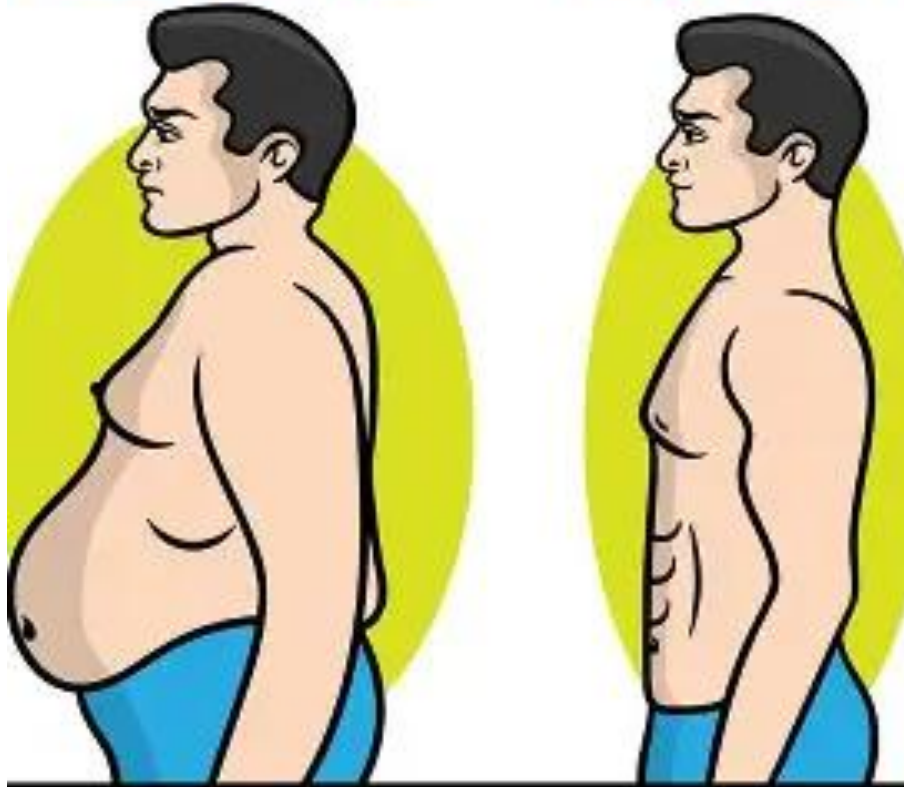


BEFORE

AFTER



Titus 3

There is a connection between Christian truth and conduct.

Transformation, not just transportation!

³ For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. ⁴ But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵ 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, ⁶ whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. ⁸ 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."

" Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, ² to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.

➤ **BEFORE**

³ For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

Amplified: For we also were once thoughtless and senseless, obstinate and disobedient, deluded and misled; [we too were once] slaves to all sorts of cravings and pleasures, wasting our days in malice and jealousy and envy, hateful (hated, detestable) and hating one another.

III. Charles Spurgeon's testimony- pages 7 and 8

Remembering where we once were shows us that the fallen nature is not so far from us, and we need constant reminding to stay where we should be in the Lord.

Paul grounds Christian ethics in remembered grace, so that we treat others with mercy because we once needed the same mercy

As Spurgeon once put it...

No man here has any idea of how bad he really is. You do not know how good the grace of God can make you, nor how bad you are by nature, nor how bad you might become if that nature were left to itself.

W E Vine comments that "the remembrance of the fact that we once manifested some of these characteristics of our unregenerate nature, should in itself be an incentive to us to fulfill the exhortations just given. We ourselves stood in need of kindness, gentleness, meekness, on the part of others, and were so treated by God in His long-suffering. How then can we refuse kindness to those who stand in need of it?" Vine goes on to write that "Foolishness is evidence of a blunted mind; disobedience is evidence of a hardened heart; deception is evidence of a perverted will; bondage to lusts and pleasures is evidence of a carnal mind; malice and envy and hate are proofs of selfishness, pride and grasping ambition. And all are the effects of sin."

Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Remembering this work of God builds four things in us.

- **First, gratitude for how God transformed us.**
- **Second, humility as we see that it was His work that changed us.**
- **Third, kindness to others in the place we used to be.**
- **Fourth, faith that God can change those who are still in that place.**

THOUGHT- Now ponder this list for a moment -- what is your reaction? Are we not benefactors of infinite mercy? Are we not recipients of so great a salvation? Are we not under obligation out of love and gratitude to serve our Master and not ourselves? Let your heart be renewed by thoughts of the fire from which you were snatched and purpose today to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness all the remaining days of your life on earth. Live for eternity and for His glory!

➤ **AFTER**

⁴ But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵ 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, ⁶ whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

One of the most beautiful illustrations of this aspect of human kindness is King David's treatment of Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:1).

Then he bowed himself, and said, "What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?"

So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet.

If David had acted according to justice, he would have condemned Mephibosheth who belonged to a condemned family. But David acted on the basis of kindness, seeking out Mephibosheth, assuring him he had no need to fear, inviting him to live in the king's palace as family and to eat at the king's table. This is but a veiled picture of the infinite kindness of God! Indeed every believer has experienced even greater kindness, for we are now children of the King and shall revel in His majestic presence forever! What kindness!

These words are commonly taken as a reference to baptism, and this passage is sometimes quoted in support of the idea of baptismal regeneration (which would totally contradict this beautiful passage). Yet we cannot say that Paul specifically mentions baptism here, and the only other use of the ancient Greek word translated washing here is connected with the spiritual cleansing of the believer by the Word of God through faith (Ephesians 5:26).

Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone. We must never put the cart of works before the horse of grace!

Vernon McGee explains that "This washing of regeneration is what the Lord was speaking about in the third chapter of John: "... Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). The water represents the Word of God—the Bible will

wash you. It has a sanctifying power, a cleansing power. We are cleansed by the Word of God. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God—"born of water and of the Spirit." That is the way we are born again. ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

Horatius Bonar writes that...

Ritualism, or externalism, or traditionalism are all different forms of self-righteousness; man's self-invented ways of pleasing or appeasing God, or paying for admittance into heaven. These forms of self-righteousness are a human apparatus for procuring God's pardon. They are the means by which the performer of them hopes to win God's favor—perhaps, also, man's praise—most certainly, his own esteem.

Spurgeon... When a man is converted to God, it is done in a moment. Regeneration is an instantaneous work. Conversion to God, **the fruit of regeneration, occupies all our life**, but regeneration itself is effected in an instant.

Spurgeon wrote that...Coming to Christ is the very first **effect of regeneration**. No sooner is the soul quickened than it at once discovers its lost estate, looks out for a refuge, and, believing Christ to be the only one, flies to Him and reposes in Him. Where there is not this coming to Christ, it is certain that there is as yet no quickening. Where there is no quickening, the soul is dead in trespasses and sins; being dead, it cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Sinner, unconverted sinner, you have often tried to save yourself, but you have often failed. You have, by your own power and might, sought to curb your evil passions and sins. With you, I lament that all your efforts have been unsuccessful. And I warn you, it will be unsuccessful, for you can never by your own might save yourself. With all the strength you have, you can never **regenerate** your own soul; you can never cause yourself to be born again. And though the new birth is absolutely necessary, it is absolutely impossible to you unless God the Spirit will do it.

Spurgeon - If your conversion is an instance of the preacher's power, you need to be converted again! If your salvation is the result of your own power, it is a miserable deception from which may you be delivered! Every man who is saved must be operated upon by the might of God the Holy Spirit every jot and tittle of true regeneration is the Spirit's work!"

Poured out [ekcheo](#) from ek = out + chéó = pour) means literally to flow out, to gush forth or to pour out . The inherent idea is to cause something to be emitted in quantity.



**We are saved by God's mercy, not by our merit—
by Christ's dying, not by our doing**

Matthew Henry comments on the mercy demonstrated in the parable of the prodigal son.

- His father saw him-- there were eyes of mercy;

- he ran to meet him-- there were legs of mercy;
- he put his arms round his neck-- there were arms of mercy;
- he kissed him-- there were kisses of mercy;
- he said to him-- there were words of mercy;
- Bring here the best robe-- there were deeds of mercy;
- Wonders of mercy-- all mercy!
- Oh, what a God of mercy He is!
- Oh, what a precious reception for one of the chief of sinners!

➤ **NOW WHAT?**

⁸ 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."

⇒ **Affirming**

to confirm thoroughly (by words), i.e. asseverate:—affirm constantly.

To asseverate means to declare or affirm something in a highly serious, earnest, and emphatic manner. It is typically used in formal contexts to indicate that a statement is made with absolute certainty, leaving no room for doubt or confusion.

Mark 16:20

And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Colossians 2:7

Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

⇒ **Maintaining**

to set or place before

1. to set over
2. to be over, to superintend, preside over

3. to be a protector or guardian

