

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, despicable, hating one another.

*But **when the goodness and loving kindness of God** our Savior appeared, **he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.** This Spirit he poured out on us **richly through Jesus Christ** our Savior, so that, having been **justified by his grace**, we might **become heirs according to the hope** of eternal life.*

*The saying is sure. I desire that you **insist on these things**, so that those who have **come to believe in God** may be **careful to devote themselves to good works**; these things are **excellent** and **profitable** to everyone. But **avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law**, for they are **unprofitable** and **worthless**. After a first and second admonition, **have nothing more** to do with **anyone who causes divisions**, since you know that such a person is **perverted** and **sinful**, being **self-condemned**. (Titus 3:3-11)*

*And since they did **not see fit to acknowledge God**, God **gave them up** to a **debased mind** and to things that should not be done. **They were filled** with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious toward parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. **They know God's decree**, that those who practice such things deserve to die--yet they not only do them but **even applaud others** who practice them. Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because **you, the judge, are doing the very same things**.*

*You say, "We know that God's judgment on those who do such things is in accordance with truth." **Do you imagine**, whoever you are, that when you judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself, **you will escape the judgment of God**? Or **do you despise the riches of his kindness** and forbearance and patience? Do you not realize that **God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance**? But by your hard and impenitent heart **you are storing up wrath** for yourself on the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. (Romans 1:28 – 2:5)*

***You were dead** through the **trespasses and sins in which you once lived**, following the **course of this world**, following the **ruler of the power of the air**, **the spirit** that is now **at work among those who are disobedient**. All of us **once lived among them** in the **passions of our flesh**, following the **desires of flesh and senses**, and we were **by nature children of wrath**, like everyone else.*

***But God**, who is **rich in mercy**, out of the **great love** with which **he loved us even when we were dead** through our trespasses, **made us alive together with Christ**--by **grace** you have **been saved**-- and **raised us up with him** and **seated us with him** in the heavenly places **in Christ Jesus**, so that in the ages to come he might **show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness** toward us in Christ Jesus. For **by grace** you have **been saved through faith**, and this is **not your own doing**; it is the **gift of God**-- **not the result of works**, so that no one may boast.*

*For **we are what he has made us**, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which **God prepared beforehand** to be **our way of life**. (Ephesians 2:1-10)*