, fullness of wealth in the earth, and fullness of light in the sun; but can the

richness of this fullness be reckoned up? So there is fullness of salvation in the grace of God, but that fullness can only be realized in the ages of the ages. In the above Scripture we see what might be termed seven steps into a full salvation.

I. An Honest Confession. "We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, and slaves of sin" (v. 3). Confession is the opening of the windows of the heart to the light of Heaven: an acknowledgment before God of our guilt and need of His mercy. God is faithful and just to forgive every sincere confessor (1 John 1:9).

II. A Divine Revelation. Of the "kindness and love of God our Savior toward men" (v. 4). God's kindness and love, as revealed in Christ Jesus, is the greatest and most precious discovery any sinful man ever made. To him it is a fountain opened, where streams of mercy flow for all his sin and impurity. When seen and trusted, constraining him to make this other confession: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:9, 10).

III. A Complete Justification. "Being justified by His grace" (v. 7). As we have sinned against God, God alone can justify. This He does by His own free, unmerited favor, through Jesus Christ. "It is not by works, lest any man should boast" (Galatians 2:16). When God justifies the believer in Jesus it is an evidence that his forgiveness has been full and complete.

IV. An Entire Regeneration. "He saved us by the washing of regeneration" (v. 5). Suppose it were possible to be justified from all sin, and yet not be changed in heart, or made a new creature How soon this justified one would be like the sow that was washed returning again to the mire. "Whom God justified, them He also glorified" (Romans 8:30). Justification sets us right with God for further blessing. Regeneration makes us like God in character for holy service. It would not be a full salvation without being "born from above."

V. A Daily Renovation. To meet this need there is "the renewing of the Holy Spirit which He shed on us abundantly" (vv. 5, 6). This is the Divine remedy for spiritual staleness. "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Ephesians 4:23). Along life's rough path there is much to tear and wear the energy of the soul; but the Holy Spirit can renew our freshness and fitness by His quickening influence. "It is the Spirit that quickens." Here the flesh profits nothing. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Our Lord said: "He that believes on Me out of his inner man shall flow rivers of living water: this spoke He of the Spirit" (John 7:37). "Believe and you shall see."

VI. An Eternal Possession. "Made heirs of the life of the ages" (v. 7). Our Heavenly Father has such vast possessions that every child "born of God" becomes an heir—not merely of eternal existence, that is seen, without being "born again;" but of the abundant life that is in Jesus Christ, throughout all the coming ages. Thus we have fullness of mercy to begin with, fullness of grace to continue in, and at last fullness of life to glory in through all eternity. "He who has the Son has life" (1 John 5:11). "He is able to save to the uttermost."