



'Commit to the Bride!' Sermon Series

Sermon #6:

'Committed to Christ Honoring Citizenship!'

Titus 3:1-8

Sunday, February 18th, 2024

Last week in Titus:

- It's hard to believe, but after today we will have only one week left in our verse-by-verse sermon series through the book of Titus.
 - Last week, I preached from ***Titus 2:11-15***, with a message entitled ***'Committed to the Gospel!'***
 - I asked the question: ***What does the local Church need to realize about the Gospel that Paul describes here so that we can be Committed to the Gospel?***
 - **Point 1: *The Appearing of Grace. (V. 11-12)***

- **Point 2: *The Approaching Glory. (V. 13-14)***
- **Point 3: *The Authority of the Gospel. (V. 15)***

- ***Based on last week's message, how do we need to do a better job of being committed to the Gospel as individuals so that we can be a Church that is fully committed to the Gospel?***

'Committed to Christ Honoring Citizenship!'

Titus 3:1-8

Sermon in a Sentence:

A Believer in Christ can commit to being a Christ Honoring Citizen by Doing the Right Things, Desiring the Regeneration of God, and Demonstrating the Righteousness of God by the way we live.

Intro:

- Oftentimes I get the question: ***How can I live my life for God on a daily basis as a born again believer?***
 - ***I believe in Titus 3:1-8, that the apostle Paul answers that question.***
 - We've got to walk with the Holy Spirit and live a life that is fully devoted to God and led by His Spirit, the Holy Spirit.
 - ***But in this passage of scripture, Paul gives clear instructions of how we are to go about this.***

- Within the context that Paul wrote this letter to Titus, the Christians were looked on as a ‘suspicious’ bunch by the Romans.
 - *The Christians met privately for worship and their conduct was different.*
- *But Paul wants Titus to remind the believers in Crete that were under his watch, to be committed to living as a citizen in such a way that honors God.*
 - *Now I do not believe that Paul is asking them to compromise the faith. I don't believe that at all.*
- But if we live our lives as a ‘bad’ citizen, what does that say about the God that we worship?
 - *A major theological theme that I believe we can pull out of this text is the sense of Ethical Urgency.*
- *I believe it's contradicting when a ‘Christian’ is a great Church member within the walls of the Church, but is a bad citizen in the community.*
 - Paul is clear to Titus here in this text that those who claim Christ, should be top notch citizens in their behavior.
- *This is something we all need to do a better job of in our own lives.*

- [Philippians 3:20](#) speaks of our Heavenly Citizenship:
 - ‘But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,’
- As Dr. W.W. said ‘*Our Heavenly Citizenship does not absolve us from responsibilities as citizens on earth.*’
Read Titus 3:1-8

Question to Ask:

How can we as Christians, be committed to living life as citizens of this earth in a way that honors Christ?

Point 1: *Do the Right Things. (V. 1-3)*

- *Let me remind us all this morning, that we are not saved by what we do.*
 - *But once we are saved, we should want to do good works for the Lord.*
 - *We have been saved to honor and serve Him.*
 - While Ephesians 2:8-9 is clear that is by grace through faith that we've been saved and not by good works so that no man may boast, [Ephesians 2:10](#) also reveals what a saved person was made to do!
 - *‘For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.’* Ephesians 2:10

- Dr. Daniel Aiken said *‘Good works never save, but good works flow from those who are saved.’*
 - The Christians at Crete were living in a day and a time where the culture was very hostile to the Gospel and many people were corrupted by sin infiltrating almost every part of their lives.
 - *Paul begins here by showing those Christians at Crete, that their lives should be in stark contrast to those of unbelievers.*
- *One of the biggest issues I see in America today, is that sometimes you can’t tell a Christian apart from a non-Christian just by watching how they live.*
 - Oh what a Tragedy!
- *We can be committed to Christ Honoring Citizenship when we do the right things.*
 - I believe the Apostle Paul shows us how we need to do the Right things in the Present Actions as well as the Past Actions.
- *The Present Actions. (V. 1-2)*
 - ‘Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.’ Titus 3:1-2
- What we find in verses 1-2, I believe illustrate how we should be acting in our present day to day lives.
 - *But I believe we must pay special attention to the first word found in verse 4, ‘Remind’.*
- **Word Study**
 - The word ‘remind’ in verse 1, comes from the greek word *‘Hypomimnesko’* which literally means to remind or remember.
 - *In the greek text, it is in the present tense imperative mood.*
 - *Which means ‘Keep reminding them.’*
- So it’s obvious that Paul’s special use of the word remind was done on purpose and not by accident.
 - Thomas D. Lea said *‘The choice of this term ‘remind’ suggests that Paul may already have taught the Cretans concerning their obligations and standards of behavior within a pagan culture.’*
- *So Paul is essentially saying, although I’ve already instructed the Cretans on this, keep reminding them of these things in their present actions.*
 - So what is the apostle Paul reminding them that they should be doing?

- #1: *Be Compliant to Government Authorities as long as they do not go against a Doctrinal issue.*

- *‘Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient,’*
- This is not the only time in the NT that this idea is mentioned and or alluded to such as *Romans 13:1*.
 - *Part of doing the right thing, is not purposefully going against our government.*
- *Thomas D. Lea said ‘The instruction that Christians be subject to the civil government indicates that such authorities are part of God’s overall order for human society.’*
 - Don’t forget that God is the one who has placed the leaders of our government in their position.
- W.W. gave good advice concerning these verses, *‘The believer should not have a bad attitude toward the government and show it by slanderous accusations and pugnacious actions.’*
- Remember what Jesus said in *Matthew 22:21*.
 - “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.”

- *Christians are to obey the Government unless or until it brings us into direct conflict with the commands of God.*
 - ‘But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.’ Acts 5:29
- *One may ask, why is Paul even bringing this up in relation to Titus and the Churches at Crete?* I believe [Bryan Chappel](#) has a good explanation.
 - *‘Titus’s immediate need to protect the Cretan Church from persecution as a result of the reputed, or actual, rejection of authority must be a contributing reason.’*
- *Paul didn’t want the Churches to bring persecution on themselves by purposefully going against the government.*
 - Please note that if we as Christians are going to be submissive of ‘rulers and authorities’, then this will affect us when we build or repair buildings to stay in line with city codes.
 - This will affect how we conduct business as Christians, pay our

taxes, run our schools, pay our workers, and even traffic laws.

- ***We do not escape being good citizens just because we are also Citizens of Heaven.***
 - While we are temporary citizens on earth, we should set a good example.
- **#2: Be Eager.**
 - ‘to be ready for every good work,’
 - ***We should be eager/ready to do good works in our community and our Church.***
 - When I read what Paul wrote to Titus and the Cretan Church here, I can’t help but think of what Jesus said in ***Matthew 5:16***:
 - ‘In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that[a] they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.’
 - ***We should be eager and looking for opportunities to serve others, not ourselves.***
- **#3: Be Respectable.**
 - ‘to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.’

■ ***As a Christ follower, we should do the right things in our personal relationships that we have with other people.***

- We should not be known for being rude, quarrelsome, rough, and as a gossiper. But we should be a people who ‘show perfect courtesy toward all people.’

■ ****Word Study****

- The word ‘gentle’ in verse 2, comes from the Greek word ***‘Epieikes’*** which is translated to ***‘considerate’ or gentle and only occurs 5 times in the NT.***
 - It also means suitable, fair, reasonable, and mild.

■ ***A Christ follower should have a reputation in the community where people want to go to Church with you, not a separate Church from you.***

● ***The Past Actions. (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.’
- ***I believe Paul is saying here, ‘look how far you’ve come in Christ!’***

- ***You no longer need nor have to live the way you once did as an unsaved person because you are now saved by Him!***
- If you are saved, you've been born again.
 - So don't let what you did in the past affect you, instead, seek to honor and Glorify God now by seeking to do 'every good work'
- ***'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.'* 2nd Corinthians 5:17**
 - Verse 3 should be a description of the Christian ***BEFORE*** Christ.
 - If this is a description of you now, you need to accept Christ today!

Point 2: *Desire the Regeneration of God. (V. 4-7)*

- ***'But', there in verse 4 is one of the most powerful words we could ever hear!***
 - But God appeared to man and gave us the opportunity to be saved from our own depravity!
 - If we are saved, we have been born again. And another way to say 'born again' and mean the same thing, is the term ***Regenerated***.
 - ***To desire Regeneration as a citizen, is to desire to live the new life that Christ has purchased for us by His blood.***

- Paul just explained who we once were, and now he explains what has been done for us for this big change in our lives to occur.
 - ***In the greek text, verses 4-7 form one sentence that summarizes God's Work for the salvation of humanity.***
 - By desiring the regeneration of God, we should be thankful for what He's done on our behalf.
- ***I believe there are 4 things that we find in this text that we need to Desire and be thankful for if we have been born again:***
 - ***The Care of God. (V. 4)***
 - 'But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,' Titus 3:4
 - ***This is the Gospel. That God cared!***
 - So Paul begins this long greek sentence, by sharing the truth that God loves us!
 - ***So simple, yet many people miss it because they choose not to believe that God can and really does love them!***
 - This is the third time in this letter that Paul mentions a characteristic of God.
 - ***In Titus 2:11 we see the Grace of God, in Titus 2:13 we see the Glory of God and now here in Titus 3:4 we see the Goodness of God.***
 - And the phrase 'God our Savior' is mentioned here in verse 4 and is the 5th

of the 6 times it is mentioned in all of Titus.

- ***The Cleansing of God. (V. 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,’ Titus 3:5
 - ***Salvation is not a result of you, or anything that you’ve done, instead it is what God has done for you.***
 - ***President of SEBTS, Dr. Daniel Aiken, calls verse 5 ‘the greatest verse in the Bible on the doctrine of regeneration, the new birth experienced by those who repent of their sin and put their trust completely and exclusively in Jesus Christ.’***
 - Paul gives clear scriptural evidence that salvation does not come by what we do.
 - ***But, it’s by God’s own mercy.***
 - ***Paul leaves no doubt here when it comes to the basis of human salvation.***
 - Now the term ‘washing’ here in verse 5 has caused confusion before.
 - I do not believe this term for ‘washing’ is a reference to baptism.
 - ***In the NT, when baptism is mentioned, it’s a reference for after the person was saved.***

○ Baptism is not a means for a person to be saved.

- Here, washing comes from the greek word ***‘Loutron’*** which only occurs in ***Ephesians 5:26 and here in Titus 3:5, and means a bath, or bathed all over.***
 - When someone turns to Christ and asks Him to cleanse them, He is made a new person and the Holy Spirit comes to live inside them and their sins are washed clean.
- Paul goes on to mention the...
- ***The Coming of God. (V. 6)***
 - ‘whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,’ Titus 3:6
 - ***In Titus 3:1-8, every person of the Trinity is referred to.***
 - ***The ‘poured out’ that is mentioned here in the Greek is the same description that is given about the Holy Spirit at Pentecost in Acts 2:17.***
 - ***We must pay very close attention to the ‘us’ in verse 6.***
 - The Holy Spirit has not just been poured out at the historic event of pentecost, but is shared by all believers.
 - ***The only way that we can truly be committed to being a good citizen while God still has us on***

this earth is by walking with the Holy Spirit which God has graciously given to us!

- ***For the believer, living in the Holy Spirit is one of the greatest things you can do to desire to live in your regeneration!***
 - God has given you the blessings of His Spirit residing and living in you.
 - Which is a direct result of the work of Jesus.
- ***The Cherishing of God. (V. 7)***
 - ‘so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.’ Titus 3:7
 - ***God greatly cherishes us and showed us that by sending His Son to calvary.***
 - The question is, do we cherish our relationship with Him?
 - To be justified means to be declared righteous.
 - ****Word Study****
 - The word ‘justified’ comes from the greek word ***‘Dikaioo’*** which is in the aorist passive participle.
 - ***Which tells us that this is a completed action that was accomplished by another.***

- ***We have become heirs of eternal life through Christ because of what God has done for us through Jesus.***

■ ***Because of Christ, when God looks at us He sees His Son. Perfect.***

- It’s important to know that we are not made justified, we are declared justified by God.
 - The fact that Paul says we are ‘heirs’ to the hope of eternal life, means that one day we will have full possession of that and what Heaven will be like.
 - W.W. said ***‘Justification is the gracious act of God whereby He declares a believing sinner righteous because of the finished work of Christ on the cross.’***
 - God cherishes us so much more than we realize, do we cherish Him?
 - ***So far this morning we’ve seen how we can be committed to being a Christ Honoring Citizen when we do the right things, Desire to live in God’s Regeneration, and lastly.***
- Point 3: *Demonstrate the Righteousness of God. (V. 8)***
- Although we cannot save people (only God can do that), we can live our lives in such a way that demonstrates God’s Righteousness.
 - ***Our reward of the Christian life is that we have the opportunity to demonstrate the***

righteousness that God has so graciously shown to us.

- **The phrase in verse 8, 'The saying is trustworthy' is written by Paul in all three of the Pastoral Epistles (1st Timothy 1:15, 1st Timothy 3:1, 1st Timothy 4:9, 2nd Timothy 2:11 and here in Titus 3:8)**
 - **Everytime that it is used, 'Pistos ho logos', it emphasizes either what is to be said or what has been said already.**
 - Some scholars and theologians believe that it was an intentional use by Paul that was either creedal, hymnic, or liturgical.
 - **Either way, Paul is emphasizing that what he's said here is truth.**
 - Paul's not blowing smoke here, but it's important for a believer's behavior to much what they say they believe about the Lord.
 - **I believe there are two rewards that we find in this text and also show us how we can demonstrate God's Righteousness to others.**
- **Saved to Work for God. (V. 8a)**
 - '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.'
 - Paul is reiterating here what he already said in verses 1-2, in case we didn't get it the first time.

- **We are saved by Jesus not so that we can live the way that we want to, but so that we can serve and work for Him!**
 - **Paul wants Titus and the Cretan Church to take these things that he's discussed seriously.**
- How many times are we told something, yet we don't take it as seriously as we should?

○ **Paul is stressing this point because he knows human nature well enough to know, that if people are serious enough about their relationship with God to work for Him on this earth and make a difference, it will cause the community and non-believers to turn their heads and say, 'Why is he working so hard?'**

- **When we work hard for the Lord, we are showing that our life is His. Do with us what you please, Lord!**
 - Those who have truly believed in God, will be devoted to the things of God.
- **Secure Heavenly Profits. (V. 8b)**
 - 'These things are excellent and profitable for people.'
 - **When we focus on what life as a regenerated person is like, it's much easier for us to do things that are profitable for others.**

- *We can secure Heavenly Profits (Heavenly Rewards as well as giving Glory to God), when we lead others to Christ.*
- *The Gospel is useful for everyone who will believe in it.*
 - But instead of securing things for this earth, what have you secured in Heaven this week?
 - Was it a lost soul that is not sealed in Jesus forever?
- *It's important that we focus on the profits that can be gained in Heaven by HOW we live our Christian life, rather than the current problems that face us.*

Conclusion:

- This morning you may have felt as if this message was elementary or simple.
 - *One reason that the Apostle Paul had to write these things to the Church at Crete is because the Church at Crete was not practicing these things.*
 - *How committed are you to be a good citizen right where God has planted you for His Glory alone?*
 - Are you fully committed to allowing God to shine through all areas of your life and not just the ones that seem the most convenient to you?

- I believe we can all commit to be the kind of citizens that God desires us to be by:
 - **Point 1: *Do the Right Things. (V. 1-3)***
 - **Point 2: *Desire the Regeneration of God. (V. 4-7)***
 - **Point 3: *Demonstrate the Righteousness of God. (V. 8)***