

32:53

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### Introduction

Titus chapter 3 is our passage tonight. Reminders in life are good. Last night, Quinn was talking about learning geometry in school, and he started spouting off some equations. And as he was spouting them off, I thought to myself, yeah, I remember those. I don't ever have to use them. But if you come up to me and ask me about the area of a triangle, honestly, I would have failed that test. But now I can tell you the formula for the area of a triangle is one half base times height. Why? Because he reminded me of it last night. But these are things that we don't use often. And so, we need reminders, reminders are important in life.

And Paul knows about the importance of reminders. He knows that in the body of Christ, you and I need reminders. And specifically, Paul is going to tell Titus to give the church on the island of Crete reminders about how to live amongst outsiders, how to live in this world.

If you remember from your worksheet a few weeks ago, the way that we can break this book up here is within these three chapters, chapter 1 is instructions about the character and conduct of the leaders in the church, chapter 2 is instructions about congregational living, and specifically living within the context of one another within the local church. And now as we come to chapter 3, he's giving instructions about conducting ourselves in the world. How do we live in this world? And a key phrase in this chapter is good deeds. We're going to see that come up a lot here tonight. Good deeds, verses 1 and 8 and 14, Paul talks about good deeds, good works. And he clarifies our good works for us in verse 5.

What he's doing here is he's addressing the church as a whole, how to live a life that's worthy of the gospel that has saved us. And he does it first by way of reminder, reminders, and so we're going to see

these reminders in verses 1 through 8. And then we're going to see what Paul has to say about relationships, both in relation to false teachers, and then regarding his very own friends.

And so, we're going to take this chapter here, we're going to break it up into five points tonight, five points. Point number one is the reminder about godly living. In verses 1-2. Point number two will be the reminder about godless living in verse 3. Then we're going to see the reminder about God's gospel in verses 4-8. Then we're going to see the relationship to false teachers, in verses 9-11. And then finally, the relationship to God's people, the relationship to God's people.

## 1. Reminder about Godly Living

So, let's look at our first point here, the reminder about godly living. Look at verse 1. "[Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, 2 to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. \(Titus 3:1\)](#) What Paul does here is he lays out seven duties that apply to all Christians, seven duties. And he shows us these seven duties, both in our actions and in our attitudes. As those who belong to God, even living in a pagan culture, under secular authorities, Paul says first in godly living, that we are to be subjected to rulers, to authorities. That is, we're to pay our taxes were to do what the government tells us to do, we are to be subject to their authority. As we know from Romans 13, that we -- that the government has been placed there by God. Romans 13:1 says, "[every person has to be in subjection to governing authorities, but there is no authority except from God and those which exist are established by God.](#)" (Rom 13:1)

God is the one who has established the authority over us. It's all been delegated by Him. And so, anyone who resists or opposes the governing authorities is showing that they resist and oppose God. Then Paul continues on and Romans 13:2, "[Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God. And they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.](#)" (Rom 13:2) While the world may resist the government because they don't like or agree with the regulations that the government has imposed, we as believers are called to submit. We must submit to them. And not just submit, but secondly, to be obedient to the human authorities. We must be obedient to human authorities.

Now, let me be clear here. Are there times where we can disobey the government? Yes, there are. When can we?

- First, when they tell us to disobey God. When they tell us to disobey God, that's the time we stand up, and we disobey the government.
- And second, when they tell us to go against our conscience. If they're telling us to do something that goes against their conscience, we must obey God in that.

However, we as believers should willingly submit to the authorities over us and -- listen to this -- have an attitude that is ready to obey the government. That needs to be our attitude. Rather than an attitude of disobedience, our attitude needs to be that of obedience to the governing authorities, first and foremost.

The third characteristic of godly living is "to be ready for every good deed." There's that phrase, good deed. Paul is going to continue to talk about that. And doing good deeds is not just something that we must do. But it's something that we must -- notice this -- be ready to do. We should always be ready to do good works. Paul is telling us that we need to have an eagerness to serve others, and not to live for ourself. But we will be ready to serve other people. And we do these good deeds not to earn points with God, but out of a heart of love for God and a love for other people. Right? Isn't that the two greatest commandments, love the Lord your God and love other people? It's what we're called to do. It's a response to that. And it's these good deeds that set us apart from the false teachers.

If you remember back in chapter 1 and verse 16, Paul said, "They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him." (Titus 1:16) That's what sets us apart. That's what sets the church believers apart from the world and from false teachers. That we do good deeds. False teachers show that they don't know God by their deeds. But we should be showing the world that we know God by our good deeds.

The fourth characteristic of godly living is that we "malign no one". (Titus 3:2) This word malign means to slander, or curse and treat with contempt. And notice who we are to malign ...no one. No one that means not our brothers and sisters in Christ, not our next-door neighbors, and not our politicians. Were to malign no one.

I saw a truck driving down the road yesterday with two flags. One was an American flag. And the other was a flag that cursed our president. I can tell you that my first thought was not, "Boy, I bet that guy's a wonderful Christian." How sad it is that it is now common. It's common to malign people on public displays. And we also see this on social media... malign people... it's become a platform to malign other people. One pastor said if we took down all the slander off the internet, we could clear half the internet. It's true. But Christians should not be characterized by this. We are different. We're set apart from the world.

The fifth characteristic of godly living is "to be peaceable." To be peaceable rather than fight and quarrel with the lost, we must seek to win them to Christ. Which means that we must seek to be at peace with them, which is exactly what Paul tells us in Romans, right? "Be at peace with all men." (Rom 12:18) Not just brothers and sisters in Christ but all men we should be seeking to be at peace with.

Sixth, the sixth characteristic of godly living is gentleness, gentleness. One commentator says, "it denotes a humble patient steadfastness, which is able to submit to injustice, disgrace and maltreatment without hatred and malice, trusting in God in spite of it all." We trust the Lord, even when people attack us. We don't seek revenge, but we're gentle towards them.

Seventh, we must be "showing every consideration for all men." (Titus 3:2) This is linked to gentleness above. And it means that we should always have an attitude of genuine consideration for others, that we look outward. We look to other people. It's the opposite of self-interest. And it carries the idea of not seeking revenge. Another word that we could use here is the word meekness, that we need to be meek and gentle. Peter says in 1Peter 3:15, "But sanctify Christ as LORD and your hearts, always being

ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you. Yet with gentleness and reverence." (1 Pet 3:15) Yes, be ready to give an account for the hope that you have the gospel that has saved us. But as we share that gospel with others with the world, we do it with gentleness and reverence. That's the idea here. Those are things that we need to be reminded of.

## 2. Reminder about Godless Living

Second point, point number two is a reminder about godless living. A reminder about godless living. Look at verse 3, "For we also once were foolish ourselves." (Titus 3:3) As we conduct ourselves toward outsiders who don't know God, we need to be reminded that we once lived like they did. We were once just like them. In our former condition before Christ, we were foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts, and on and on. Now, someone might look at this and say, "well, not me. I grew up in a Christian home with Christian parents who taught me good Christian morals." Well, let me just say that that's truly a blessing for you. That's a blessing. That's a blessing from the Lord, that you had parents who brought you up that way.

And you should be thankful to the Lord for your parents, who instilled God's truth into you. However, this does not dismiss the fact that before you were saved, you lived like this. You may not have committed every sin that's listed here. And maybe you didn't live the rebellious life to the degree that others who were saved later in life did. Maybe you weren't as rebellious as they were. But if someone was to look at your heart and your life before Christ, even though you grew up in a Christian home, and you were taught good Christian morals, if someone was to look at your heart and look at your life before Christ, they could easily characterize your life as living this way. At some point you were foolish. Some point you were disobedient, disobedient, even to those parents who raised you with good morals? Right? Deceived enslaved to various lesson pleasures, spending your life and malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. And what should this reminder do for us? This reminder should humble us. This is a humbling thing. It humbles us.

And it helps us to realize that when we are dealing with a world of unbelievers, that if it wasn't for God's grace in our lives, that people could still characterize our lives as rebellious sinners. They would look at verse 3, and they would characterize us as that kind of person. If it wasn't for God's grace. It's good for us to stop and remember what God has saved us from. Right? To remember those things.

## 3. Reminder about God's Gospel

And it's also good to remind ourselves how God has saved us, which leads to our third point, point number three, a reminder about God's gospel. Look at verse four. "But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us." (Titus 3:4) It's amazing. Here's verses 4-7 in the Greek or one sentence. It's all one sentence. As if Paul could not stop writing about the glorious gospel that has saved us, he just has to keep going. He can't stop. He can't put the pen down.

And notice that first word there in verse 4 "but". But -- with the darkness of our previous condition as the backdrop, there is now glorious light. God did not leave us in our sins, but He did what? He saved us. He saved us. That great transition happened in our lives. We were living like sinners, but now we have become saints. We were living as rebels. But now we've been redeemed. We were living as enemies of God, but now we have become His children. And Paul wants to remind us that our salvation is not because of us, but it is from God and from God alone.

And in these verses, Paul gives us a reminder of the glorious gospel that we've been saved by.

- First, he tells us that it is because of the kindness of God our Savior. We don't deserve the salvation that we have received. But it's all because of God's kindness. God has shown kindness to us when we didn't deserve it.
- Second, were saved because of God's love for mankind. And God showed His kindness and his love for mankind by sending His Son. Right? The Incarnation of Christ was God's kindness and love on display for all to see. And He appeared to take away sins. 1 John 3:5 says, "you know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin." (1 Pet 3:5) Why did He appear? In order to take away sins.
- The third thing that we should remember about our salvation is that He saved us. He saved us, we did not save ourselves. The prayer that you prayed did not save you. The baptism that you had did not save you. The altar call that you responded to, did not save you. It didn't. Who saves? God does. God saved us. And therefore, He's the one who gets all of the glory for salvation. Which is why the next thing Paul says is, "not on the basis of good deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to his mercy." (Titus 3:5)

It's all by His mercy. You and I deserve hell. You realize that that is what we deserve as sinners who have sinned against God, we all in this room, deserve an eternity in hell. But by God's mercy, He has given us eternal life with Him. It's all by His mercy. And not because of anything that you and I have done. No good works can save us. Paul wants to make sure that he is clear in this as he's commanding Titus, to remind the church to do good works, continue to do good works and do good works. But let me remind you, you're not saved by your good works. Those good works don't save anyone. But they're the outflow of a saved heart.

Paul continues with another reality and salvation and what God does to us notice they're the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit. Washing has the idea of cleansing from sin. And regeneration has the idea of receiving new life and being born again. And all of this happens by God Himself. We've been renewed, that is new life now emerges from the new birth that we have been given. And it's a spirit empowered and spirit filled life, as the Spirit does His work and our hearts through His Word. That's how the Spirit works in our life. Did you know that? Did you know that? He works through His Word. That's why we must be in His Word. This is Spirit giving life here. Through His Word.

He then poured out the Holy Spirit upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior. That is -- we have been sealed by the Spirit, and the spirit is the guarantee of eternal life for us. We have the guarantee of eternal life because we have been sealed by the Holy Spirit, because we now have the Holy Spirit, living dwelling within us. He's the guarantee of eternal life. And we can know that we have eternal life. 1 John 4:13 says, "By this, we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit." (1 John 4:13) He's given us His Holy Spirit, so you can know we can be confident that we have eternal life, because we have the Spirit living inside of us, who does His work in our hearts.

Paul continues on reminding us about our salvation in verse 7. "So that being justified by his grace, we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:7) The purpose of God in saving us is so that we would be made heirs. So that we would be made heirs. Romans 8:17 says that we're heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. We're now children of God. And how did God do it? He justified us by His what? His grace. By His grace. Justification means that we're declared legally righteous by God based upon the atoning work of Christ on the cross. God is the one who justifies us, we don't earn it, and we don't deserve it. It's all by His grace.

Look at verse eight. "This is a trustworthy statement." (Titus 3:8) What is a trustworthy statement? Verses 4-7, that one sentence of the glorious gospel. In the Greek, that phrase "trustworthy statement" is literally "faithful the Word." Faithful the Word. And Paul uses this expression multiple times in his pastoral epistles as a way of pointing to theological or confessional truths. Meaning what I just gave you in verses 4-7 is a faithful confession of the church.

Paul then tells Titus, what he's to do with this confession. And all of the verses prior to that, even all the way back into chapter 2, the beginning of chapter 2. All of these truths that Titus was just given, what was he supposed to do with it? Notice what it says there, he was to **speak it confidently (Titus 3:8)** Speak it confidently. Why? So that the believers might be careful to engage in good deeds. There it is, again, Paul's emphasis on good deeds, we must do good works.

Now, he has just made it clear in the previous verse that the good works that we do, do not save us. But they're the outflow or the overflow of all that has happened to us as believers in verses 4-7 of that glorious Gospel and what the gospel is done in our hearts. It's now the outflow of it, that we do good works. This is good not only for Christians in the church, but this is also good for all people outside of the church, so that as unbelievers see our good deeds, it might draw them to Christ, so that they might be saved. It's good for them too, it's good for them to see our lives being lived out for Christ. So that hopefully it'll draw them to Christ and say, "I want to serve that God that you serve."

#### **4. Relationship to False Teachers**

It's good, and it's a profitable thing. Let's move on now to relationships. Paul has given us reminders. Now we come to the end of the book, and Paul now talks about relationships, and specifically around leaders in the church. Point number four will call the relationship to false teachers. Look at verse 9, "But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the law. For there and

unprofitable and worthless.” (Titus 3:9) Paul now turns to direct Titus on how to deal with false teachers who want to argue. They want to argue with you. Here's how you deal with them, Titus.

By extension here, he's also talking to the elders and even the members of the church to do this as well. What does he say to do? He says, avoid them. Avoid foolish controversies. Avoid means to turn around, namely for the purposes of avoiding something or to shun that you literally shun them. This is a present tense imperative, meaning this is a command that has to be practiced continually. Continually practice this within the church, avoid them. You see, there were Judaizers, who are coming into the church, coming to the Christians at Crete, and telling them that they needed to uphold the Mosaic law in order to be saved. They were trying to bring them back under the law, which is what? Works, Works-based salvation. That's what they were trying to do. Paul says, avoid them. And don't argue with them and don't have disputes with them. He calls these types of disputes are unprofitable and worthless. And that he and his elders and the congregation were to avoid these false teachers who wanted to debate about these things.

Now, does this mean that we cannot have productive conversation about theological topics in the church? No, we can. We can have those productive conversations within the church. But we shouldn't be spending our time with false teachers trying to sway them. Those disputes are profitless and unproductive. We need to shut them down, avoid them.

Now in verse 10, Paul broadens the context here from false teachers to anyone in the church who was divisive and disruptive in the church. And what were they to do with a factious man or a factious woman? Warn them twice. And if they don't listen, do what? Reject them, reject them. That means get them out of the church. God does not want division in his church. He wants unity in his church, He wants His church to be unified. And those who are factious in churches and not submitting to the Word of God, Paul says are perverted and sinning, being self-condemned. They're all about self instead of the church, instead of the truth.

Going back to God's Word, Proverbs 26, verse 4 says, "Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will also be like him." (Prov 26:4) Perhaps this is the wisdom that Paul was thinking of here, as he's giving these directions, these commands here to Titus. There is a way to deal with divisive people in the church, false teachers and divisive people in the church. And the leaders are to take this seriously so that division does not spread in the church.

## 5. Reminder about Good Works

So now in our final point, point number five, a reminder about good works, says “When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis” (Titus 3:12) Paul now comes to the close of his letter with some assignments. First to Titus, Paul's plan was to send Artemis or Tychicus to take over the ministry for Titus so that Paul could link up with him again, he wants to link up with Titus again. So, he's going to send over one of these two guys. And he wanted Titus to meet him at Nicopolis, which is most likely where Paul's writing this letter from. Titus was all also to help Zenas who

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we know nothing about. There's Zenas the only time that we see this person, the lawyer, so we know Zenas was the lawyer and Apollos, who we know...we know about Apollos. Apollos was a faithful teacher in the church, faithful man, well-educated, and he loves to teach God's Word. And Zenas and Apollos they're planning on traveling through Crete.

And so, Paul wanted to make sure that they're well taken care of as they come when they arrive, that Titus and the church there take care of them. Then Paul gave assignments to the people -- notice in verse 14 -- "[learn to engage in good deeds](#)" (Titus 3:14), learn this. Here, we see this wording again, good deeds, there it is. But this time, it's not in relation to outsiders. Notice that. Now this time, he's not talking about those outside of the church, but to relationships within the church, to do good deeds to one another. And meet pressing needs. The elders of the church, along with the members of the church were to learn this. This wasn't a one-man job that Titus could do alone. Titus couldn't do all of the good deeds and meet all of the pressing needs. And so that's why Paul says teach them they need to learn to engage in those the church needs to learn that they need to practice this Titus couldn't meet all the pressing needs of the body. And so the church was urged to serve one another.

We are called to serve each other. As needs come up in the church, the church was called to serve each other and meet those needs. And what would this do this would reflect the gospel to the watching world. As we each take care of each other in the church, the watching world would look at us and go, Why? Why did they treat each other like that? Why did they love each other so much? Why do they care for one another, so much in that place? Answer: the gospel. It's because of what the gospel has done in our hearts. Isn't that what Jesus said in [John 13:35](#). "[By this, all men will know that you're my disciples, if you have love for one another.](#)" Love for each other. Love is an action, serving, caring for one another. That's what he urges the congregation to do.

Paul then closes this letter to Titus letting them know that the believers that are with him at Nicopolis greet him. Titus was called to greet the believers who love them, which is the sign of true believers, right? We love God and we love other believers. We love each other. And then Paul's final benediction. "[Grace be with you all.](#)" (Titus 3:15)

So, we talked about on Sunday, that's the heartbeat of Paul's theology, right? Grace. It's all about grace. And this is the whole of the Christian life, right? We're saved by God's grace, and we live the Christian life, all by God's grace.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for the grace that you've given to us. The grace that we have received in salvation. Lord, we deserve nothing. We don't deserve the breath that we breathe. Our next breath, we don't deserve it, Lord. It's all by Your grace, the life that You've given to us the blessings that we have in our life. We deserve none of it. It's all by Your grace. And we thank You that Your grace has saved us. And Lord, I pray that You would help us to live out these truths of Your Word. Not in our own power, not in our own strength, but by Your grace dependent upon Your Spirit. As we live lives of obedience to You, for Your glory alone, we pray in Christ's name, Amen.