

# WORSHIP SERVICE - 11.5.2023

## PART 35 - GRACE AND GOOD WORKS

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### Titus 3:1-15

**1** Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, **2** to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. **3** For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. **4** But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, **5** he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, **6** whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7** so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. **8** The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. **9** But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. **10** As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, **11** knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

**12** When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. **13** Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. **14** And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful.

**15** All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith.

Grace be with you all.

### II. READY FOR EVERY GOOD WORK

- Paul begins the final portion of his letter by instructing Titus to remind the believers of things that they had heard before.
- Titus must remind them and we need to be reminded of our godly priorities.
- We could sum up the list of ethical and moral instructions in to two categories: the Christian's responsibility to rulers and authorities, and the

Christian's responsibility to all people in general.

## 1. The Christians's responsibility to rulers and authorities

- Paul tells Timothy to remind God's people of their Christian responsibility to obey the ruling authorities.
- "...*be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient...*"
- Earlier in this letter Paul outlined the qualifications of elders and stated that these men must not be open to the charge of insubordination(1:7).
- Insubordination means a refusal to submit to authority; a disobedience and defiance of established authority.
- The false teachers were insubordinate and disobedient (1:10, 16).
- Older women were to teach younger women not to be insubordinate but submissive to their own husbands so that the word of God may not be discredited (2:5).
- Bondservants were not to be insubordinate to their own masters by being submissive in everything, giving evidence of a living faith that adorns the doctrine of God our Savior(2:9, 10).
- Disobedience is not what is to characterize the new life of the believer.
- What is our obligation to the state?
- Romans 13:1-7 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.
- See also 1 Peter 2:13-14
- The state, those who govern over us, are authorities delegated by God, he instituted them, he appointed them. Paul calls them ministers or servants of God.
- It is to the governing authorities that God has given the power of the sword to punish evildoers.
- Those who resist the authorities are proving that they are insubordinate and therefore resisting God who appointed them.
- We are to submit to the governing authorities because we understand that in doing so we are submitting to God, whom we are devoted to.
- Now, this is not unconditional allegiance. Where our obligation to obey God comes into collision with our duty to the state, "*we must obey God rather than men*" (Acts 5:29).
- But as far as our conscience permits, we are to be law-abiding citizens, giving good testimony of our willing submission to rulers and authorities because we obey God.
- Hughes and Chapell, "*If our gospel positions are to have credibility, we must make sure that we do not sully our stance in the political arena with words or actions that indicate unwillingness on our part to be subject to proper authority.*"
- We also have to be "ready for every good work."
- This means we are ready to do whatever is good; righteous deeds, the right things, and especially our duty to love others.

- The command also defines the boundaries of our responsibility to the civil magistrates and others in general.
- If they promote evil instead of punishing it, if they set themselves in opposition to all that is good, if they reject their God-given duty, that is not something we go along with.
- The good works of grace is a dominant theme in Titus and the pastorals in general.
- Those who profess to have been saved must be devoted to good works (3:8).
- And Paul's concluding exhortation is that God's people must learn to devote themselves to good works (3:14).
- Our good works is how the gospel is adorned and commended by outsiders (2:9-10).
- Our good works, though not the grounds of our salvation, are the indispensable and necessary fruit of our salvation.
- Christ "redeemed us from all lawlessness to purify for himself a people... who are zealous for good works." (2:14).

## 2. Responsibilities to all people in general.

- How are believers to relate to unbelievers?
- Paul gives us four attitudes and actions that must be directed toward "all people."
- All of our relationships in every sphere of life are to be characterized by and governed by the kind of selfless words and actions mentioned in v1-2.
- Our speech must not be used to speak evil of anyone.
- We must not be contentious, argumentative, or quarrelsome.
- We must be gentle and show perfect courtesy toward all people.
- Notice the stated attitudes and actions all characterize our Lord and we are to be like our Lord.
- What wins the gospel a hearing from unbelievers is when they see a distinct pattern in the church and the people of God.
- How is this even possible? Where does the ability to possess this humility and peaceableness and gentleness and submissiveness come from?

## III. RENEWED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK

- Paul turns to the theological reason that underpins how it is that Christians can behave in the manner prescribed.
- It's simply this, "*We were once insubordinate, disobedient, anti-social rebels and God saved and changed us!*"
- The whole section hinges on the main verb in v5 "he saved us."
- V3-7 are a condensed but comprehensive account of our salvation. It is one of the richest and fullest statements of our salvation found in the NT.
- These themes of our salvation woven through the Pastorals all of the New Testament letters.
- These are the very things we need to be reminded of and what we must insist on in our teaching--God saved us!

### 1. THE NEED OF OUR SALVATION

- v3 is a snapshot of life apart from Christ, apart from the grace of the Lord.
- This is the state of all unredeemed humanity, it's a state of depravity.
- They are meant to show the distinction between the kind of people Christians should be in v1-2, and the kind of people we once were (v3).

- That's what we once were, totally depraved, morally and mentally. Our condition was hopeless.
- That's why we needed rescue. That's why we need ongoing rescue.
- If we are to appreciate who we are now in Christ it's important to remember who we used to be.
- If we have experienced the grace of God in salvation, then we do not act as we were before we received grace.
- We still are in need of God's saving grace on a day-to-day basis. We don't ever move beyond our dependence on it!
- Remembering that humbles us, and reminds us of our ultimate priority to know and believe and live out the truths of the gospel.

## **2. THE SOURCE OF OUR SALVATION**

- How do we get out of our hopeless and helpless condition of depravity?
- The answer to the question of how we go from what we once were to what we are now is, "He saved us."
- Paul traces the source of our salvation, the rescue from our lost condition, to the appearance of the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior.
- He is referring to the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, he is the manifestation of the goodness and lovingkindness of God in accomplishing our rescue through his life, death, and resurrection.
- It is God who initiates our rescue from our helpless condition.
- God gets all the credit in our salvation and we get all the blessings and reward of our salvation.
- Our salvation is a consequence of what was on the heart of God.
- 2 Timothy 1:9 who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began...
- It was God's plan, before time began, it was his eternal purpose to rescue a people by his sheer grace and mercy.
- Goodness and loving kindness describe God's kind regard for his people.
- You didn't have to coerce God to do anything to love you and save you and to change you.
- God is far more committed to your salvation and transformation than you are.
- And what he started in you, he will bring to completion (Phil 1:6). We can be certain of this because he is the source of our salvation and rescue.

## **3. THE GROUNDS OF OUR SALVATION**

- Our salvation does not rest on our own righteousness or good works.
- Our best attempts at righteousness fall far short of God's standard of holiness and perfection.
- "not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy..."
- The grounds of our salvation rests solely on the mercy of God and the perfect righteousness of Christ.
- V7 being justified by his grace
- Justified means God has declared us to be righteous through the sin-bearing death of his Son.
- This is one of the reasons we can have assurance of salvation—it didn't start with us and it didn't depend on us.

## **4. THE MEANS OF OUR SALVATION**

- How does God bring about our salvation and change us?
  - “By the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit...”
  - This is how we were saved and how we are continually being saved—it is all through the work of the Holy Spirit, richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ.
  - The Holy Spirit applies to us all of the benefits of our salvation accomplished by Christ.
  - By the Holy Spirit, we become a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).
  - We experience a radical new beginning.
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- “The washing” likely references water baptism which is an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace of the washing away of our sin and the new birth by the Spirit.
  - “Renewal,” is the moral transformation we experience following our new birth. It is the ongoing work of sanctification that the Spirit brings about in our life to make us more like Christ.
  - We can paraphrase it this way, *“God saved us through Christ and generously poured out his Spirit upon us. The Holy Spirit inwardly regenerates and renews us, and this work is outwardly signified in our baptism.”*
  - The Holy Spirit through his work, produces godliness in the people of God.
  - Godliness leads us to the good works that we are to be ready to do and be devoted to doing.
  - If the whole of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are committed to saving us, how can our salvation fail?

## 5. THE GOAL OF OUR SALVATION

- What will all of this lead to?
- We were saved for the purpose of becoming God’s heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
- What does that mean? It means that God will accomplish his saving work to the fullest.
- He will bring us all the way home to glory!
- We are co-heirs with Christ. We will share in his glory! (Rom. 8:17)

## 6. THE EVIDENCE OF OUR SALVATION

- This is how that glorious salvation proves itself, there will be visible change in those who have believed and experienced salvation.
- The fruit of this ongoing and continuing work is that God’s people will make it their profession to do the good works they were created in Christ Jesus to do (Eph. 2:10).
- Paul writes, “These things are excellent and profitable for people.”
- Don’t get caught up in the things that will distract you from godly priorities, things that are unprofitable and worthless— Avoid divisive issues and divisive people (3:9-11).
- We who are recipients of grace, who have understood the richness of God’s mercy towards us, need to devote ourselves to the good works of grace.
- And by doing this, we adorn the gospel of God our Savior—to the praise of his glorious grace!
- Grace be with you all!

## APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?

- With whom can I share the gospel this week?