



Titus – Lessons for the Church
Wk. 12 Good works produce Good Fruit
By Glenn Baker 07/17/2022

Titus 3:1-3 ESV

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.

[BACKGROUND]

My name is Glenn Baker I'm an elder candidate and will be nervously, excitedly, and humbly continuing our series in Titus by revisiting Ch 3 Vs 1-3. The title for today's sermon is "**Good works produce good fruit**".

Please stand with me for the reading of God's word...

We are at our 12th week in Titus, and we have been championing this focal point for the entire book of Titus. These verses further promote a theme of the book which is a non-negotiable truth for the church today:

The Gospel **SAVES, TRAINS,** and **FUELS** us to **LIVE** on the Great Commission!

Today as we revisit these verses let me point out that the operating word of the day is the word **REMINDER in (3:1)**. So, let me remind you as we've stated before, that this letter is a counter-cultural gospel for the Cretans. This is applicable for us today, as we seek to be countercultural as a church in our culture.

Being counter cultural in our society means our works **WILL** produce good fruit. In other words, the way we act, move, and live in society will display that we are other-worldly; **HOLY**. Christian life is to be lived as to display that we are not of this world.



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To develop this idea, we will reverse engineer these verses to help us view them in a different light and hone in on what it means to be ready for every good work. Back to v. 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.

Ok so for point 1 here is what we have:

1. Be done with your old self.

Paul is saying **we once were**; meaning we are not to be that way anymore. This is what verse 3 helps us to understand, where we came from.

Let me first point out that Paul is including himself in his exhortation. Notice he says we instead of you or y'all or use guys or them guys over by there. Of the many things that Paul is constantly reminding the church, the gospel is always held in the highest regard. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23). That means not some or most but in fact all.

Remember that church, as we move forward in your day today that there are no exceptions. No matter how handsome you think I am 😊, or how powerfully Jody can bring the gospel every week, there has only been one man to live a wholly fully perfect life.

As we visit verse 3, we're going to sum up our old lives into one word and that word is **DEGENERATE**. When Paul says that we were slaves to various passions and pleasures I can think of no better description of our human depravity and the function of that depravity is to be hated by others and hate one another, that is being a **DEGENERATE**. What Paul means here in 3:1 is expanded for us in Ephesians so let me **remind us** of what he has already addressed in Ephesians 4:17-24.

Ephesians 4:17-24



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Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must **no longer walk** as the Gentiles do, in the **futility** of their minds. ¹⁸ They are **darkened** in their understanding, **alienated** from the life of God because of the **ignorance that is in them**, due to their **hardness** of heart. ¹⁹ They have become **callous** and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ **But that is not the way you learned Christ!**— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to **put off your old self**, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be **renewed** in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

I find the hardest thing in the world for us, is to live out this truth, right!?

(Personal Illustration) I work in an industry that has seen complete carnage over the last two years. Initially the government tried to shut us down and told everyone to stay home. When people pliantly obeyed, they were able to collect a paycheck without working, but a result people got lazy and finally decided that getting paid to do nothing was actually better than getting paid to work (much like a lazy Cretan 1:12). Not only did this produce supply chain issues, BUT the fundamental attitude towards labor has shifted.

As you can imagine this made my life a living, well, you fill in the blank. You see when we don't say good-bye to our old way of life it's NOT just hurting us personally, it affects others.

When you don't leave behind your old self, what you once were, people get hurt. How many things are you dwelling in right now that are affecting the people you work for, the people you owe things to, the people you love? People who love Jesus, care about how they treat others, and therefore are constantly turning from their old lifestyles, repenting, and embracing their new identities in Christ.



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Now that takes a while, that repenting, and as Christians Paul says to us, hey remember, or let me **REMIND** you we all were once that way, you need to have a little empathy, a little patience. That brings us to our second point.

2. Let the New Self be Respectful.

² **to speak** evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy **towards all people.**

To produce the fruit that people will notice in our world, to show them that we live differently, that we have found a better way, we have to be willing to be respectful. Now that's easier said than done. Let me take you back to my earlier illustration, to **remind you**, about my adventures in restauranting.

I discovered shortly after the pandemic hit, that I have a problem, a people problem, and that is I really don't like them! These people that are literally killing me, Paul is telling me To bless!?

You see in 2019 my business was rocking and rolling. Everything was going according to plan. I had just opened my second location and things were stabilizing in a way that told me that store number 3 within reach. And then COVID happened. So, what do you think happened in my heart? Do you think my feelings toward the government have been warm and fuzzy? How about other restaurants that are more resourced and have been better able to survive and capitalize on the situation? Do you think that I've been keeping up with the Bible reading plan to a tee? Do you think the stress of my situation has led me to treat my wife and family with nothing but love affection and pastoring them well in the way that I'm called?

Maybe you don't run a restaurant in these COVID times with the weird and unpredictable economic environment BUT maybe you are affected by the things of life much like I am. Things that can cause anybody to forget that you are not once what you were, that you are a new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17)! And that being a new creature means you respect people for you remember as Jesus did, that we all are created in the Image of God.



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My personal example is not necessarily to be confessional and self-deprecating, but to say that I needed to be reminded of where I came from and that the good news has called me to live a different life. Brother Mike brought this up last week and I too will bring this up to serve as a reminder in Titus one chapter verse 16 Paul makes examples of the Cretans that they

Titus 1:16

They profess to know God, but they deny them by their works they are detestable disobedient unfit for any good work.

What we need to be reminded of here church is that we will be judged by our fruits and that we should be very careful about what fruit hangs from our lips!

I know that people don't deserve our courtesy but neither did we deserve the perfect courtesy of Christ. Because of our treatment of Him, He had every right to demand justice but instead was patient with us, and took upon Himself the price of justice, once and for all. If He can do this then we ought to feel compelled to at least try and respect those, that like us, don't deserve it.

Now what is this going to look like? That brings us to our last point this morning:

3. The New Self must be Ready for every Good Work

To be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle

Alright through reverse engineering we have worked our way backwards to this moment. We discover what we have become, how we are to be respectful, we are to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle (have meekness).



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What does it mean to be ready? At the restaurants we do what's called a "hamburger huddle" before every shift. It's a 5 minute pep talk and run down of individual assignments to see who's going to cover what because Tammy decided she isn't going to show up for her shift.

Maybe for others being ready means you wake up, get dressed, make your bed, and have breakfast so you have the energy to survive going into the office one day a week.

Now being ready to speak evil of no one, avoid quarreling, and to be gentle means doing a morning devotion, spending time in the word and in prayer.

To be counter-cultural is to do the things that the world doesn't do. The world wakes up and gets ready to do battle on twitter.

So how am I going to be ready come tomorrow morning when the supply truck doesn't have Coke and onion rings again?? And Tammy shows up two hours late after the lunch rush and heads straight for the bathroom after she clocks in, because you know, she's here at work.

Will you pray for me church in the way that I will pray for you? That I would love with the kind of grace that Pastor Jody preached about a few weeks ago.

I'm reminded when Jesus was delivered to Pilate right before the crucifixion. Jesus displayed what it means to be meek. He didn't stop Pilate because he was ready for THE good work.



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[CHALLENGE & APPLICATION]

1. Remind yourself to seek resolution quickly
Mat 5:22-24

22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. 23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

2. Remind yourself your reward is in heaven and is eternal
Mat 5:11-12

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

3. Remind yourself to pray for those that persecute you
Mat 5:44-45

44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.



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I want to end by reminding you that doing good works is not about what we can do for God, but what God has done for us.

[PRAYER]

[COMMUNION]

[BENEDICTION]