

INTRODUCTION

1. I would like to invite you to take God's Word and turn with me to Titus chapter 3.
2. We are looking tonight at the third chapter of Paul's letter to Titus and in these first seven verses Paul gives Titus some important *reminders to live by* as part of his instruction to the believers at Crete.
3. Read Titus 3:1-7.
4. There are times in our Christian experience that we need to be reminded of certain things.
5. That is why God gave us a book--so that we can read and re-read what He has said.
6. This therefore eliminates any excuse for improper behavior.
7. Paul has already reminded the Cretian church of the kind of behavior that is "fitting for sound doctrine."
8. He has already given them the purpose for such behavior—as a testimony and witness of God's grace.
9. Now he concludes with 2 more reminders and focuses his attention outside the fellowship. He gives them:
 - a) A reminder for the present (vv.1-2)
 - b) A reminder of the past (vv.4-8)

I. A Reminder for the Present (vv.1-2)

“Remind them” Gr.hupomimnesko (pres.act.imp.), “to put in mind, bring to remembrance” (Strong), “to cause one to remember, to remind someone of something” (BAGD)

2 Tim.2:14 - **Remind** *them* of these things, charging *them* before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers.

2 Peter 1:12 - For this reason I will not be negligent to **remind** you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth.

Jude 5 - But I want to **remind** you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

A. Your Relationship to Governmental Rulers (v.1)

1. Be “subject”

“Subject” Gr.hupotasso, (pres.mid.inf.), “to be in subjection” (Rienecker), “to put one’s self in subjection to or under the authority of some person” (Wuest).

“This duty pertains to our attitude and conduct in regard to secular government” (MacArthur, Titus).

- a) Rom.13:1 - Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority

except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

- b) 1 Peter 2:13-15 - Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

2. Be obedient

“Obey” Gr. *peitharcho*, “to submit to authority” (Strong), “to obey a ruler or superior” (Wuest)

“‘To obey’ has the thought of obedience to a superior and seems to denote obedience to particular commands of government, such as payment of taxes, dues, etc.” (Hiebert, Titus, p.66).

- a) Mat. 17:24-27 - When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, "Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?" He said, "Yes." And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?" Peter said to Him, "From strangers." Jesus said to him, "Then the sons

are free. "Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you."

- b) Prov.24:21 - My son, fear the LORD and the king.
3. Be "ready for every good work"
- a) "ready" Gr.hetoimos, "prepared" (Vine)
 - b) "good" Gr.agathos, "fit, capable, useful"
 - c) "work" Gr.ergon, "refers to work, but the emphasis in the NT is that it involves a job or a task, and in some cases it is translated 'employment.' It is not referring to the quality of work; it is referring to an assigned task" (MacArthur, The Fulfilled Family, p.20)

"Paul is not speaking of reluctantly doing what we know we should do in society but of willingly and sincerely being ready and prepared to perform every good deed toward the people around us that we have opportunity to do. He is referring to a sincere, loving eagerness to serve others. No matter how hostile the society around us may be, we are to be good to the people in it whose lives intersect with ours" (MacArthur, Titus).

Gal.6:10 - Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

1 Thess.5:15 - See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

B. Your Relationship to All Men (v.2)

“The naming of a new object ‘no man’ shows that from this point on he is no longer speaking of specific duties to government, but of duties to citizens generally” (Hiebert, Titus, p.66).

1. “Speak evil of no one”

“Speak evil” Gr.blasphemo, (pres.act.inf.), “defame, rail on, revile” (Strong), “to slander, to treat with contempt” (Rienecker), “curse” (MacArthur)

“We are to malign no one, not even those who contribute most to the assault on biblical standards. Even while contending against the worst of sins committed by the worst of sinners, we must never stoop to maligning those whose sin we detest” (MacArthur, Titus).

2. “Be peaceable”

“peaceable” Gr.amachos, It is translated “to be no brawlers” in the KJV. It means, “without fighting”

(Rienecker), “abstaining from fighting, not contentious” (Wuest)

Believers “are ‘not to be contentious.’ They must not pick up an occasion for a fight, must abstain from being quarrelsome” (Hiebert, Titus, p.66)

- a) Rom.12:18 - If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.
- b) Ps.34:14 - Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.
- c) 2 Tim.2:24-26 - And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

“People who are ever fighting are wretched citizens and neighbors” (Lenzki, quoted by Hiebert, p.66).

3. Be “gentle”

“gentle” Gr.epieikes, “‘what is right,’ what is serviceable,’ then ‘equable,’ ‘moderate,’ gentle” (Kittel).

“It has been referred to as ‘sweet reasonableness,’

an attitude that does not hold any grudges but always gives others the benefit of any doubt” (MacArthur, Titus).

“The word ‘gentle’ is the very opposite of ‘contentious.’ Instead of being aggressive and pugnacious, they are to be actively considerate and forbearing, not insisting on their rights” (Hiebert, Titus, p.66).

- a) Phil.4:5 - Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.
- b) James 3:17 - But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

4. Show “humility”

“Humility” Gr.praiotos, “meekness” (Strong), “mildness, patient trust in the midst of difficult circumstances” (Rienecker)

“In its use in Scripture, in which it has a fuller, and deeper significance than in non-Scriptural Greek writings, it consists not in a person’s outward behavior only, nor yet in his relations to his fellow-men; as little in his mere natural disposition. Rather it is an inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercise of it are first and chiefly towards God” (Vine).

- a) Jesus is the supreme example
 - (1) Mat.11:29 - Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
 - (2) Phil.2:5-8
- b) We are to follow in His example
 - (1) Eph.4:1-2
 - (2) Col.3:12 - Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering.
 - (3) 1 Tim.6:11 - But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

II. A Reminder of the Past (vv.3-7)

This is a picture of the unsaved today, and a picture of you and me before we knew Christ. We were foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to lusts and pleasures, living selfishly, and hating others. That is a picture of the lost world (McGee, Thru the Bible, NT, Bible Explorer).

A. What We Were (v.3)

1. Paul's list in 1 Cor.6:9-11

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

2. Paul's list in Galatians 5:19-21

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

3. Paul's list in Ephesians 2:1-3

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who

now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

4. Paul's list in Titus 3:3
 - a) "foolish" Gr.anoetos, "Of the intellectual and spiritual condition of men before becoming Christians" (BAGD). It "denotes a complete lack of understanding, total ignorance in regard to a particular area of knowledge" (MacArthur, Titus, Logos), "without true spiritual understanding and knowledge, ignorant of heavenly things" (Matthew Henry's Comm., Bible Explorer).
 - b) "disobedient" Gr.apeithes, "unwilling to be persuaded, spurning unbelief" (Vine)
 - (1) In Luke 1:17 it says that John the Baptist would come to "turn the hearts" of the "disobedient"
 - (2) Titus 1:16 refers to the false teachers as "disobedient"
 - c) "deceived" Gr.planao, "being purposely led astray" (MacArthur), this can mean "to lead astray" or "to deceive," whether through conduct, speech, or writing" (Kittel)

“Man in this his degenerate state is of a straying nature, thence compared to a lost sheep; this must be sought and brought back, and guided in the right way, Psa. 119:176. He is weak, and ready to be imposed upon by the wiles and subtleties of Satan, and of men lying in wait to seduce and mislead” (Matthew Henry).

- (1) Heb.3:10 - Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.'
- (2) 1 Peter 2:25 - For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.
- (3) 2 Peter 2:15 - They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.

d) “serving various lusts and pleasures”

"Although the unsaved, natural man willfully chooses to sin, he does so because his very constitution is sinful, and he has neither the desire nor the ability to be anything but sinful. He is therefore both willingly and inevitably enslaved to sin in its many and various forms" (MacArthur, Titus).

- (1) “serving” Gr.douleuo (verb)
(pres.act.part.) from Gr.doulos, “to be a slave to, be in bondage” (Strong)
 - (a) John 8:34 - Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.
 - (b) Rom.6:17-18 - But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
- (2) “various” Gr.poikilos, “many-colored, variegated, various” (Rienecker)

James uses this word to describe the different kinds of trials that a believer faces (see James 1:2)
- (3) “lusts” Gr.epithumia, “a strong desire, craving, longing” (Strong)
 - (a) used in 1 Tim.3:1 (good desire)
 - (b) used in James 1:13 (bad desire)
- (4) “pleasures” Gr.handano, “evil pleasures, lust” (BAGD)

- e) “living in malice and envy”
- (1) “malice” Gr.kakia, “evil” (Rienecker), “wickedness” (Strong)
 - (2) “envy” Gr.phthonos, “jealousy” (Strong), It is the “the feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others; this evil sense always attaches to this word” (Vine).

- f) “hateful” Gr.stugnetos, “detestable” (Rienecker)

- g) “hating one another”

“hating” Gr.miseo, “to hate, pursue with hatred” (Strong)

“Hate is a natural fruit of envy, but it is also produced by many other things. It often has no rational base and simply is expressed for its own sake. It does not need a reason. Hateful persons despise anyone or anything that stands in their way or displeases them. They find themselves hating one another and eventually hating everyone, including those who are most like them. Hatred is not an appealing sin, even to the hateful” (MacArthur, Titus).

B. What We Have Become (vv.4-7)

“The transitional conjunction But turns the emphasis from remembering our former condition of lostness to the equally important need to remember our present condition of salvation” (MacArthur, Titus)

1. Saved (vv.4-5)

a) Through God’s love and kindness (v.4a)

“But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared”

(1) Similar to the phrase in 2:11

(2) “kindness” Gr.chrestotes, “connotes genuine goodness and generosity of heart” (MacArthur)

“While generosity was some times attributed to God, inscriptions show that in the Hellenistic age it was the most prized of the stock virtues acclaimed in rulers” (Rienecker, 656).

(3) “love” Gr.philanthropia, “refers to compassion, especially the eagerness to deliver someone from pain, trouble or danger. It involves more than mere emotion and always finds a way to express itself in some form of helpfulness” (MacArthur, Titus).

b) Through God’s mercy (v.4b)

“mercy” Gr.eleos, “compassion” (Strong)

“Mercy is similiar to grace...mercy relates to the condition of the sinner in his sin. Whereas grace judicially forgives the offender for his wrongdoing, mercy compassionately helps him recover” (MacArthur, Titus).

(1) Eph.2:4-5

(2) Rom.11:30 - For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience.

c) Through the Holy Spirit (v.5)

“Through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit”

“The Essenes and some other Jewish people associated the Spirit with purification”
(Keener)

(1) John 8:63 - It is the Spirit who gives life.

(2) 1 Cor.12:13 - For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body; whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

d) Through Jesus Christ (v.6)

(1) Titus 2:11-14

(2) John 1:17 - For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

2. Justified (v.7a)

“Justified by His grace”

“Justified” Gr.dikaioo, “to declare righteous” (Rienecker), “to render innocent” (Strong), “Justified” meant “judged righteous” or “acquitted” before God’s court; according to the Old Testament and Jewish teaching” (Keener)

a) Rom.3:23 - Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

b) Rom.5:9 - Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

3. Heirs (v.7b)

“We should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

a) Since we belong to Jesus Christ we have become heirs with Him

b) Rom.8:16-17 - The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of

God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

- c) Gal.3:29 - And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
- d) 1 Peter 3:7 - Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

CONCLUSION

1. This should be our meditation during these days.
2. We have been saved, justified, and made heirs of Jesus Christ.
3. We are no longer “foolish..., disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another” (v.3).
4. Does your life reflect this noticeable difference?
5. If not, I want to call you to a self-examination—to see whether you are in the faith or to repent of sinful behavior.
6. Let’s pray.