

# His Own Special People

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Titus 2:11-14

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## Introduction:

Smackdab in the middle of his pastoral letter to his young disciple Titus, we find the apostle Paul (of course under the inspiration of the Spirit of God) give this incredible description of the *people of God*, the *Church*, the *bride of Christ*.

We are *HIS OWN SPECIAL PEOPLE*.

To be upfront and honest with you all, tonight's message is exclusively for the Christ-follower.

If you happen to be unredeemed tonight and still stand in a position of guiltiness before almighty God because your sin has yet to be forgiven, at any point during this sermon you can repent (change your mind) and believe (put your faith and trust) in Jesus Christ.

After you do this, you then can enjoy all the benefits of being a son or daughter of the most high God, namely salvation, and THEN you can receive the specific encouragements that are found in this wonderful passage of God's Word.

Tonight, we'll learn about 5 specific characteristics of the "special" people of Christ Jesus. If you happen to like the title of tonight's message, well it's not because I came up with it but because God did. It is the very phrase that is used in verse 14 of Titus 2: that we are "His own special people".

This word *special* carries with it a ton of meaning. This is actually the only time you'll find this specific Greek word used in the entire New Testament.

"**special**" – periousios – that which is one's *own*; a people *selected* by God for His own *possession*

- It also means something that has been *reserved for particular purpose*

In the King James Version of the Bible, the word is translated to be "a peculiar people" and I kind of like that!

The Word of God does describe us as a pretty peculiar and unique group of people because we aren't like the rest of world. We're on a different path, we have a different way of living and to the world who does not know God, we're all a bunch of weirdos and I say AMEN to that!

We're not like the world because this world isn't our home and isn't where our citizenship is from; our citizenship is in heaven (Phil 3:20). We are a HOLY (set apart) people.

## READ TITUS 2:11-14

Now before we get into those 5 characteristics of God's special people that I mentioned we'd see in our text, let's spend a moment considering the truth that is found in verse 11.

*<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,*

Having a proper understanding of the grace of God is an absolute necessity when it comes to being a Christian. If you get this wrong, then Biblically speaking, you are not a true Christian.

It is this understanding of the doctrine of grace that separates true Christianity from cults that claim the name of Christ.

Our salvation is ONLY possible because of the grace of God. He extends it as a gift that is to be received. Our salvation is not, even in the slightest, according to ANYTHING that we've done or will do.

The only contribution we've made to our salvation is providing the SIN that was needing to be atoned for!

Those who disagree with this teaching of salvation by grace alone stand against a whole lot of Bible. Turn over probably just a page in your Bible to Titus 3.

### Titus 3:5-7

<sup>5</sup> not by works of righteousness which we have done, but **according to His mercy He saved us**, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> that having been **justified by His grace** we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

### Ephesians 2:8-9

<sup>8</sup> For **by grace** you have been saved **through faith**, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> **not of works**, lest anyone should boast.

The way to receive this gift is through the exercising of faith (belief and trust) in Christ Jesus.

### 2 Timothy 1:9-10

<sup>9</sup> who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, **not according to our works**, but according to His own purpose and **grace** which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, <sup>10</sup> but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, *who* has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

Notice back in verse 11 of our text tonight how this grace of God that brings salvation “has appeared to all men”.

I love this. There is not a single person who is exempt/excluded from being able to receive this salvation that is according to grace. It is available to ALL men!

No one is off limits. Sometimes we think things like, “No way this person or that person can be saved” and it’s like God says in response, “Oh yeah, watch Me!”.

### **Isaiah 59:1a**

<sup>1</sup> Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, That it cannot save;

God can save whoever He wants. Anyone that wants to receive the free gift of salvation can receive it if they turn to Christ!

On the grace of God...

“Grace—rightly perceived—compels holiness.” – R. Kent Hughes

And that quote right there is a great catapult into the first of our five points tonight regarding the special people of God...

## **1. A Pious People (vs 12)**

<sup>12</sup> *teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,*

Pious/piety is an old Puritan-style of word that I think we should bring back. It speaks of deep devotion, fervor, and reverence for the Lord.

Pious can be used synonymously with godly (piety = godliness).

Here in verse 12, we learn that God’s special people are to be those who “deny ungodliness and worldly lusts”.

This word “deny” is awesome!

“**deny**” – to disown, to reject, to disavow, to renounce, to forsake,

- To repudiate (to refuse to accept/be associated with)

As God’s special people, we have disowned, rejected, and renounced all that is ungodly! We should be those who refuse to accept or even be associated with what is ungodly and what are considered worldly lusts!

### **2 Corinthians 4:2a**

<sup>2</sup> But we have *renounced* the hidden things of shame,

## **Romans 6:11**

<sup>11</sup> Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be *dead indeed to sin*, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Sin is no longer what our lives are for. We've formally declared our abandonment of sin. No longer is it our master.

**“ungodliness”** – all that is against God, wickedness, sin

- “Unrighteousness by virtue of not giving proper respect for God and His institutions”

## **Romans 1:18**

<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

## **Jude 17–18**

<sup>17</sup> But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>18</sup> how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.

There's a verse for today!

But what of these worldly lusts that are mentioned in verse 12 of our text that we're called to deny?

These are those *unrighteous desires of our flesh for the things of this world*. These desires are what draw us away from the Lord if we're not careful to deny them.

## **1 John 2:15–17**

<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

What's very interesting about the way the apostle John breaks down the things of the world here is that they are exactly what we see that Eve was tempted by when the serpent deceived her in the Garden of Eden.

## **Genesis 3:6**

<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Good for food – lust of the flesh, pleasant to the eyes – lust of the eyes, desirable to make one wise – pride of life.

We must beware of the allurements of this ungodly world. If you're a believer tonight who's looking for the things of this world to bring you a sense of satisfaction, it's time to stop eating with the pigs and walk in the better life that your heavenly Father has for you.

Though we once did (BC days), we no longer live for ungodliness and worldly lusts. We now deny those things and live a better life for *greater things* than just temporary pleasure.

Look back at verse 12 and notice the directive that is given as to what we ARE to live for. If we just looked at what we're to say NO to, here is what we're to say YES to.

We are now to live "soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age".

We conduct ourselves in sobriety. The soberness that is being spoke of here in our text is all about having a clear/sound mind. The command to live soberly, yes involves not being a drunk, but is really all about having **self-control over one's desires**.

Why's it important that we live this way? Well, for starters, we have a very real foe that is against us...

### **1 Peter 5:8**

<sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

You want to get wrecked and devoured by the enemy? Don't be sober or vigilant.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:6–8**

<sup>6</sup> Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. <sup>7</sup> For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. <sup>8</sup> But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

We are of the day. As those who are of the day, it is imperative that we live soberly, exercising self-control over our fleshly and sinful desires.

In addition to living soberly, we are to live righteously. I don't think we need to belabor this much. To live righteously simply means to live for what God says is right.

In the book of Romans, those who are born again (God's special people) WERE once slaves of sin, but are now deemed slaves of righteousness.

### **Romans 6:12-13, 18–19**

<sup>12</sup> Therefore **do not let sin reign** in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. <sup>13</sup> And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your **members as instruments of righteousness** to God.

<sup>18</sup> And having been set free from sin, you became **slaves of righteousness**. <sup>19</sup> I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness *leading to more* lawlessness, so now **present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness**.

Finally, we are to conduct our lives in godliness. To be godly is to act in accordance with God's nature.

The formal definition of what godliness is – “showing fitting and proper respect and reverence to God”. It's been said before that godliness is “reverence manifested in external behaviors”.

### **Psalm 4:3**

<sup>3</sup> But know that the Lord has set apart for Himself him who is godly; The Lord will hear when I call to Him.

All of this is to say that as God's set-apart people, we are to walk in a set-apart way. We are not called to be like the godless world, living for its ways. We are called to be DIFFERENT. We are a pious people.

But in addition to being a pious people, we are to be a ...

## **2. A Prepared People (vs 13)**

*<sup>13</sup> looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,*

If you didn't know, this is like the unofficial verse of our church.

In what way are we to be a prepared people? What are we to be prepared for?

We are to be prepared for the *rapture of the Church!* We are to be waiting, looking, and watching for the **imminent appearing of the Bridegroom** for His bride!

“**looking for**” – looking forward to one's arrival, waiting with watchfulness for someone to show up

- Anticipating, expecting

This is the same word that was used to describe Simeon in Luke 2.

### **Luke 2:25–32**

<sup>25</sup> And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. <sup>26</sup> And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. <sup>27</sup> So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, <sup>28</sup> he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: <sup>29</sup> “Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; <sup>30</sup> For my eyes have seen Your salvation <sup>31</sup> Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, <sup>32</sup> A light to *bring* revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.”

In the same way that Simeon was eagerly anticipating the birth of the Messiah, so you and I are awaiting the appearing of Christ where He will take us home.

In a divine way, it had been revealed to Simeon that he would not die before seeing the birth of the Christ. In a similar way, Christ has promised that He Himself will come back for His people to snatch them away from this wicked world. We haven't necessarily been promised that it will happen in our lifetime, but we are to live in expectation that it will!

### **Philippians 3:20**

<sup>20</sup> For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also **eagerly wait** for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

This "blessed hope" is our confident expectation of the blessing of being with our Bridegroom.

**Hal Lindsay** once said, "Man can live about forty days without food, about three days without water, about eight minutes without air...but only for one second without hope."

No matter what the enemy throws at us in this life, we never have to lose hope because the rapture is our blessed hope.

From the very lips of Jesus Himself...

### **John 14:1-3**

<sup>1</sup> "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.** <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there you may be also.***

He went to prepare a place for us. He's coming back to get us so WE CAN BE WITH HIM.

Notice in Titus 2:13 that the blessed hope is "the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ". There is a prophesied day where Christ will touch down on the Mount of Olives, but at the rapture of the Church, He appears in the atmosphere to receive His bride to Himself.

### **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

The most important question you can ever ask about the rapture is not about its timing, what it'll look like, or this or that. The most important question is "***Am I ready*** for it?"

There's a saying I heard early on in my walk with the Lord regarding the rapture that changed my perspective on it forever. As a young believer, the rapture was a daunting thing for me to think about because I wasn't sure if I was ready.

The saying I heard that changed me was “IF YOU STAY READY, YOU WON’T HAVE TO GET READY”. Everything clicked when I considered this. As long as I stayed close to Jesus and lived for Him alone, I’d be ready.

Illustration: bag ready to go in truck for when my wife gives birth to our baby girl

- That bag makes sure that no matter where we go, we’re ready for the birth of our child

And so, we are a PREPARED people when we’re living in a way that pleases God and are busy about His work in this world until He comes back to receive us to Himself.

### 3. A Purchased People (vs 14a)

<sup>14</sup> *who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed*

Illustration: Anyone in here have a dog? Dogs are awesome. Man’s best friend, right? My wife and I have a great little dog; she’s the best.

Imagine that someone abducted your dog and was holding it as ransom. As those who love that little dog with all that you are, you’ll do whatever it takes to get them back. If it means that paying the ransom is the only way, you’ll pay it!

It’s kind of like we’ve been abducted by sin and we’re held ransom by it. And it’s as though our loving Savior said “I’ll pay the cost to get them back. I’ll pay the ransom.”

The word that is used for *redeem* here literally means “**to release upon the receipt of a ransom**”.

#### Mark 10:45

<sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a **ransom** for many.”

Our redemption from sin was NOT CHEAP. You and I were expensive. *It costs the very blood of God Himself to purchase us back from sin!*

I love how God didn’t send an angel to buy us back. He didn’t send Michael or Gabriel. God came down HIMSELF to do it with His own blood!

#### Revelation 5:9

<sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have **redeemed us to God by Your blood** Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

#### 1 Corinthians 6:20

<sup>20</sup> For you were **bought at a price**; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.



Praise the Lord that He wasn't a cheapskate when it came to our redemption! Can you imagine God trying to bargain a deal with the devil for our salvation?

No, the reality is that...

"Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow".

### 1 Peter 1:18–19

<sup>18</sup> knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, <sup>19</sup> but with ***the precious blood of Christ***, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

The way we were purchased was through how Christ "GAVE Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed".

We were once under the bondage of sin, but Jesus came to LIBERATE us from this bondage that we couldn't get free from.

"Whom the Son sets free, is \_\_\_\_\_!"

In the Old Testament, there was this really interesting thing called a kinsman redeemer.

GotQuestions.org (great resource for all things Bible) gives an excellent description on what a kinsman redeemer was:

"The kinsman-redeemer is a male relative who, according to various laws of the Pentateuch, had the privilege or responsibility to act on behalf of a relative who was in trouble, danger, or need. The Hebrew term (*go el*) for kinsman-redeemer designates one who delivers or rescues or redeems property or person. The kinsman who redeems or vindicates a relative is illustrated most clearly in the book of Ruth, where the kinsman-redeemer is Boaz."

In the same way, the Lord Jesus Christ bought us for Himself, out of the curse, out of our destitution; made us His own beloved bride; and blessed us for all generations. He is the true kinsman-redeemer of all who call on Him in faith.

The OT kinsman redeemer was ultimately a picture of our Lord Jesus who rescued us from sin!

## 4. A Purified People (vs 14b)

*and purify for Himself His own special people*

If our redemption speaks of how Christ *bought* us, our purification speaks of how He has *cleansed* us!

"purify" – to cleanse, to free from the guilt of sin, to purge of evil

## 1 John 1:7

<sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son **cleanses** us from all sin.

The blood of Jesus purifies and cleanses us.

## Isaiah 1:18

<sup>18</sup> “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

Connected to our purification is our justification. We’ve recently learned about this on Sundays in the book of Romans.

Our purification and justification teach us of how God sees us post-conversion. He now sees us as wearing the ***white robes of the righteousness of Christ Jesus***.

Illustration: now, even though we still commit sin, because we’ve been purified and justified by the blood of Jesus, it’s like trying to mark up a white paper with a white crayon. Praise the Lord for this.

Finally, our fifth and final point regarding the special people of Christ...

## 5. A Purposed People (vs 14c)

*His own special people, zealous for good works.*

After having been purchased and purified by Christ as His own special people, we now have a great purpose! That purpose is to shine in this world!

The way that we shine in this world is, through yes what we say, but also, through what we DO. And what God has called us to do is to do GOOD WORKS in this dark world.

We’re to be a people who are “zealous” for good works!

“**zealous**” – eager, enthusiastic, and excited

- Are we this way when it comes to helping those in need? If we’re being honest with ourselves, we aren’t always this way.

What exactly are good works? Don’t overthink it. Good works are *kind* and *benevolent* deeds. The body of Christ should be leading the charge when it comes to doing good in this world. We shouldn’t let godless humanitarian organizations beat us to the punch when it comes to fulfilling needs.

Make no mistake, good works aren’t what save us (we already addressed this at the beginning of the message); however, ***good works absolutely should be flowing out of us after we’ve been saved!***

The book of James has much to say of this. The faith we have is a FAITH THAT WORKS. You'll be able to see my faith.

When we do good in this dark world, we shine Jesus and point people to Him.

### **Matthew 5:16**

<sup>16</sup> Let your light so shine before men, that **they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.**

If you do a quick glance through the very small letter to Titus, you'll notice several times where Paul exhorts the young pastor to charge the flock to do good works!

### **Titus 2:6-7**

<sup>6</sup> Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, <sup>7</sup> in all things showing yourself *to be* a **pattern of good works**; in doctrine *showing* integrity, reverence, incorruptibility,

### **Titus 3:1, 8, & 14**

<sup>1</sup> Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to **be ready for every good work**,

<sup>8</sup> This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to **affirm constantly**, that those who have believed in God should be **careful to maintain good works**. These things are **good and profitable** to men.

<sup>14</sup> And let our *people* also learn to **maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.**

We're commanded to do good works because they represent the kindness and love of our God and they swing doors wide open for the Gospel to be shared.

### **Ephesians 2:10**

<sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand that **we should walk in them.**

### **Conclusion:**

As we close, we are awestruck with the fact that we are considered to be His own special people. He has set us apart, not simply for His use, but to simply be His.

As His own special people, we are to be a **pious people** who do not live for the ungodly ways of this world but instead, day by day, choose to live soberly (self-controlled), righteously (for what God approves of), and godly (according to God's nature).

As His own special people, we are to be a **prepared people** who are ready for the glorious appearing of Christ, when He snatches away His beloved from this dark world. Maranatha!

As His own special people, we recognize that we are **purchased people** who were bought with the very blood of Christ. He redeemed us from sin and the power of the grave and because He has done so, we say to Him, "my life is YOURS, Lord".

As His own special people, we recognize that we are a **purified people** who've been cleansed of every sin and fault. We've been justified by what our beloved Savior did for us on the cross of Calvary.

Finally, as His own special people, we are a **purposed people** that God wants to use as "lights of the world". He has purposed for us to be those who preach the Gospel and are careful to maintain good works, because through doing good we represent Him well to the world and open doors for the hope of salvation to be shared.

Praise the Lord that we are **His own special people**.