

December 31, 2017

**“Be Ready to Do What is Good”****Focal Passage: Titus 3:1-15 (NASB)**

Cross References: Jeremiah 32:38-41; Ezekiel 36:24-28; John 15:1-8; Romans 12:1-2; 13:1-8; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 6:8; Philippians 2:12-13

For a great companion passage, see: Ephesians 2:1-10

**BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN**

Dec 24 1 John 1-5	Dec 25 2 John-Jude
Dec 26 Rev 1-3	Dec 27 Rev 4-8
Dec 28 Rev 9-12	Dec 29 Rev 13-16
Dec 30 Rev 17-19	Dec 31 Rev 20-22

**Foundational Truths of the Passage:**

- **Christians need to be subject to the authorities God places in their lives.**
- **Christians need to be considerate to others, realizing that without the grace of God we would still be enslaved to our sins.**
- **God saves us through Jesus Christ out of His kindness and grace and mercy, not based on deeds that we do.**
- **Because we are saved by God’s grace, we need to engage in good deeds, so we can be fruitful Christians.**

**Lesson Idea:** We recognize that we have been saved by grace and not by works. Because we receive God’s grace, we respond with good deeds.

**Titus 3:1-15**

*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. 3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. 4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal*

*life. 8 This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men. 9 But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. 10 Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, 11 knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.*

**Personal Concerns**

*12 When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. 13 Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way so that nothing is lacking for them. 14 Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.*

*15 All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.*

**DISCUSSION:**

- V 1. What did Titus need to remind the Cretans to do, and why? (see Romans 13:1-8) How are you “ready for every good deed?” (see Ephesians 2:10; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 6:8)
- V 2. What does it mean to “malign someone?” What does it mean to be “peaceable” and “gentle?”
- V 2-3. Why should we show consideration for all men? How does remembering our past remind us of the grace that we have received? Why should it spur us on to show grace to others?
- V 4-5. How did God’s kindness and love for mankind become evident? What is “mercy?” Why could we never earn salvation?
- V 5. What is the “washing of regeneration?” How are we “renewed” by the Holy Spirit? (see Jeremiah 32:38-41; Ezekiel 36:24-28; Romans 12:1-2)
- V 6-7. How do we receive the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to be “justified,” and how does that happen to us? Why did Jesus Christ our Savior justify us? What are we “heirs” of?

- V 8. What is the “trustworthy statement?” How should those who have believed God behave, and why? (see Philippians 2:12-13)
- V 9. What should believers avoid, and why?
- V 10-11. What did Paul say should happen to people who cause division in the church, and why? What does possessing a divisive spirit say about a person?
- V 12-15. What does Paul’s closing greetings and instructions say about the nature of relationships in the church? What do “our people” need to learn to do? What does it mean to be “unfruitful?” (see John 15:1-8)

**APPLICATION:**

- ✓ Read v 1-3 again. Does your life reflect more of your new nature or your old nature?
- ✓ How are you actively being “fruitful” in good deeds?

Lesson by Stan Fike

**NOTES: from David Guzik, *Titus (Enduring Word Commentary)***

V 1-2. **Remind them:** In the grammar of the ancient Greek text, remind is in the present tense: “Go on reminding.” Titus was to constantly remind the Christians under his care to show proper respect and humility towards all people, particularly those in a position of authority. Knowing the sometimes-difficult character of the people of Crete (as mentioned before in Titus 1:12), this command to be subject to rulers and authorities had special meaning.

V 3. **(We) were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived:** Remembering this work of God builds four things in us. First, gratitude for how God changed us. Second, humility as we see that it was His work that changed us. Third, kindness to others in the same place. Finally, faith that God can change those who are still in that place.

V 4-8. **But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared:** When we were in the place described by Titus 3:3, we didn’t rescue ourselves. We were rescued by the kindness and the love of God. He reached out to us long before we reached out to Him.

**Not by works of righteousness which we have done:** Our salvation isn’t based on any works of righteousness

which we have done. In and of itself, response to an altar call does not save. Saying the sinner’s prayer does not save. Baptism does not save. Church attendance does not save. Giving does not save. Reading the Bible does not save. Each of these may be wonderful works of righteousness, but they do not save us. Instead, according to His mercy He saved us.

**He saved us:** This is the essence and distinctive of the gospel. We can notice the emphasis: *of God . . . not by works . . . His mercy . . . He saved us . . . of the Holy Spirit . . . He poured . . . through Jesus . . . by His grace . . . heirs.* God is always the initiator, and we receive from Him before we give anything back.

**Through the washing of regeneration:** These words are commonly taken as a reference to baptism, and this passage is sometimes quoted in support of the idea of baptismal regeneration. Yet we cannot say that Paul specifically mentions baptism here, and the only other use of the ancient Greek word translated washing here is connected with the spiritual cleansing of the believer by the Word of God through faith (Ephesians 5:26).

“The theology of Christianity is based on grace; the ethics of Christianity are based on gratitude.” (Briscoe)

V 9-11. **Avoid:** “The word *peristemi* literally means *to turn oneself about so as to face the other way* (cf. 2 Timothy 2:16 where it is used in a similar manner).” (Guthrie)

**Reject a divisive man:** Titus must take measures against those who insist on going their own way. Their self-will makes them self-condemned.

V 12-15. **That they may not be unfruitful:** This is a recurring theme through Paul’s letter to Titus. Paul was concerned that Christians might be barren and unfruitful, yet still have a “wonderfully” confident assurance of their standing in the Lord. Instead of being unfruitful, God’s people must learn to maintain good works and to meet urgent needs.

**Grace be with you all:** “The closing benediction harmonizes with the opening salutation. It is a benediction of grace, the only difference being that whereas at the beginning it was addressed to Titus, at the close all those to whom he ministered were included.” (Morgan)