

Titus 3

Titus 3
Tape 8204
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Titus, chapter three. Now in chapter two, Paul has instructed Titus to teach the things, which become sound doctrine. Teach the older men. Teach the older women. Teach the young women and teach the young men. So he is telling him the various things that he should teach to the special age and sex groups. But then, sort of putting them altogether in chapter three, he said:

Put them And the them would include the whole group—young men, old men, young women, older women.

Teach or put them *in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work*. Three things, subject to the principalities and powers, and then, obeying magistrates, and third, be ready to every good work.

The Bible does not teach civil disobedience, but the Bible does command us to be in subjection to those that are in authority over us. In Roman 13:1, Paul said let every one be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God and the powers that be are ordained of God.

When Nebuchadnezzar was ruling in Babylon, because of the greatness of his kingdom, the powers that he possessed, he was lifted up with pride. And after a warning of God, he sort of behaved himself for a year, but then while walking in Babylon, seeing the great walls, seeing the hanging gardens (one of the seven wonders of the ancient world), he said, is this not the great Babylon that I have made? And God then allowed him to go insane. He lived like a wild man. He ate grass with the oxen out in the field. He wouldn't come in at night. He was totally insane. And when God returned his sanity to him, the lesson that he learned was that God is the One who rules.

God is the One who sets the authorities in power. And God can exalt those who He wants to exalt and God can abase those who He wants to abase.

Now it doesn't mean that God always allows good men to reign. Sometimes as a judgment on the people, God allowed evil men to reign. If you don't want to follow after righteousness, if you don't want to live after God, then God will allow evil men to reign over you, in order that you might see the consequences of allowing evil to reign. And when evil reigns, a nation, a culture, goes downhill, until they get to the bottom and then they begin to see the consequences of being ruled over by evil people. And they cry out unto God out of the oppression and out of the conditions that come through the reign of evil. They turn their hearts to God. They say, oh God, we don't want this! We want righteousness. And then God will give them righteous leaders. And they will lead the people in righteousness and the nation will be exalted.

We read, (Proverbs 14:34), righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. So God rules. And God allows men to rule, good and evil men to rule, according to the hearts of the people. So we are to be in subject to the higher power. There is no power but of God.

The powers that be or ordained by God, Paul tells us (Romans chapter 13:1-5). Whosoever therefore, resists the power, resists the ordinances of God. And they that resist, will receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Will you then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good and you will have praise of the same. For he is a minister of God to be for good. But if you do that which is evil, then be afraid for He bears not the sort in vain. For he is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must need be in subjection not only for wrath but also for conscience sake. Paul teaching to the Roman in chapter thirteen.

I was asked to speak for the graduation of the cadets from the Orange County Sheriff Training School. And as I spoke to the men there at the graduation ceremony, I used this passage of Scripture, saying that we are pretty much in the same business in that the Bible declares that they are ministers of God to people for good. And they need to remember that. And as a minister of God, thus responsible to God, for how they use the authority and the power that has been vested in them, as peace officers, whose duty is to keep

the peace.

Peter, in his first letter, said much the same thing in chapter two (1 Peter 2:13-17). He said submit yourself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

So as Christians, we are to be obedient to the government, whether we agree with it or not, we are to submit to the authorities and to obey the magistrates, and to be ready to do every good work.

And so Paul goes on, ²*To speak evil of no man*, We are not to speak evil of any man.

to be no brawlers, And we are not to be brawlers. I sort of chuckled when I saw that word, brawlers, in Greek. It is *amachos*. Now the "a" gives it a negative as we've taught you before. In the Greek language, the "a" is a negative prefix, like our "non" is a negative prefix. So "a" is a negative prefix in Greek. You have the word, *theos*, God. You have the word *atheos*. Putting the "a" in front, you have no God. You have the word, *gnosko*, to know. You have the word *agnosko*, not to know. Agnostic—not to know. So you have the word, *machos*, which means a fighter. Put the negative "a", not a *machos*. So you are not to be a brawler or a fighter.

but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. That's Christian. We are to be gentle, to be loving. We are to show meekness.

³*For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived*,

We were serving divers lusts and pleasures,

We were living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. The past life. Now you know sometimes, we forget what we were. And in our past life, before accepting Jesus Christ, we lived like the world around us—foolish, disobedient. We were deceived. We had diverse lusts. We were living for pleasure. We were living in malice. We were envious. We were hateful. We hated others.

In Ephesians (Ephesians 2:2-3), Paul talks about the past life. Where in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

The past life is pretty sordid. The past life is pretty black.

In Colossians, Paul said (Colossians 1:21), and you, that were at one time alienated and enemies in your mind by your wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. In the which (Colossians 3:7), ye also walked at one time when you lived in them.

So none of our pasts are very pretty. How we thank God that He intervened in our lives and took us from that empty life as we were pursuing the things of the flesh. And He gave meaning to life. He gave purpose to life, because we began to live then after the things of the Spirit, which are eternal. So, he reminds them of what they once were.

⁴*But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared*, That's what we used to be. But after that we came to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the kindness of God, through sending His Son, our Savior.

⁵*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us*, He saved us from what? That old life that we were living, disobedient to God, that old life of brawling, that life of serving, a slave to our lusts, the various lusts. Living after pleasure. Living in malice and envy. He saved us from that. He saved us by His mercy.

by the washing of regeneration, We've been washed from our sins! The regeneration—we are new creatures in Christ Jesus, washed and cleansed from our sins.

and renewing of the Holy Ghost; And by the renewing of the Holy Spirit, that work of God's Spirit in our lives, transforming us from what we were, into what God wants us to be.

I'm not yet complete as far as my progress is concerned. There are still areas where the Holy Spirit is working in my life, bringing me into conformity to the image of Jesus Christ. But, thank God, I'm not what I was! I've come a long way. I've got a long way to go, but I'm certain that God, who has begun a good work in me (Philippians 1:6), will continue to perform it until He has completed it, even as with you. God has begun a work by His Holy Spirit in your life, a work of regeneration, a work of transformation, as He is conforming us into the image of Jesus Christ.

I like to watch people work who are really professionals. They really know what they are doing. I love to watch them. I learn by watching them. I love to watch an artist. I really do not have artistic talents, but I love to watch artists. Now, my father was an artist. My son is an artist. I have a grandson and a granddaughter who are artists, but somehow it skipped a generation with me. But I have an appreciation. And I love to watch an artist as they are painting a picture. And many times I've observed as they are just putting in lines for the perspective. If you just look at the lines they are drawing, you wonder what in the world can that be? But after they get the lines of perspective, they start to fill in and you see the picture begin to emerge. But there's a better way to know what it's going to be. Just look at the model! That which, the vase of flowers, or whatever, which you can look and then you can see what this is going to look like when it is finished, if you look at the model.

Well, God is like an artist working in us. It does not yet appear what we are going to be, but we can look at the model, which is Jesus! And we realize that is the model that God is using for you as He is working in your life. He is conforming you into the image of Jesus Christ!

So Paul, writing to the Corinthians said (2 Corinthians 3:18), and we all with open face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed from glory to glory into the same image by His Spirit that is working in us.

So here to Titus, Paul tells him, to put them in mind of these things. It is not by the works of our righteousness but by His mercy that we have been saved by the washing of the regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

When Paul was writing to the Ephesians (Ephesians 4:11-13), and he reminded them of their past and what they were before Christ. But then he reminds them of what they are now in Christ Jesus, as the work of the Holy Spirit is conforming them into the image of Jesus Christ. And so he said, God has given, in the church, gifted men, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor-teachers. For the perfecting of the saints, for the working of the ministry, the building up of the body of Christ, until we all come into full maturity unto the measure of the stature of the image of Christ. That is what God is bringing us to.

And isn't it a glorious experience to see the work of God's Spirit in your life, doing for you what you tried but couldn't do for yourself? There are so many areas of my life where I struggled. I wanted so much to be like Jesus. I wanted, so much, to be what God wants me to be. And I tried so hard. And I found as Jesus said to Peter, my spirit was willing but my flesh was weak. And though I tried and though I desired, I just could not obtain or achieve it. And what a thrill and what a joy it is, in those very areas where I failed, because of the weakness of my flesh. What a joy to see the Holy Spirit, working in me and doing for me what I couldn't do for myself. To see the Holy Spirit making those changes, transforming me. Suddenly you realize, wow! I'm different! I'm not doing that anymore! And it is no longer a struggle! It's no longer, oh, I'm just going to try to do this again. I've got to do this. It's just done! And what a blessing it is, the work of God's Spirit in our lives, doing for us what we can't do for ourselves as He is transforming us into the image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And speaking of the Holy Spirit, Paul said, ⁶*Which he shed on us abundantly* He, just didn't dribble out the Holy Spirit! But He has shed it on us abundantly! The term, baptized, has the connotation of just being submerged. That's why I like full immersion with baptism. It isn't just sprinkling. God didn't just sprinkle you with the Holy Spirit! He baptized! He submerged us in the Spirit.

He has given to us abundantly *through Jesus Christ our Saviour*; When John was preaching at the Jordan River and people were coming to be baptized. He said unto them, I baptize you with water unto repentance, but there is one coming after me who is mightier than I am. And He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire! John said, I baptize you with water unto repentance. John was the baptizer.

Water was the element. Repentance was the issue.

He said, when Jesus, the One mightier than I, comes, He will baptize you. So Jesus is the baptizer. The Holy Spirit is the element and the issue is power! You will receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you!

So He has shed abroad the Holy Spirit abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord our Savior.

⁷*That being justified by his grace*, Now in verse five, we were saved by His mercy. That is the forgiveness of sins. God has forgiven your sins. But justification is one step further. That is God has erased the charges. It's one thing to have these charges here and God says, okay, I forgive you those charges. It's another thing to say, I blot out the charges!

You know there is an interesting thing in a lot of cases, in court. Sometimes they are able to squelch the record of the individual as far as the jury is concerned. This man may have a long history of crime, but he is not being tried for the long history of crime, he is being tried for a particular crime that he has committed. And many times they cannot bring up the man's past pattern of evil because that's not what he is being tried for. And thus the jury doesn't always have all the information, because the past has been sealed and cannot be used as evidence for the present crime.

God has sealed the past! He has wiped it out! As far as God is concerned, it doesn't exist! God does not remember your past sins in as much as bringing it up or reminding you again. He says, that's over.

I think that too many people are delving and trying to live in the past and living under the guilt of the past. And they haven't been able to accept God's justification because they still feel the guilt of the past things that they have done. And it plagues them. And Satan is constantly bringing up the past to condemn you.

But you need to remember that Paul asked the question (Romans 8:34), who is he that condemneth? It is Christ who has died, yea, rather is risen again and is even at the right hand of the Father making intercession. Who is he that finds fault? It is God who is justified. God isn't finding fault with you. God has erased the charges against you! God has erased all of the past sin. And we need to recognize that, so we can be delivered from the guilt of the past that oftentimes plagues an individual and keeps us from entering in into the full victory and into that fullness of life that God wants us to enjoy in and through Jesus Christ!

But because we remember the past and what we were, we think, oh, I am not worthy. I am not deserving. And we're just, we sort of deny ourselves, what God is wanting to do for us, because we feel the unworthiness because of what we have done. God has wiped out what you have done. The record is clean! And God wants to do for you wonderful, glorious things, that many times we hinder God from doing because we, not by faith, will just accept it! The grace of God is a glorious thing! It is God's loving favor towards us that He desires to manifest to us although we are totally and completely unworthy and undeserving of it!

I have discovered that many times when I am at my lowest state in feeling a sense of guilt, and I think, oh God, I wouldn't blame You for kicking me out. And I feel so unworthy and undeserving that it is often at those times that God just does something super, special for me! And I say, oh God, You're just too much! I can't believe that! And I realize that I am so undeserving and unworthy, and yet, God bestows just rich blessings.

So I've discovered that the lack of blessing is not because of the lack of devotion. The lack of blessing is because of the lack of faith, believing and trusting God's love, that He wants to bless me. Because you see, I have a hard time in my mind divorcing myself from this "good boy—reward" concept. Rewarding good behavior, punishing bad behavior. I grew up and that's a good way to grow up with your kids, a good way, the reward of good and the punishment. But God doesn't do it that way, and yet, we oftentimes think of God in that term, of rewarding good behavior and punishing bad behavior. But that isn't grace! You see, grace is the rewarding because you are His child. Oh, you may be a naughty child, but still, His grace is poured out on us! And oh, the richness of the grace of God! And so often times, though as I say, we disqualify ourselves from what God is wanting to do because I'm looking at my failure rather than looking at God's love and God's grace towards me!

The wonderful grace of Jesus, being justified by His grace that *we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life*. God has adopted me as His child! And as His child, I've become an heir in the family of God! And I have that hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ! And the hope that I have is predicated upon the promises of God, which He has promised. So I have God's word. God has promised me eternal life! And I believe the promises of God!

Jesus said, God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. That's the promise! I believe it! And I thank God for the glorious hope of eternal life. And it is not only based upon the promise of God, but it is confirmed by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

So Peter said (1 Peter 1:3-4), thank God, we have been born again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, to an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, fades not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God. Oh, the grace of God towards us! In the richness of His grace, He has promised us, eternal life with Him in His kingdom!

Now Paul said, ⁸*This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly*, These are the things that I want you to affirm constantly. There are certain truths that we need to have affirmed over and over and over again. Because they are so marvelous that we are prone sometimes, to doubt them! And so affirm these, over and over!

Peter, when he wrote his letters (2 Peter 3:1-2), said, that the things that he was writing were things that they already knew. I'm not writing anything new. I'm writing these things to you. You already know them. But I'm writing them to you, to remind you of these things, to put you in remembrance of these things, which you already know. And realizing (2 Peter 1:13-14) that I'm soon going to be leaving my tabernacle. I'm going to be dying soon. I'm writing them to you now that even after I'm dead that you might be reminded of them.

So there are certain, basic, truths that we need to have the constant affirmation that this is God's promise. This is the Word of God. This is what God has declared to you. This is what God is going to do for you. And that constant affirmation of these truths. And so it's a faithful saying. These are the things that I want you to affirm to them, constantly.

Now, Titus, as we said earlier, is in Crete. Crete is an island of toughs, the machos. And these people were noted for being rebellious. There were constant insurrections going on in Crete. Even to the present day, there is conflict in Crete as the Turks and the Greeks are fighting for supremacy in the island of Crete. And it's still a place of constant turmoil. And so as Paul is writing to Titus, it's to minister to the Cretans, these important things to people who are rather belligerent, rebellious, brawling, type of people.

So affirm them constantly, *that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men*. These things are good. They are profitable unto men. So remind them over and over, to good works. Encourage them to good works. They are profitable.

On the other hand, ⁹*But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law*; That is, strivings about the law. But avoid the foolish questions. Where did Cain get his wife? I'm always suspicious of a man who is interested in another man's wife. There are a lot of questions that are asked that are not honest questions. They are questions that are raised only to create controversy. There are good, honest, questions.

I love the program "To Every Man an Answer", because most of the questions that we receive are good, honest, questions. People are wanting an answer. And we ought to be able to give an answer to every man, concerning the hope that we have in Christ Jesus.

But there are many questions that people ask that are not really sincere questions. They are not asked in order to find an answer, they are asked in order to create an argument. They want you to state your position so that they can put your position down, so that they can argue with your position. And the questions are foolish questions, designed to create an argument. Paul said to Titus, avoid them, and the genealogies, and the contentions and the strivings about the law.

for they are unprofitable and vain. Now there are people who are contentious. And they are always wanting to get into some kind of an argument or contention. After our Sunday evening services, the

Internet goes wild as these guys are listening. Then they, you know, start arguing on the Internet over what was said. They just start, you know, picking things apart. Well, he said this. Well, no, he said that. Well, you know, and they try to pick everything apart. They listen only for the purpose of criticizing, not for the purpose of learning, not for the purpose of growing, but only for the purpose of criticizing.

Paul tells Titus, avoid that kind of stuff—the contentions and strivings. For they are unprofitable and vain. I feel sorry for a person, whose life is so unfulfilling that they can only live and do only seem to live to tear others down, rather than to build others up. It says (1 Corinthians 8:1) knowledge, puffs up, but love builds up. I would rather, much rather, build someone up, than to be puffed up with knowledge.

¹⁰*A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;* In other words, if you have a person, who has taken a heretical view, you are to admonish him. But if you have admonished him twice, then just reject. But there should be admonishment. And sometimes people get some kind of a crazy idea, a heretical kind of an idea. They think they have had some kind of a special revelation on a Scripture, that is off the wall. You say, oh, that's off the wall. Look that's, you know, this Scripture says this or that. And you show them the Scriptures that discount the idea that they have. And you admonish them into the truth. And after the second admonishment, if they continue in that heretical position, then just reject it.

¹¹*Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.* So, just reject that kind of heresy.

¹²*When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis:* Now, Artemas, we know nothing about. Tychicus was the one who was with Paul and carried the epistles of Paul to Ephesus and to Colosse. He was one of the pastors or ministers in Ephesus. Paul is telling Titus to be diligent to come to him in Nicopolis.

for I have determined there to winter. ¹³*Bring Zenas the lawyer* Now, Zenas is another one, we don't know anything about who he was. But it's interesting he is the only lawyer mentioned as a disciple.

and Apollos Now, we do know Apollos. It is interesting that Paul and Apollos, joined together. They were both of them, brilliant men. They were both of them, well schooled in the Old Testament Scriptures. And they, were both of them, capable of giving strong apologetics from the Old Testament, proving that Jesus was the Messiah.

So bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos *on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.* In other words, take care of them. Take care of them well, that they're not needing anything.

¹⁴*And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.* Now God's purpose for your life is that you be fruitful. Herein is the Father glorified, Jesus said (John 15:8), that you bear much fruit.

It might be well for us to look at our lives, every once in a while, to determine whether or not we are really bearing fruit for the Kingdom of God. Are our lives bringing forth good fruit for God's Kingdom? And it is important that we look at our lives, everyone once in a while to determine, is my life producing fruit? Jesus declared (John 15:5) that He was the vine. We are the branches. Every branch in me that brings forth fruit or bears fruit, He purges it that it might bring forth more fruit. And then, herein is My Father glorified that you bring forth, much fruit. Now over and over, Jesus, in His teaching, warned about not bearing fruit. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away. It's important that we bear fruit.

Jesus came to the fig tree (Mark 11:12-20). It had no fruit, only leaves. He cursed it. And it died. It withered and died. The disciples were surprised how quickly the thing just withered and died.

Jesus spoke (Luke 13:6-9) about the tree that didn't bring forth fruit. And the master said, cut it down! Why does it cover the ground? Why do you even leave it? Why do you even let it take nourishment out of the ground? And the gardener said, let me have another year. I'll fertilize it and see what I can do, to make it produce fruit.

But the whole purpose of our life is to bring forth good fruit for the Kingdom of God. That's why God has left you here on the earth. He loves you so much, He wouldn't leave you in this miserable place, if it wasn't for a purpose. And the purpose is that you bear fruit for Him and for the Kingdom. So maintain

good works for necessary uses. Don't be unfruitful.

Paul said ¹⁵*All that are with me salute (greet) thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.* So we come to the end of Paul's letter to Titus, who was ministering in the island of Crete.

Father, we ask that You would help us, that we would, indeed, bring forth fruit, good fruit, for the Kingdom of God. And we know that the fruit of the Spirit is love. And so let Your love, Lord, flow forth from our lives to touch this needy world around us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Justified by grace, how thankful we are for the grace of God, whereby we stand tonight. If it were not for the grace of God, surely we would not be here.

When George Whitfield saw a man being let to the gallows, he said, but for the grace of God, there go I.