

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).

“Remind implies that what follows is not new information but is already known by those who are being addressed” (Daniel C. Arichea and Howard Hatton, A Handbook on Paul's Letters to Timothy and to Titus, UBS handbook series; Helps for translators (New York: United Bible Societies, 1995). 296).

Paul used this same approach when he wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:14 which says, “Remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers.”

Peter told his readers in 2 Peter 1:12, “Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you.”

Jude also called his readers to remember in Jude 1:5 when he said, “Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.”

What does Paul want Titus to remind them of?

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) Romans 13:1 says, “Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.”
- b) 1 Peter 2:13-15 says, “Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, 14 or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. 15 For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.”

2. Be “obedient”

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

Some Important Reminders

Titus 3:1-7

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“‘To be obedient’ 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 says, “When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the two-drachma tax came to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma tax?" 25 He said*, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?" 26 When Peter said, "From strangers," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are exempt. 27 "However, so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for you and Me.”
 - b) Proverbs 24:21 says, “My son, fear the Lord and the king.”
3. Be “ready for every good deed”
- a) “ready” Gr.hetoimos, “prepared” (Vine)
 - b) “good” Gr.agathos, “fit, capable, useful”

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- c) “deed” 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).

Galatians 6:10 says, “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

1 Thess.5:15 says, “See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.”

Next he reminds them about...

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. “To malign no one”

“Malign” 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. “To 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 says, “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.”
- b) Ps.34:14 says, “Depart from evil and do good;

Seek peace and pursue it.”

- c) 2 Tim.2:24-26 says, “The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, 25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held 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 says, “Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.”
- b) James 3:17 says, “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.”

4. “Showing every consideration for all men”

“Consideration” Gr.praiotos, “meekness” (Strong), “mildness, patient trust in the midst of difficult circumstances” (Rienecker). It is translated “humility” in the NKJV.

“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 says, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble 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 says, “So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”
 - (3) 1 Tim.6:11 says, “But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.”

Having reminded them of the present, now Paul gives...

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
 - 2. Paul’s list in Galatians 5:19-21
 - 3. Paul’s list in Ephesians 2:1-3
 - 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

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wiles and subtleties of Satan, and of men lying in wait to seduce and mislead” (Matthew Henry).

- (1) Heb.3:10 says, “Therefore I was angry with this generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart, And they did not know My ways.’”
- (2) 1 Peter 2:25 says, “For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.”
- (3) 2 Peter 2:15 says, “Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.”

d) “Enslaved to 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) “Enslaved” Gr.douleuo (verb)

(pres.act.part.) from Gr.doulos, “to be a slave to, be in bondage” (Strong)

(a) John 8:34 says, “Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.”

(b) Rom.6:17-18 says, “But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and having been freed 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) “Spending our life 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.4-6)

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 says, “For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience.”

c) Through the Holy Spirit (v.5)

“By the washing of regeneration and renewing by 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 says, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one

Spirit.”

d) Through Jesus Christ (v.6)

(1) Titus 2:11-14

(2) John 1:17 says, “For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized 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 says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

b) Rom.5:9 says, “Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.”

3. Heirs (v.7b)

“We would be made 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 says, “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.”
- c) Gal.3:29 says, “And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.”
- d) 1 Peter 3:7 says, “You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.”

CONCLUSION

1. This should be our mediation 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.