

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

Planting The Gospel

PART

1

TITLE

Remember Clearly

SCRIPTURE

1 Timothy 1:12-17



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Good morning Providence, and happy early Fourth of July to you. I know that that's not yet, but it's coming. So, this is one of my favorite times of year, not just because I get to blow stuff up, and set off fireworks, but it's always a great reminder for me, because as a nation, we celebrate our independence. But every Sunday as we gather and we praise God, what we're doing is we're praising him for our dependence in Him that we must rely on Him, we must trust in Him. He is the one that sustains every beat of our heart.

And so, we're going to look at today is the Gospel, the Good News that saves us and sustains us. And so if you have a copy of God's Word, go ahead and open up to the book of 1 Timothy. 1 Timothy chapter 1, if you don't have a copy of God's Word, there might be one underneath the chairs in front of you. We will be on page 991 in there.

Last week we finished up the book of Jonah, and now we're getting ready to start a five week series on how to share our faith, what that looks like to share our story. And as we think about sharing our faith, and sharing our story, it just comes back consistently over and over again of our dependence on Christ. And over the next five weeks we're going to look at the specific ingredients that helps us to share our faith and our story well to a world that doesn't know Him, or is not trusting in Him yet. So, that's what we're going to be over the next five weeks, and today, we get to start it by looking at what is the Gospel, and what it means for our lives.

So 1 Timothy chapter 1, we will start on verse 12. But before we read this Word, let's pray.

Take a moment right now just to pray that God would speak to you this morning ... Take a moment just to pray for me that I would communicate God's truth clearly this morning ... Christ, you have given us salvation. You've given us good news, and this is great and it's heavy, but Lord, I ask that you would give us wisdom to understand its depths. Lord, we ask that this morning as we read your Word, as we discuss it, Lord, that you would open up our eyes to see the wonderful truth in your Word. Lord, I ask that this morning you would help us to love you with more of our heart today. God, that we'd have more boldness and courage to share your truth in your Gospel with a world that might or might not know you. So Lord, this morning, let your presence be with us. It's in Christ name I ask, Amen.

1 Timothy, chapter 1, starting in verse 12, the Word of God says, "I thank Him who has given me strength," this is Apostle Paul writing, and he says, "I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who would believe in him for eternal life. Now to the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." This is the Word of God.

Well back in the 1940s, there was a conference that was held in Britain, where they brought all the different religious leaders and scholars to meet together to talk about what is the difference in the different religions? There's a lot of big world religions out there, so what's the difference between Islam, and Christianity, and Buddhism? What's the differences between them? What's the similarities between them? As they gathered and they talked, they saw there were some similarities. They all believed in something bigger than themselves to some sense of grander, something greater out there. They found that all of them had some sense of a moral code, a more standard to live by. These things are good things you do, these are bad things you don't do. And they all seemed to hold to some kind of standard except for one. They all seemed to hold to some kind of standard of karma, if you do good, good happens to you, and if you do bad, bad happens to you.

And as they went around and they had these different leaders talk and discuss this, they came to C.S. Lewis and they asked him, "What is the thing that Christianity brings to the table of humanity? What's different? What's unique about Christianity?" And C.S. Lewis responded with just one word, he said, "Grace." It's grace. Because the rest of the world and all these religions say if you do these good works, good things happen to you, or bad things happen to you. But grace says, "We're all bad. We've all sinned. We've all fallen short, but God and his grace has given us the gift of salvation, not because we earned it, but because He's good and He's gracious to us." And all the other leaders sitting around says, "That is different. That is unique. That is strange when you compare it to other religions."

And I think that this passage this morning is showing us some unique things about the Gospel. If we're going to share our faith, if we're going to share our story, there's some unique things that we need to know about and be intentional to share. And the first thing that I see that we should see in this text is that God or Jesus is patient with us in our sin. Jesus is patient with us in our sin. Paul starts here in verse 12 and he says, "I thank him who has given me strength." There's a heart of gratitude behind Paul, because he's realized Christ is not only strengthened me, but He has saved me. He's done both of these things, and it wells up gratitude in his heart. And for those of us that know the Bible, we know a little bit about Paul's story, and we can see why there would be a gratitude in Paul's heart for this.

Because think about it, he says it here, if you look, if you don't know anything about Paul, you can catch a little glimpse of it in verse 13. He says, "Formally," he's remembering his past, he says, "...formally, I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and an insolent opponent." Paul was traveling around, and he was arresting Christians. He was breaking up families. He was murdering people, and approved of people being murdered for being Christian. This is what Paul was doing, "formally" before Christ saved him, but Christ did save him. Christ redeemed him.

And what's so interesting about this is he can sit here with a sense of gratitude, because think about Paul knowing these things that he's done. The church is not huge at this time, it's just getting started, it's just getting momentum. As Paul would travel from place to place or church to church, he would probably meet a lot of people that he would remember back to his former sins, his past sins. He would think, "This lady is a widow, because I killed her husband. These kids don't have parents, because I'm the one that put them in jail." I mean, this is Paul remembering his past. How can Paul have hope when everything around you is pointing to your past and how bad it was. It's because his hope and his peace didn't rest in his works, but in God's grace and God's perfect patience. "God's perfect patience," that's what he says in verse 16 if you look there. Maybe you circle this word, but maybe your Bible says in the middle of verse 16, "... That Christ might display His perfect patience," or "unlimited patience." That's what Christ is doing. Even in the midst of all these people that could have called Paul guilty, all these eye witnesses that saw the things he did wrong, God was patient with Paul.

Now, why was God patient with Paul? He'd done wrong right? A lot of eye witnesses that could have said, "Yeah, we saw Paul do this and that." And a better question, a better question is this, why is God patient with us if we've done wrong? Like why doesn't God just immediately cast judgment like right here and right now and just be done with it? "Like Paul, you're killing these people. I'm done with you Paul, like you're gone." And it's because of God's perfect patience.

In 2 Peter chapter 3, verse 9, it talks about God's patience, and it explains why God is patient with us. And it says this, "The Lord is not slow fulfilling His promise as some count slowness." What that means there, some people are like, "Jesus, when are you going to come back and make all these things right? Because there's a lot of brokenness in our world." And God's response in His Word is this, "But God is patient towards you. Not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." Why was God patient with Paul? Not immediately casting judgment on him? And why is God patient with you this morning? Because He desires for you to repent and turn. And this is God's love. Because God didn't have to announce His judgment to the world. He could have just immediately given it. It's because of God's perfect patience, which is incredibly different from our patience.

I mean, think about it, in just a different way, but in a tangible way. If I see an ant crawling on my arm, I don't announce judgment to this ant. I don't say, "Get off my arm, or there's about to a reckoning. There's repercussions that are about to happen in this moment if you don't stop touching me." No, what do I do? I take my finger, and I flick him away. Right? Like there's one rule, don't touch me. You broke it. We're done, right? That's our extent of our patience, but God's isn't like that. He's holy and He's set a part. And we're stuck in our sins, but because of God's perfect patience and His grace, He saves us. He saves us.

And there's a call to this that to model what Paul did here. He said, "... Formally, I was these things, formally, I were these things." How often do we stop and think back to who we were before Christ saved us? How often do we remember our sins? Because what we do when we remember our sins, is it lifts high Jesus's grace and perfect patience.

Just a couple months ago, I was back in Charlotte, which is my hometown. And when I was back in Charlotte, I wanted to take a trip down memory lane. I know some of y'all are thinking, "He looks like he is 15, it must have been a short trip." Okay, I'm in my mid 30s. I've earned this. I've earned a right to go down memory lane. And as I'm going down memory lane, I just go into places the first place I worked at, go kart track, which is ironically now a church. And I'm going by an old friend's house, and I'm going by the college I went to, I'm reliving some of these memories, but at the same time, God in his graciousness, started to show me sins in my life in all these different areas. That's not why I went there, but God, in His grace, showed me that. So, I remember going to places where I'm like, "Man, I remember at this stage. This is where I loved and desired more money, more than I loved and desired God. And this is where I loved the beauty of women more than I loved the beauty of God."

All these different places I went to, all were just a reminder of my sin, which led me in that moment to think, "God, you are so gracious. One, that you would save me. Two, that you would call me to share this good news with others that you would equip me to be able to tell of your love and your grace to others." And this verse came to my mind as I was sitting there in my car, Psalm 25:7, Solomon is praying and he says, "Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions, but according to your steadfast love, remember me for the sake of your goodness, oh Lord."

Now listen now, this is important. With the application of we need to look back and remember our sins. It's not we look back and remember our sins, so we feel a weight of guilt, and shame, and despair. That's not what Paul was doing here. We look back at our sin, and our transgressions, and what we do is we remember God's goodness and His grace. That's what this verse is saying. God's goodness and His grace and His love to deal with us, and His perfect patience to save us. What it does is actually gives us a clear picture of the gospel. We deserve wrath and we've been given grace. Martin Luther defined the Gospel as this, he said, "The Gospel is that you are more wicked than you ever dared believe, and you are more loved than you ever dared to hope." We are more wicked than we ever dared to believe, but yet, we are more loved than we ever dared to hope. This is the Gospel. This is the good news.

As we think about our sins, and we remember either where we are, or what God saved us from, it gives us a beautiful picture of Jesus Christ, the one who saved us. Now, I know some of his sit here and we think, "Well, this is an evangelism series, right? Like I understand my sins, but how is that helping me to share the Gospel better?" What it does is we remember our sins, what it does is reminds us our need for grace. And it reminds us that we are no better than those that are lost. We have a desperate need for grace just as much as somebody who doesn't know Jesus.

Without grace and God's perfect patience, we would never be redeemed. So instead of sitting in self righteousness in trying to share the Gospel, these are things that are wrong in your life, and these are things that you need to fix, and coming in judgment. Instead, we come with grace and with love, because we realize we are in desperate need of Christ's love and grace in our life also.

One man described evangelism as this, "It's just one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread. It's just one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread." We're not better than one another. And as we think back at the Gospel and what Christ has saved us from, what it's going to do is it's going to open up doors for us to share the Gospel humbly with others that don't believe. And it's going to remind us that we too we're in the same place that they were in. And as we talk to unbelievers and skeptics, if we come with this love and this humility, God's grace is going to shine so much brighter.

The second unique thing about the Gospel in this passage is that Jesus saves us from our sin. Jesus saves us from our sin. Jesus could have just been patient with us in our sin, and just allowed us to live our lives, and then die and be separated from him in hell. Like that would have been patient, that would have been enough, but He didn't. He's like, "I don't want to leave you in your sins. I want to free you from your sins. I want to redeem you. I want to give you hope and joy."

Look at what verse 15 says, this is a clear picture of what Christ has done and why he came. He says, "The saying is a trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ came into the world to save sinners." This is unique. This is different. Christ didn't primarily come into the world to teach us good truths, although He did. You look at other world religions and Confucius, Buddha, Muhammad, they're all teachers, but Christ came as a savior. He came primarily to save us from our sins. Jesus said it like this, "I came into the world not to condemn it, but that they might have life and have it to the full." Jesus said, "I came to seek and to save that which was lost."

So as we think back on our sins, we feel some of that weight, we need to remember that Christ has come to redeem us and to save us from those sins. What I think is beautiful in this passage is that Paul lists out three sins when he could have listed a number of other ones of himself, he says, "I'm a blasphemer, a persecutor, I'm an insolent opponent." He says all of these different things, but then what he does is he highlights at least four beautiful things of God's salvation. Four beautiful things about God's salvation. In here he talks about in verse 14, God's grace, that overflowed to him. God's grace that overflowed to him. It wasn't just a little bit of grace, it was an overflowing grace.

And later in verse 16, he says the mercy that he received from Christ, even though he was the foremost of sinners. Paul highlights God's grace and God's mercy, which one theologian said that when we see God, those are one and the same in God. God's mercy is His compassion to even forgive us of our sins. But his grace is the gift that He gives us of salvation. So, it's one in God, but when it reaches us, it seems to be two. But His grace and His mercy are held together in God's faith and love. That's what he says in verse 14, "God's grace overflowed to me with faith and love that are in Christ Jesus." Paul is like, "All of this is held together in Jesus. It's not me. It's not my works. It's not my goodness. It's not my mind. It's all held in Christ. Grace, faith, love, and mercy are all wed together in Christ." This the salvation that comes to us. This is the salvation that we share. And Paul's life was changed from the one who would martyr people to the one who would be martyred for Christ.

But Jesus didn't just save Paul, there's many other stories we could share. One of my favorites is John Newton. Now, not Isaac Newton, not the guy with the apple, gravity, all that stuff. This is John Newton. You might or might not have heard of him, but he was born in the 1700s. And when he was born, he had a Godly mom, but a really rough dad. And his mom died when he was young. So as he grew up, he just became a rough man just like his dad. By his teenage years, John Newton was a drunken sailer, literally, like a drunken sailer. And he became famous for this this time, and this is pretty impressive honestly, he had this reputation with his peers that he could cuss for two hours straight without ever repeating himself. Like I don't care who you are, that's impressive, right? Like that takes talent.

I mean, he was seen as just a very wicked, grumpy man that no one wanted to be around. So much so, that when he was a sailer, they were delivering cargo to Africa, and I don't know if this was planned or if this just happened, but the crew left him there. And I think it was just like, "Hey, John Newton's not back yet, everybody on the boat, up anchors, and let's get out of here." And they left him in Africa, because they didn't like him that much. And while he was there, he was captured and became a slave. And not just a slave, he actually became a slave to the slaves, because his owner didn't like him. This is a wicked, wicked man. He's a wretch. I mean, John Newton had to eat his dinner on his hands and knees without using his hands, just eating with his mouth like a dog, because people couldn't stand him.

And you'd think that would humble a man, right? You'd think that that would change somebody, but he escapes, and he finds a boat, and he gets back on the ocean. And even while he's back on the ocean, he gets drunk again, and he stumbles over to the side of the boat. And they get a fishing hook, and they hook him in the water to bring him back in. Like, I can't make this up, like this is a real man's story. And once again, still no humility. He comes back and his heart's still hardened. And instead of having a humble heart towards Africa, he has a heart of rage and anger. So what he does is he becomes a slave trader. And instead of showing grace on Africa, he starts taking men and women as slaves and breaking up families. I mean, terrible, just imagine one of the most wretched people you can ever think of, John Newton's that guy. John Newton's that guy.

Well, one day, he's out on a boat, and this really terrible storm hits. And he doesn't want to die, and so he prays to a God that he doesn't even know. And he says, "God, help me," that was it. That was his prayer. "God help me." And God in his perfect patience, spared John Newton's life. He ends up back in London, and he talks to a few men outside of the city. And these guys start to tell him about Jesus, the guy that he prayed to. And John Newton hears of God's grace, and he believes and becomes a Christian.

But not just a Christian, he actually becomes a pastor. And John Newton, at the end of his life is known for three things, he's known as being one of the most gracious people you would ever meet. He was patient with people. He loved people well. So, he was known as being gracious, he was famous for that. But second, he became famous for helping to abolish the slave trade. He paired up with William Wilberforce, and those two guys together abolished the slave trade in Europe. And then third, what we might know him from, is that he became most famous for the song Amazing Grace. He wrote that, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now, I'm found, was blind but now I see." This is the man that wrote that.

Jesus saves us from our sins. And I know we can read this story and think, "Well Paul, that was a long time ago. John Newton, that was a long time ago." I was thinking this week just about people here at Providence that I know that God has saved from crazy backgrounds. There was a guy that I met that said, "I used to define my life. My life was identified by how many men I could sleep with on the weekend." He said, "But now, my life is defined by my identity and relationship with Jesus Christ."

We have somebody that's a part of our worship team that was an atheist years before. But she said, "I hated God. I had no need for God." And now, she stands up here and helps to lead us in worship and says, "Lord, I need you. I need you." I know people here at Providence that used to be drug addicts that God has saved out of that, and now, they're addicted to loving God, and his grace, and his goodness. That's not out there somewhere, that's here.

Your story might be that way. And as we think about God's greatness and His might to save people, this should give us the courage to share the Gospel, because we need to remember what Christ has done. We need to remember what Christ has done in other's lives, and Paul's life, and John Newton's life, and other people here at Providence. And this is why, because it helps us to share our faith with everyone, to share our story with everyone.

The reason being is because sometimes we look at people and we're like, "Man, my boss is so far from God. There's no hope for that person. My neighbor is so distant from Jesus, they don't even care, they're hostile towards Jesus." Oftentimes, those are the people that God is pursuing the most. If you were to ask me, "Go share the Gospel with Paul," before he came to know Christ, "No, I'm not sharing this Gospel with this guy like he would kill me. I'm not going to go share the gospel with John Newton like no I'm not going to do that.

These guys are too far gone.” But Christ came to save the foremost of sinners is what our text says. Those that we see as the most distant from God. So church, as we remember what Christ has done, build up in our heart a passion, and a desire, and a hope as share the Gospel that Christ can change anyone’s heart.

I would also encourage you to remember what Christ has done in your life. I know some people here would say, “Well Ryan, I didn’t come from like a crazy background like that. Like if we talked about sewing wild oats like that would be a stretch for me to even talk about sewing wild oats, because I just didn’t have any. And so, I was just faithful. I grew up in a home where they loved Christ, and shared Christ with me, and I believed.” So, that can give us a sense of feeling inadequate to share our story. But I truly believe that that story right now is one of the most powerful stories in our culture. And this is why, some people can look at Paul and John Newton, and just say, “Those people needed some Jesus. Right? Their life was a mess.” But then you can say, “Well, I had a so-called good life, where I did things right and I avoided things that were wrong. But I even knew that I needed the grace of God, because I too was a sinner lost and Hell bound without Christ.” So, share your story, share other stories with hope, because Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost.

The last thing that this passage shows us about the Gospel is our call to share the Gospel. Jesus calls us to serve Him. Look at what Paul says in verse 12, the very end of verse 12 he says, “I was appointed to his service. Christ appointed me to His service.” We were called to serve Christ. Now look at verse 16, he says it again, he says, “But I have received mercy for this reason.” Why has God given you mercy? And why has God given me mercy? Paul’s going to tell us right here, the reason that we have received mercy, he has received mercy, is that Christ might display His perfect patience as an example to those who believe in Him for eternal life. We are given mercy that we would be an example to display God’s goodness and grace to a world that doesn’t know it.

So, what he called Paul to do, that’s what He’s calling us to do. And that’s what Paul does in verse 17, he just bursts forth with all this praise to Jesus, because he’s thinking back, “This is who I was, I was a wretched man that was lost. Christ came and saved me and redeemed me.” And then he ends it all in verse 17, he’s like, “I’m just going to speak all this about Jesus to the king of ages, immortal, invisible, that only God the honor and glory forever and ever.” He just pours forth all of this praise. This is how we share the Gospel. This is how we share our faith. Christ changes our hearts. We love Him deeply, and it just pours forth out of our heart and our lives.

And it might not look exactly like this but look how Paul talks about Jesus, he says he is the king of ages. Now this is beautiful to me. This is beautiful as I look at it. Because when we think of kings, you have to have a kingdom, right? And some kings have countries, some kings have villages, some kings have burgers, but some you’ve got to have a king and they have to be over something, right. But here when he talks about Christ, your Bible might say the “eternal king,” but it literally means the king of ages. What Christ is king of is time. He’s the one that spoke it into existence years ago.

He's the one that knows the end. He's the one that knows the day you were born and the day that you will die. Christ is the king of ages, and all of that is held in his hands. And Paul says he's immortal.

There is a philosophical statement that says that God is dead. Friedrich Nietzsche said it. Now he's not talking about that God was alive once, and then he got old and died and passed away. What he's talking about when he says that God is dead is he used to be alive in men's minds. We used to think about God a lot, but now he's dead. We don't think about Him anymore, and he's gone, and he's useless, he's worthless; God is dead. That is not true. Our God is immortal. Just because we would deny that there is a God doesn't change the truth that there is a God.

You can think about it like this: tomorrow, if everybody on planet Earth, everybody on planet Earth went blind, we couldn't see anymore, and we got together, we built a little counsel and said, "I don't think there's a sun anymore," and we all sat around and agreed, "Yeah, there's not longer a sun, because we can't see it, it's not there, so there is no sun," would it change the fact that the sun is still there and it's still shining? You might not be able to see it but it's still there. And it's the same for us. We can say that there is no God, but it doesn't change the fact that God is there. We can say that God is dead, but he's not, he's alive, and he's moving, and he's ruling his kingdom, and he's saving souls. He is the immortal God.

And you might say, "Okay, Paul, if this is such a great God, why don't you let me see him?" And he says he is invisible. And what I love about this though is in another one of Paul's letters, he talks about Jesus and he says, "Jesus is the image of the invisible God." If you want to see this God, if you want to know who this God is, if you want to see the tangible nature of this God, it's found in the life of Jesus Christ. So we read the Gospels, and we see the God who loves us, and the God who cares, and the God who saves us. And he is the only God; it's the last thing that Paul mentions here, "He's the only God. There's no other God but Jesus. There are many imitations, but there's only one God, and he is due all glory," is what he says. He's due all glory forever and ever.

Like I said, this is a picture of sharing the Gospel, declaring these truths about Christ. We read this and we think, "Man, I can't do this. I can't go into my job tomorrow and just start speaking out different attribute of God and describing him. Like, I'll lose my job if I walk in, and I'm just like, I'm going to rattle off 'He's immortal, he's the king of ages, this is our God.'" You might. You might lose your job with that, but I honestly don't know if that's the best way to share this story, and to share this truth about God. It might be, but I think there's a subtle way to do it. I think there's a way that as you share your heart, and your life, and your story, these truths about Jesus, that he is the king, that he's the only God, that he's immortal, just flow from everyday conversation.

I'll give you an example. I was spending some time with some friends who don't believe in Christ. They've said it to me, they're agnostic at best. And they were talking about a very tragic time in their life, a really difficult time, where they had had a miscarriage really late into the pregnancy. And so they're sharing this truth with me, and it's just a weightiness on their heart; I can tell they're almost tearing up sharing this story with me. And I tell them that my wife and I went through a really difficult miscarriage as well. And he looks at me and he says, "How did you deal with that? As a husband, we don't always think about that. But as a husband, how did you deal with that?" And it allowed me to share my story, and to proclaim these truths about Christ in just a real personal way where I just said, "Jesus was how I dealt with it. I trust in his goodness, his love, even when it's painful. He's the one that gave me hope and strengthened me in courage in the midst of losing a child," and what I'm doing is exactly what Paul is doing just in a different way. I'm just sharing my story and proclaiming the grace that God has given us, and the hope that we have of salvation, because it's all found in Jesus Christ.

There can oftentimes be a sense of fear that paralyzes us from saying statements like this, but I think if we would just stop, and we would just share our story, that that would be enough. I think that God can use our words in our everyday life to point to his glory in great, great ways. So let us remember to share our story.

And we got this devotional that is available at Next Steps, that you can pick it up. Dave Owen has written it. It's five days to think through your story. When you trusted Christ what that looked like, and how to be able to share that with someone else. And if you don't know Christ, I'd still encourage you to pick this up and to read it, and maybe you could believe in Christ, maybe you could have a story that you don't have yet. But we want to equip you to be able to talk about it in just a way that flows, and a way that works, and a way that's easy to tell others about Jesus.

We also want to give you an opportunity to share with one another, because even sharing your story with believers is great, because it encourages you, right, to hear how God has saved and redeemed other people. So in life groups, in the next coming weeks, in the next few weeks, we're going to give you opportunities just to share with one another your story of how Christ saved you. Because the reality is, if you can't share your story with someone who believes like you do, you'll never share it with someone who doesn't. So we want to be faithful to encourage one another, and to share our faith, to know our story, because it is the greatest truth the world has ever known. The way that Christ has saved us, and redeemed, and sanctified us, it's all in Christ's glory and beauty.

I end with this, I enjoy Greek mythology; it's just something that's always interested me: Zeus and Hercules and all that. Well if you know that world, this mythology, there's these creatures called Sirens, and it's this weird half-bird, half-woman who are on this island, and they sing this very beautiful song.

. And as sailors go by they end up crashing into these rocks, because they hear this song and they steer their ship that way, and then they wreck their lives on these rocks. So all these different people in Greek mythology try different things to resist the Sirens. One guy said, “What we’re going to do is we’re going to just stuff our ears with wax, and fill with up with max, and so we can’t hear this song that they’re singing.” Another man said, “Well just tie me to the mast, and as you tie me to the mast then I’ll be able to hear the song, but I won’t steer the ship that way because I’m not in control.”

But I think the person that responded to it best was Orpheus. Where he said, “What I’m going to do is as we pass by this island, and as they sing, what I’m going to do is I’m going to pull out my harp and I’m going to play a more beautiful song.” And as he plays a more beautiful song, his sailors listen to that song and they don’t pay attention to what the Sirens are singing, and so they’re saved. It works. They don’t crash into the rocks because they’re saved by a better song.

Now why do I say all that? Because I believe as we share our faith, what we’re doing is we’re sharing the best song. We’re sharing a better song. There’s no tune that our world has to offer that’s better than the grace that Jesus Christ gives. So this is what it looks like to share our faith. We just talk about it because it’s better than anything the world has to offer. So let us share our faith and our story of Jesus Christ with hope and with love because He’s good and gracious to save.

Let’s pray. God thank you, thank you that you sent your son to die in our place. Thank you for your perfect patience. What you have great justice that could have just wiped us out immediately when we sinned, but you instead gave us great grace through perfect patience. So lord now, many of us here you’re still giving us perfect patience because haven’t believed, and I just pray that you would stir our heart. Because Lord, you came not to condemn, but Lord, that we might be saved. And so, Lord, save us. And for those that know you or trust in you, Lord give us great hope, and help us to see the great beauty of this Gospel that we share. And God, and help our hearts to overflow with goodness and love as we share the Gospel with others. It’s in Christ’s great name we pray. Amen.



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