

The Mighty Jesus

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Well, take your Bibles and let's go back to 1 Timothy as we're going through an expositional preaching tour of this New Testament book. Again, this is a letter written by the aged Apostle Paul. He's writing to his young disciple and young pastor, Timothy. He's left Timothy in Ephesus to oversee the church there so he writes this letter instructing Timothy in church life, in essence, "Timothy, here's what you need to do, here's the things I want you to address, to fix, to correct, to build up, to build on, whatever." So he called this beautifying the bride, her fashion, that is, the way she's structured and her function, how is she to do her work. We don't find everything we need to know about the church in the pastoral epistles but we find a lot and last time we looked at verses 12 through 17 and we talked about a true servant minister, because what Paul is doing, he's exhorting Timothy right off the bat to confront and correct false doctrine that was creeping into the church. We might even say it's not creeping anymore, it's gotten in there and so Paul didn't have time to deal with all of it so as he goes somewhere else, he says, "Timothy, I'm leaving you behind and I want you to deal with this." As a matter of fact, look back up at verse 3. He says in verse 3 as he's writing to Timothy, "I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, to remain on at Ephesus," why? "So that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines." And I spent some degree of emphasis on the fact that in the balance of New Testament teaching, the church pastor is to be intentional and ever-vigilant to guard sound doctrine and to confront and correct unsound doctrine as it finds its way into the church, and this is something that has to be done in every generation, and, ah, the last 100 or so years in what we might call Baptist or Evangelical history, we have failed greatly in allowing worldly false notions, beliefs, practices, viewpoints, into God's church and so this is a pattern for us as Paul urges Timothy.

Now we come to verse 12 and in verses 12 through 17, the Apostle Paul lays down his own life, his calling, his ministry, as a contrast to that of the false teachers and we looked at everything from Paul's perspective last week, now we're gonna look at these verses from more of a divine perspective. I've entitled the exposition of verses 12 through 17 today as "The Mighty Jesus." The mighty Jesus. Look at verse 12,

12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, 13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was

shown mercy because I acted in unbelief; 14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and the love which are found in Christ Jesus. 15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. 16 Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Christ Jesus might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. 17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

So, again, this, this is the same text I used last week but a completely different message. The mighty Jesus. I. Paul talks about Christ's strength, his great mighty strength. He says in verse 12, "I thank Christ Jesus." I thank him because he has strengthened me. Now that's an important statement because contrast to the false teachers, they don't look at themselves as humbled and wholly dependent upon Christ's strength. As a matter of fact, they're full of themselves. They are, ah, in great awe of their own wisdom and their own understanding but not the Apostle Paul. Paul begins by saying, "It is Christ who is my strength." You see, the truth we know as Christians is that all men by nature are without strength. All men before God are wholly weak. Romans 5:6 reminds us, "For while we were helpless," what a word, "helpless at the right time Christ died for the ungodly." Helpless means no strength at all. It actually can have the idea of being sickly and anemic. While we in our moral fortitude were deficient, had no hope, couldn't do anything, we couldn't look to God, we could not reach to God, we couldn't walk to God, we couldn't intellectually find our way to God, we were helpless then God acted on our behalf.

Listen, church, the reason men who do not believe and be saved, the reason that men do not honor Christ in their lives, the reason men do not faithfully serve Christ and advance his kingdom through a local church is because they're too weak to do so. It's not because they're brilliant and learned and above it, it's because they're too weak to grasp it, to see it, to embrace it, because men on their own are deplorably weak. We are weak intellectually and we cannot grasp the vital greatness of Christ and his kingdom. We are weak of heart, we cannot feel or treasure the greatness of Christ and his kingdom. We are deplorably weak in our will, we cannot bring ourselves to initiate a full devotion to Christ and his kingdom. We have an overall weakness of strength and cannot endure the rigors of following Christ and building his kingdom.

That's what you are, that's what I am before God, and Paul wants to bring that out again when he says, "I thank Christ Jesus because He has strengthened me." Now Paul was anything but a weakling, humanly speaking, but he said, "When it came to things that mattered, I was in, completely weak." I mean, Paul, who before he changed his name at conversion, was Saul of Tarsus, was by any objective standard a strong man. He was a determined man. Among the Hebrews he was a brilliant man. He considered himself in his own words, quote, "a Hebrew of Hebrews"; the top of the top when it came to the Jews. "But," he says, "in things pertaining to God and things that really matter and things that count for time and for eternity, I was weak, I was deplorably weak," but now in verse

12 he says, "but Christ strengthened me." Christ's strength is what made Paul who he was. Christ's strength is what made Paul the man of God that he was. Christ's strength made God the minister of God that he was. Isaiah 53:12 reminds us, this is a prophecy of what Jesus will perform, it says, "Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the, the, the, the booty with the strong," that's the spoils of war. Here Jesus is winning and warring and conquering and he enjoys the spoils of his victory. The point is Christ's strength is adequate. Christ's strength is more than adequate. Christ's strength is mighty and Paul says, "It is His mighty strength that has made me what I am."

The greatest day of any person's life is when they see themselves as hopeless and weak and Christ as mighty and strong. No wonder this same apostle said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." The little song we sing to our children, "I am weak, but He is strong." Oh, that's a great thing to teach children and that's a great thing that men need to learn. Christ is the mighty strong one.

II. This text also teaches us not only about his mighty strength but his great calling. Christ's crawling there in verse 12. Notice at the end of the verse, "because He considered me faithful, putting me into service." Notice Paul didn't say, "I, I, I, after I was converted, I looked at all the opportunities and I counseled with men and I looked at all the job descriptions for ministers and I decided this was the kind of ministry I was gonna have." No, he says, "He put me to service." This is speaking of God's calling on Paul's life and in principle very similar to God's calling on every Christian's life. This is Christ calling him into service.

In Acts 9:15, the apostle writes, "But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine,'" notice this is what God is saying of Paul. "Paul is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel." I have called him not only to salvation but also to service and particularly for Paul to the office of apostle.

1 Corinthians 9:16-17, Paul says, "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of." What a minute, Paul, we think you're a wonderful example of a, of a faithful Christian and a faithful minister. He says, "Yeah, but I don't have anything to boast of, for I am under compulsion." What a phrase. He says, "Before you give me too many pats on the back, you need to understand something, I don't call the shots here. He called me out of my blindness and my wickedness and saved me and then he called me to particular service. I'm under His compulsion. He calls the shots for woe is me," he says, "but if I do not preach the gospel. For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will." He says, "Understand that it wasn't my will that prevailed here. His will prevailed over my will and called me to salvation and called me into this service." Wow. This ties in greatly with the, the principle of Christ's strength, does it not? Christ had all this power to overcome his will. As a matter of fact, if you're converted, it's the mighty strength of Jesus that overcame your will because on your own you would never will to adore him, you would never will to treasure him, you would never will to honor him. Thank God for the overcoming power of Jesus Christ.

Here we see him calling Paul to this stewardship, this, this, this ministry that he has. There's a dual nature to God's call on one's life. Paul, ah, is a pattern of such here and that is that the call of salvation always includes the call to service. Did you get that? The moment the Apostle Paul was converted, God was already commissioning him and in, in, instructing him in the kind of service he would be performing for his new Lord and Savior. The, the most radically unsound teaching is somehow that you can believe on Jesus, get your name written down in heaven, have heaven as your home, but your life is not to be spent in honoring and serving him. That is not Christianity. That's an invention of the last century of water-downed easy-believism and evangelicalism. It is not biblical Christianity. Paul was called. He was under compulsion. He was given a service, a stewardship that God had given him. The call to salvation includes the call to service and the call to service included the call to salvation, the two are never alone. One is always in the company of another.

Now let's amplify this out for us in, in, in, as way as a, application to our life. Acts 2:41 and 42. Notice how these first believers in the New Testament are, are mentioned. "So then, those who had received his word were baptized," they're converted, "and they were added that day about three thousand souls." Notice, saved, added to the local church. Saved, added to the local church. What's that mean? Look, when you believe on Jesus Christ, your name is on salvation's roll and immediately God calls you in addition to calling you to salvation, he calls you to service to put your name on the service roll of a local church. Did you hear that? Your name goes on salvation's roll when you believe, your name goes on the service roll when you join a local church and that's always been...God has no other concept. There are no hybrid, ah, Christians out there. There's no unique hybrid brand of Christianity that somehow gets around the local church. Christ was saved to be a minister and a servant to the churches. We are saved and we are called to be a minister in a local church. Christ initiates this call and our response should always be, and I believe this is true, every true child of God has a heart desire to honor him in service through their local church.

Now, ah, again I always give the caveat and the balance that I understand. There are a lot of good brothers and sisters, I again had correspondence, I have correspondence with people every week, mostly church leadership, talking with a person this week and they were talking about biblical principles and church life and how, how they had found themselves in a situation in their local church with a church leadership was just unwilling to be biblical. Now this wasn't a hard issue, this wasn't a, a one of these things we can disagree on, it was a clear undeniable biblical pattern and but because of the fear of man, the, the, the leadership was just not able and they were just saying, "What, what can I do?" And I said, "Well, I don't know. I, I want you to honor your pastors and submit to their leadership but if they're not willing to follow Scripture, then maybe you should pray about somewhere else to go." And they said, "Where am I gonna go?" And I said, "I don't know," because that far too often is the pattern in churches. Ah, it, it, it's just so prone, we are so prone to adapt to, accommodate the culture and what makes our lives more comfortable, I guess you would say, and so it, it is difficult. So I do have a deep sympathy with true brothers and sisters in Christ who find themselves struggling in some local churches but there are many good pastors out there that need some saints of God to

come around them and say, "Pastor, I know it's tough, I know the struggle's hard but count on me to be with you as you lead us to be a more biblical church," and that's what Anchored in Truth is for, to take the hand and put our arm around and encourage pastors out there who've decided the drift has gone far enough and we need to start reforming back to a more biblical baptistic local church.

I say baptistic because I believe the old Baptists were about as biblical as you can get. If you read church history, I think you'll agree with me there. But brothers and sisters, if we went back 100 years in church history and brought up our Baptist leaders of 100 years ago, they would look at the average Baptist church today and say, "What have you done?" They'd literally, they would look at our churches and say, "Do you realize we would excommunicate from our, you from our association of churches if you took your church and planted it back in our culture." The old Baptists were not perfect but I believe they got it right and church history bears that out and that's why I don't mind being called a Baptist in the historical sense, not in most of the modern sense.

Christ calling. Paul says, "He put me into service. He didn't just call me to salvation, He called me to serve Him." And by the way, what a contrast and this is the context of what Paul's telling Timothy, what a contrast to the false teachers whom God didn't call, they called themselves. They saw some advantage. They saw some profit in it. They saw something that would, ah, build their ah, pride, if you will, and, and gain them popularity so they are hirelings as such but Paul says, "No, no, no, contrast them with a true man of God," and he uses himself, "I am called of service by God Himself." I believe discerning men in the church can tell the difference.

III. Christ's mighty strength, Christ's great calling on our lives, thirdly, Christ's mighty mercy. Oh, the great mercy of Jesus Christ. Paul says, "I want you to know something, it was all mercy." Verse 13, "even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor," now he's talking about in the context of Christ and his church, he said, "That's what I was doing. Yet I was shown mercy." Yet I was shown mercy. What a contrast here, what a paradox of such. Here this man, his name was Saul of Tarsus. He was so zealous and passionate, you might even say just mean-spirited against Christ and trying to crush Christ's church. He was a hardened unbeliever. He even obtained the commission of the local government, which was the high priest, to crush the church of Jesus Christ. He was one who showed no mercy to Christians yet in the context of his willful blasphemy, his willful, willful persecution and his willful violent aggression against Christ and his church showing them no mercy, God showed Paul the greatest mercy. Wow.

He said, "I've become the object of the great mercy of God." Now I regularly define grace and mercy as two sides of the same coin and that's a good definition biblically, but these words are pregnant with meaning and there's lots of other amplifications. For example, I will often tell you grace is getting what you do not deserve, God's favor. You do not deserve Christ coming. You do not deserve Christ dying for you. God's given you something you do not deserve. You do not deserve Christ forgiving you. He's given you something you do not and could not deserve. The other side of the coin, mercy. God does

not grant to you what you do deserve, God's wrath, God's retribution, God's judgment. And that's a good definition but mercy is bigger than that even. Mercy includes the outward show of pity. God looks upon Paul, Paul is saying, and my friend, God looks upon us and he sees us for the worm that we are. He sees our dreadful wickedness. He sees our entire being stands in every way contrary to all the goodness, righteousness and holiness of his very being. Yet as he looks at us in this condition, he both feels pity for us and he acts in mercy toward us.

Now stop there for a minute. You have to receive that by faith because you have no capacity to comprehend such a thing because this is radically contrary to anything you would do. In our wretched state before this holy God, he looks at us, you sir, and you ma'am, and you young person, he looks at you and he feels a pity for you and he acts in mercy toward you. Folks, you can't verbalize this, you can only lay on the floor and say, "Hallelujah, what a Savior." You can't verbalize this. It's beyond our minds. One of the great frustrations of my ministry is I don't have the vocabulary to articulate the wonders of his grace and mercy and I really try. For a Southern Middle Tennessee boy, I really try hard but you can't, you just can't, you say, "I feel like when I get through, I barely touched the hem of the garment of the glories of his grace and mercy."

So he feels mercy, he acts in pity and mercy toward us in an abundant kindness that we could never never deserve. Ephesians 2:4 reminded us that, "God, being rich in mercy," being rich in mercy. In other words, God doesn't look down on us as wretched sinners and God says, "Alright, gotta get My strength up here. I'm gonna work at it. I'm gonna try. They're so, they're so fallen. They're so sinful. There's, I'm gonna try to get the strength up to hold My nose and reach down to them." No, you know what this means? It means God ever lives with an ever-abundant of mercy for us to save us. It's not hard for God at all. Are you hearing me? It's not hard for God to show deplorable sinners mercy. God being, he didn't just become rich in mercy, he didn't just build up to a place of rich in mercy, God lives forever in the state of great mercy. My goodness, what a Savior. Rich in mercy. It's always ever-present in him.

We were in a deep miry pit of guilt and sin and misery but God being rich in mercy flew to our relief. That's what Paul's saying here. The old songwriter wrote it this way, "He saw me plunged in deep despair and flew to my relief. For me He bore the shameful cross and carried all my grief. His mercy is adequate for my need." That's what Paul's saying. Paul said, "Do you know what I was? And yet Jesus showed me that great great mercy, that, that feeling of pity for me and that adequacy to rescue me." A songwriter wrote, "Mercy there was great and grace was free. Pardon there was multiplied to me. And there my burden so found liberty at Calvary." His great mercy. Paul says a true minister of God in contrast to those false teachers that keep creeping in the church, he's a man who knows – listen – he's bought by mercy. Now he can be bold and he can be dogmatic on what matters, he can be bull dogmatic on what really matters, but behind it all he knows he's a child of mercy.

3. I'm sorry, number 4. Christ's sovereign grace. Christ's sovereign grace. Paul builds glory upon glory in this mighty Jesus who saved him and made him the true minister of

God and he says in verse 14, "and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus." The sovereign grace. You see, in any true understanding of what is right and what is just, we always and only deserve God's disfavor, not his favor. We always and only deserve God's wrath, not his blessing. Ephesians 2:3 reminded us that when you take our natural being and stand it before God, we are by nature children of wrath. Do you know what that includes, and listen to me this morning, that means when you were a one-celled human being in the womb of your mother, you weren't a fetus, you were a person. When you were a one-celled human being in the womb of your mother, yet you were given passed on from your forefather a nature of sinful rebellion; a pollution of sin was in your being that caused the very holiness of God to be against you in wrath.

You say, "That makes God a bad person." No, it makes you a bad stuff. God's holy. Our great great great great great great great great great granddaddy Adam started this and kept passing it on and passing it on, and we come into the world being of our very nature a being that calls for God's wrath against us but Jesus is the grace ambassador. He brings grace to us. He brings a favor to us we do not deserve, God's unmerited favor. Grace changes God's view of us and God's actions toward us. Did you, did you hear that? God has changed from what he would naturally in his justice how he would view us, let's say, and that has changed to a grace view of us. He has gone from disfavor toward us to favor toward us.

Now remind yourself of the sovereignty of God and the eternal nature of God. Listen to me this morning, now think, we did not find favor with God when we believed on Jesus. That's not when it began, anyway. We found favor in God's heart before the foundation of the world and this resulted in the Father sending Jesus for us. Had we not found favor, Jesus would have never come. Finding favor doesn't primarily exist on your side of the equation. It was God's side of the equation that as he in holiness looked down on us from heaven and said, "Though I should not in My wrath and My justice demands their crushing, My love demands that I cast a favor to the most undeserving and so I will send My Son to rescue them, a favor they simply could not deserve."

In choosing to send Jesus to us to save us, in Christ God's countenance toward us is changed. It goes from a holy scowl of displeasure to a smile of gracious favor. His eyes look at us now bright with delight and favor. Are you hearing me this morning? In Christ Jesus the Triune holy God who if he confronted you in your nature state, would be forced by the very being of his holiness to crush you in wrath but now he is looking upon you as the object of his greatest delight and joy. In grace we've become the joy of his heart. The Bible even uses the phrase, "the apple of His eye." Sir, listen to me, you may be the laziest, no good, church member we've got, now don't raise your hand, but if from your heart you've said, "Jesus, You're my only hope. Jesus I've got to have You. You're my Lord and Savior." I want you to know God looks on you as the joy of his heart.

Look at verse 14 again, "the grace of our Lord Jesus," and Paul just can't leave this alone, "was more than abundant." More than. It was super-abundant. Again, this is a capacity in God's being that is beyond our comprehension that he walks around every day without

even trying and he has abundant grace for those who are in Christ Jesus. Abundant favor and goodness toward them. A super-abundance of it. By his doing and by his grace, his choice of sovereign grace, he saves us and he changes us. Now listen, in, in, in, in the sense of his grace changes his view of us – now listen to me – his grace has changed our view of him. His grace saved me and it changed me, chief and primarily it changed my view of him.

Take the example of Paul. Paul's using himself as an example. What does he say about himself? He said, "I was a blasphemer of Christ and His church. I was a persecutor of Christ and His church. Hated it. Hated everything about this Christ and His people, His called out, His ekklesia, His called-out assembled ones. I was a violent aggressor against them. In every way I could, I tried to crush them." Paul said, "Now I'm changed. Now my view of Christ and His people is radically changed. Now I'm willing to give up my life, my all, to build up His church." This is how regeneration and the new birth changes the heart. Listen, my heart is changed and I'm beginning to love him. My mind is changed and I'm beginning to respect and honor him. My eye has changed, I'm beginning to look to him. My hands are changed, I'm beginning to reach for him. My feet are changed, I'm beginning to run to him. He is my source. He is my rest. He is my reward. Not only did grace change God's view of me, grace is changing my view of God.

V. Paul is laying out that he is the true minister of God, has been saved by this mighty Jesus, and that's the mark of the real true minister. He says, "Notice Christ's ambition," verse 15. Christ's ambition. He says, "It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all."

That was Christ's ambition, to come into the world to save sinners. Now it was Christ's ambition because this was Christ's commission from the Father. The Father sent the Son to come down here and rescue the children and that was his full and total ambition. It became his driving and consuming passion. He says, "I did not come down here to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me." Now Christ is not saying he did not desire to die on the cross and save us, he's just saying, "It wouldn't matter if I didn't, I'm here to do what He told Me to do and that's go to the cross and save the children." It's Christ's ambition to do it.

John 17:4, God the Son talking to God the Father in prayer says, "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work thou hast given me to do." You gave me the instruction and it's my ambition to carry them out.

John 6:39, and "This is the will of Him who sent Me," this is Jesus, "that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day." He said, "The Father sent Me to save His church." He said, "And I'm gonna tell you what I'm gonna do, I'm coming down to the earth and I'm gonna get the job done so that not one of them is lost. Every single one of them is gonna make it all the way home to heaven." Jesus said, "That's My ambition, to get the job done."

Isaiah 53:10, a prophecy of Jesus' work, "But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief." That's the Father looking on the Son, crushing him for our sins. "If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He," Jesus, "will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hands." It was the good pleasure of the Lord, in this context, God the Father, to accomplish these things through the work of his Son Jesus Christ and it was the Son Jesus Christ's ambition to carry out the good pleasure of the Father. Christ's unthwartable ambition to save sinners.

VI. Christ's commission to us. We get this picture now of Paul saying that, um, there's a reason why we're saved. We hit on this some in, in being saved in service but notice it again in verse 16, "Yet for this reason I found mercy." So he said, "God had a purpose in saving Me, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life." Example to those who would believe in him. Actually it's saying who, who are destined to believe is a literal translation of the Greek. All of those who are his, Paul says, he saved me so that I might be a blessing to all of those who are his. And can I say to you, child of God, every church member here at Grace Life Church, you were saved and put here to be a blessing to the other folks around you as Paul was saved to be that blessing.

Ephesians 4:11 through 13 reminds us of how God has ordered things to work in the local church. "He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors and teachers," what for? "For the equipping of the saints," that's you guys, "for the work of service," that's your work of service, "to the building up of the body of Christ," that's your local church, and we keep as church leaders equipping you to do the work of service to build up this body, verse 13, "until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ." So as Paul was saved as an example to be a blessing to others, so we understand we're saved that we might be a blessing to others.

Now your example of saving grace before the church is hardly like Paul's. I mean, you, you were not openly persecuting the church on the authority of the government. Your testimony of saving grace does not have the widespread impact that the Apostle Paul's had, however, you were like Paul, saved for a purpose. You were saved and given a commission that centers in a local church just as Paul's commission did and he said, "I was given as an example to those destined to believe." You know, every conversion testimony is a blessing to the whole church. Isn't it wonderful to hear those testimonies read and it blesses us again as Paul's testimony blessed, that God can and will save anyone who will turn to Christ. As we hear those testimonies, we remind ourselves God will save anyone who will turn to faith in Jesus Christ.

So while none of us are called to the office of apostle, that office no longer exists, few of us are called to the office of pastor in the local church, yet all of us were saved to be a blessing and a servant for the benefit of one of Christ's local churches. Paul said, "He saved me that I might be a benefit or a blessing to them all."

VII. In talking about the mighty Jesus and this is where it always must end: the exaltation of Christ, Christ's great exaltation. He comes to this doxology as such, he says, "Now to the King eternal." In other words, he says, "Everything that's good about me, everything that's good about my work all goes back and all the credit goes to the King eternal." And when he calls him the King eternal, he means there's no other king like him. He's the forever King and, by the way, you are his forever child because he's the forever King. Exodus 15:18 says, "The LORD shall reign forever and ever."

Then he says he's immortal which is the idea of incorruption. He has in, he is rather incorruptible. He cannot be destroyed. You see, Jesus is made of such stuff as can never decay, wither or diminish. He's the same yesterday, today and forever. He changes not. Sin and its corroding forces are powerless to Jesus Christ. In fact, he reverses the effects of sin and decay. He doesn't just stop it, he reverses it. You are the subjects of sin and decay. Just look at your picture now and look at it 20 years ago. It sags, it bags, and it drags. You are enduring sin and decay but in Christ Jesus the day is coming when he will reverse the flow of corruption, slam on the brakes, put it in reverse, and all of a sudden he will cleanse you and beautify you and resurrect you and glorify you and you will forever reign with him in that perfect glorification. He's immortal and he lends that immortality to us because we're in Christ.

Then Paul says here he's invisible, verse 17. It means he's unseen, of course. John 1:18 says, "No one has seen God at any time." Now him being invisible includes his infinite nature which includes that he is omnipresent, he is omniscient, he is omnipotent. You see, there is no place where God is not present. Have you thought about it? Do I need to remind you again that God is in hell? If he's not in hell, he's not God. He's omnipresent. He's only there in his wrath, he's only there in his judgment, but he's there. There's no place God cannot be. He's omnipresent. There's no place where he cannot be. There is no power which he is not superior, to which rather he is not superior, and there's no knowledge which he does not know and he knows it without the corruption of evil connected with so much of the knowledge.

Then Paul goes on in verse 17 and says he's the only God. 1 Timothy 6:15 says, "blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords." The only one. I'm, listen to me, Allah is a mythical lie and every other so-called god men hold up. There is but one true God. Psalm 86:10, "You are great and do wondrous deeds; You alone are our God."

Then he says he gets, is to receive all honor. The idea of honor here means to be esteemed of the highest value. That's what happens when you become a child of God, there begins to grow in you this contemplation, this conclusion that he is of highest value. My desire as your pastor is to so preach his glories to help you get to the place where he reigns as of highest value to you. He's the highest value in my life.

When you're on your deathbed, or maybe when you're where Austen and Linda S. were a couple of days ago with their five month old in the intensive care ward at Children's Hospital with an incubator in, the child's paralyzed, has no saliva, stopped blinking his eyes, what has value then? What has value then? If he's your highest value, you've lost

nothing at that moment. If he's your highest value, you've lost nothing when you're taking your final breaths on your deathbed, on your face in the greatest nightmare you've ever faced. If he's your highest value, we can't lose. We just can't lose and I know those things are holy ground and I don't tread that recklessly but there's a reason why God wants us to grow in these things because God said, "I'm trying to help you. I'm trying to help you." He is our highest value, that he, he is one of all honor.

Then he says glory. The word glory here in verse 17 means an opinion. The idea is by all righteous calculation, he is deserving of all reverence and praise and then he says forever and ever. You see, it's the new birth, it's the regenerate heart that enables us to genuinely from the core of our being honor him as our highest treasure, to deem him the one and only of highest value. It is in the new birth, the regeneration of the heart that enables us from the core of our being to desire him glorified and to hold the opinion that he alone deserves all reverence and all praise and Paul says, "That's where I am and that's where the true minister of God is." But by the way, he's not just limiting this to a minister of God, he's limiting this to all true Christians. That's true of all of us.

The true minister like the true believer is the product of the work of the mighty Jesus. I have only barely skimmed the surface of the glories of Jesus in this message. That's why I'm glad I've still got some health and voice because I want to keep on going and then I'll get to end the end of everything I am capable in this lifetime of grasping and preaching about Jesus and I'll look at him and think, "I didn't get started. I didn't get started."

The true minister and every true believer is the product of the work of the mighty Jesus. It's his mighty strength, it's his great calling, it's his wonderful mercy, it's his sovereign grace, it's his committed ambition and, finally, all for the, to the end of his glorious exaltation. You've got to remind yourself again this morning that God saving you is not first about you getting to heaven, it's first about God being exalted in that he can do the work of saving you. You couldn't do it. The pope can't do it. The cardinals can't do it. The priest down at the church can't do it and the Baptist evangelist can't do it. Only Jesus can do it. He gets the exaltation. He gets the exaltation. So Jesus didn't come here primarily to get you out of hell. That's wonderful and that was his purpose but his higher purpose was to please his Father and glorify the wisdom and the power of God in, in, in formulating and carrying out a salvation plan that is, is so wonderful and so perfect and so glorious that only he could've done it.

So Paul says, "Look at me. I was a blasphemer of this church. I was a persecutor of this church. I was a violent aggressor of this church and yet through the work of the mighty Jesus I became a true minister of Christ and of this church." Now where do you stand this morning with the mighty Jesus? You've gotta deal with him. Wait, don't check me out yet, you've gotta deal with him. You have to deal with him. You can deal with him now as he stands before you with nail-pierced hands as your mighty Savior, but if you wait, you will appear for him at the end of time when he returns and he will not extend nail-pierced hands, he'll extend the rod of judgment. He'll be your mighty Judge or now he can be your mighty Savior but you will contend with Jesus. You will deal with him. I beg

you in my heart of hearts this morning, turn your heart over to Jesus. Yield to Jesus. Call on Jesus because he is, my friend, mighty to save.