

Lesson 16 – Titus 3:3-8
Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School
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Outline of Chapter Three

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Introduction

The Apostle Paul has exhorted Titus to “set in order what remains”. Titus’ first task was to appoint elders in every city. Those that would be appointed elders had to exhibit a level of maturity as exhibited in character qualifications. These are also character qualities that we all should be avoiding/pursuing as those who desire to glorify God by progressing in sanctification. Paul then looks at the relationships of the mature believer: those that contradict, older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and employees (slaves) and the motivation for pursuing excellence in these relationships. Paul’s focus then turns to the lifestyle witness of the mature believer beginning with how we live among pagans.

1. Be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient
2. Be ready for every good deed
3. Malign no one
4. Be peaceable (“uncontentious” in the pre 1995 NASB)
5. Be gentle
6. Showing every consideration for all men

Today we will see the motivations for a lifestyle witness.

Lifestyle Witness of the Mature Believer

A. Motivation for a Lifestyle Witness (3:3-8)

“For” connects 3:1-2 with what is coming next. A lifestyle witness among pagans is possible and motivated by what comes next.

1. Motive from our own pre-saved past (3:3)

³For 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.

- a. We were also once foolish

“We were” is in the imperfect tense, indicating over and over, again and again we were foolish.

Foolish [anoetos] literally means “without comprehend”. It pictures the unsaved as without spiritual understanding, ignorant of God and continually manifesting an unwillingness to use their mental faculties to understand the truth about God.

Foolish ultimately means living our lives independent of God.

¹**The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God"** They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good. Psa 14:1

¹⁷So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, **in the futility of their mind,** ¹⁸**being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;** ¹⁹**and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.** Eph 4:17-19

- b. Disobedient [apeithes] pictures willfully disregarding God’s standards. It pictures a stubborn, stiff-necked attitude and speaks of disbelief manifesting itself in disobedience.
- c. Deceived [planao] is in the present tense and passive voice meaning to continually be led astray. The unbeliever is led astray by a sinful nature and blinded by Satan and his world system.
- d. Enslaved [douleuo] means to be willfully and continually in bondage to various lusts and pleasures. This is enslavement to the sin nature.

Without Christ, each person is enslaved to the sin nature which is the corruption of our whole nature and is that which inclines us to sin. The result of the sin nature is “total depravity” – where the corruption of sin extends to every aspect of our being (Rom 1:18–3:20) including intellect (2 Cor 4:4), conscience (1 Tim 4:2), will (Rom 1:28), and heart (Eph 4:18). The idea of total depravity is not that man displays as much evil as he possibly could, nor that he cannot do any good, or even feign a love for God, but that his entire nature is affected by sin. As such he is totally incapable of moving on his own toward God.

- e. Spending our life [diago] meaning to continually/habitually pass the time or live. The normal or typical manner of life is malice and envy.

Malice [kakia] refers the quality of wickedness and thus in a moral sense means depravity, vice or baseness. It denotes a vicious disposition, evilness, ill-will, spitefulness. It describes a vicious intention and expresses the desire to hurt another and rejoices in it. In reference to behavior it conveys the idea of a mean-spirited or vicious attitude or disposition as indicated by words such as malice, ill-will, hatefulness, and dislike. It is an attitude of wickedness as an evil habit of one's mind.

Envy [phthonos] describes pain felt and malignity conceived at the sight of excellence or happiness. It is not just wanting what another has, but also resenting another for having it.

- f. Hateful, hating one another

Hateful [stugeo] means to hate and is not found anywhere else in the NT.

Hating [miseo] means to have a strong aversion or to dislike strongly, with the implication of hostility. It is in the present tense indicating that it is a way of life. It is the absence of agape or phileo love.

The Scriptures repeatedly show us that we were once one thing – enslaved to sin and alienated from God. Now we are His children. We have been saved from eternal damnation and a life of no significance now.

³⁰**For just as you once were disobedient to God**, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, Rom 11:30

¹**And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ²in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), Eph 2:1-4**

⁹**Or 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 effeminate, nor homosexuals, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor *the* covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. 1 Cor 6:9-11**

²**You know that when you were pagans, *you were* led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. 1 Cor 12:2**

⁵Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. ⁶For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, ⁷**and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. Col 3:5-7**

2. Motive from our own salvation (3:4-8a)

⁴But when the **kindness** of God our Savior and *His love* for mankind appeared, ⁵He **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, ⁶whom He **poured out upon us richly** through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that being **justified by His grace** we would be **made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life**. ⁸This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, Titus 3:3-8a

“But” turns the emphasis to salvation from our pre-saved past as the motivation for a lifestyle witness. The Holy Spirit through Paul has just showed us how evil we were. Now He lays out a sweeping description of our salvation: kindness, love, saved, mercy, washing of regeneration and renewing, poured the Holy Spirit out upon us richly, justified by grace, made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

In this short passage Paul sweeps across the glorious truths of salvation, every facet of which is sovereignly initiated and empowered by God alone. There are doctrines here that could be studied and pondered for months without mining all their truth. MacArthur NT Commentary - Titus

What is salvation? It is the work of God whereby he saves individuals from the penalty, power, and one day the very presence of sin. It is completely by God and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Eph 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet 1:18-19).

a. manifestation (3:4)

⁴But when the **kindness** of God our Savior and *His love* for mankind appeared, ...

Salvation is through God's kindness and love. It has appeared – that is Jesus the Christ. New Testament writers seem to use “God our Savior” to refer to the Father and “God and Savior” to refer to Jesus.

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of **God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus**, *who is* our hope, 1 Tim 1:1

³but at the proper time manifested, *even* His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of **God our Savior**, Titus 1:3

⁴To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and **Christ Jesus our Savior**. Titus 1:4

¹⁰not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of **God our Savior** in every respect. Titus 2:10

¹³looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great **God and Savior, Christ Jesus**, Titus 2:13

¹Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our **God and Savior, Jesus Christ**: 2 Peter 1:1

²⁵to the only **God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord**, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. Jude 1:25

The decree of God refers to His sovereign purpose – His comprehensive plan that includes all events that will ever occur. It is His eternal plan whereby, before the creation of the world, He determined to bring about everything that happens. This is a particular work of the Father within the Trinity. The Father sovereignly plans and brings about all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psa 145:8-9; 1 Cor 8:6). He is sovereign in providence and salvation (Psa 103:19; Rom 11:36). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Eph 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chron 29:11). He is neither the author nor approver of sin (Hab 1:13; John 8:38-47). His sovereignty does not absolve people of their responsibility; people are still accountable (1 Pet 1:17).

b. basis (3:5a)

⁵He **saved** us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His **mercy**...

We are saved by God's grace (getting what we do not deserve) and mercy (not getting what we deserve) not by doing good deeds.

⁸For by **grace** you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; ⁹**not as a result of works**, so that no one may boast. Eph 2:8-9

c. means (3:5, 6)

^{5b}by the **washing of regeneration and renewing** by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom He **poured out upon us richly** through Jesus Christ our Savior, ...

Salvation is a glorious work of God that is difficult to fully grasp. The Scriptures provide the steps to how God accomplishes a person's salvation. The following are the steps in the salvation process or *ordo salutis* (order of salvation). Some of these steps occur simultaneously, but are ordered here for understanding.

1. Election – God's unconditioned choice before the foundation of the world (eternity past) of those individuals whom He would save (Matt 22:1-14; Rom 3:10-13; 8:27-30; 9:6-24; 1 Cor 1:18-19; Eph 1:3-11; 2:8-9; 2; Acts 13:48; 1 Thess 1:4; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 2:10; 1 Pet 1:1-2; 2 Pet 1:10; 2:13;). All whom the Father appoints to eternal life (Acts 13:48) He will call to Himself (Rom 8:30) by sovereign causing the gospel to be told to them (Acts 10; Rom 10:8-17). God's choice is required because all people are dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1) – dead people cannot chose to come alive.
2. The Gospel Call – When God causes the gospel to be shared with the elect (Acts 10).
3. Conviction of sin – When confronted with Jesus the Christ, the Holy Spirit shows the sinner their sin (Luke 5:8).
4. Regeneration – the act of God that brings new life (born again) (2 Cor 5:17) to the one who believes (John 3:3; Titus 3:5). God regenerates (John 1:13) instantaneously at the moment of salvation as He wills (James 1:18) by the Holy Spirit (John 3:5). A truly regenerated person will bear fruit in keeping with the new life (1 Cor 6:19-20; Eph 2:10).
5. Conversion – when a person responds to the gospel with faith and repentance.
 - 5a. Justification – the work of God (Rom 8:33) where the believing sinner is declare righteous (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Rom 2:4; 2 Cor 7:10; Isa 55:6-7). Our sins are placed on Jesus (Col 2:14; 1 Pet 2:24) and Jesus' righteousness is placed on us (2 Cor 5:21).
 - 5b. Adoption – making us a part of God's family, His children (John 1:12; Rom 8:15; Gal 4:5; Heb 12:5-9).
 - 5c. Indwelling (1 Cor 6:19) – the act by which the Holy Spirit permanently (John 14:16) takes up residence in every believer.
 - 5d. Baptizing – the act where the believer is united with Christ in His death (Rom 6:3-5) and into union with other believers in the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13).
 - 5e. Sealing – the guarantee that the believer belongs to God (2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13; 4:30); providing the believer with eternal-security and assurance of salvation.
 - 5f. Bestowing spiritual gifts – the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts supernaturally and sovereignly (1 Cor 12:11; Heb 2:3-4) distributes spiritual gifts to each believer (Rom 8:9) individually just as He wills. Each believer is given at least one permanent (Rom 11:29) spiritual gift (1 Cor 12:7) which is to be employed to serve other believers as a good steward of God's grace (1 Pet 4:10). Spiritual gifts are given for the advantage of all (1 Cor 12:7), the edification of the church (1 Cor 14:26), the equipping of the saints (Eph 4:7, 12), and the glory of God (1 Pet 4:10-11).
 - 5g. Sanctification – meaning positionally set apart for God (2 Thess 2:13; Heb 10:10); experientially, it is the process to more and more die unto sin and live unto righteousness (2 Cor 3:18).
6. Perseverance (when we remain Christians despite trials, tribulations, and temptations) causing us to persevere in the faith, so that we do not finally fall away.
7. Death (when we finally get to see the Lord face to face) – we enter an intermediate state, where we are in the presence of the Lord, but without our physical bodies.
8. Glorification (when we receive our new resurrected bodies) – when our bodies will be resurrected and changed so that they will no longer decay.

d. results (3:7)

⁷so that being **justified by His grace** we would be **made heirs according to the hope of eternal life**.

There are many benefits of salvation for the justified sinner. Paul gives one here—we are heirs.

¹⁴For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶**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*. Rom 8:14-17

⁵Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and **heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him**? James 2:5

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴**to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,** ⁵**who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.** 1 Pet 1:3-5

“Trustworthy statement” is a common marker for five of Paul’s theological affirmations in the Pastoral Letters (cf. 1 Tim 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11); here referring back to the gospel message laid out in v4-7. Titus is to speak them confidently. The gospel message is not to be watered down for the sake of acceptance. It is a trustworthy statement; a truth that cannot be changed.

¹⁵**It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance,** that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*. 1 Tim 1:15

¹**It is a trustworthy statement:** if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires *to do*. 1 Tim 3:1

⁷But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; ⁸for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.

⁹**It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance.** ¹⁰For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. 1 Tim 4:7-9

¹¹**It is a trustworthy statement:** For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; ¹²If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; ¹³If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself. 2 Tim 2:11-13

3. Motive from the new life (3:8b)

^{8b}so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men. Titus 3:8b

“have believed” is a past act with continuing consequences.

There is a necessary connection between salvation and conduct. True salvation brings about a change in life which will be evidenced by fruits in keeping with repentance.

¹⁷Therefore if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.** 2 Cor 5:17

The saved sinner loves Jesus and seeks to keep His commands.

⁸and **though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,** ⁹obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. 1 Pet 1:8-9

¹⁵**If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.** John 14:15

May be careful [phrontizo] means to exercise thought, give sustained thought to something, be intent on, be careful, be thoughtful, consider, think seriously about, reflect, fix one's attention on, ponder, be concerned about, take careful thought, give heed or concentrate upon.

The believer should give attention to ensuring that they are engaging in good deeds. Not to get something, but out of gratitude.

²⁸Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, **let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;** ²⁹for our God is a consuming fire. Heb 12:28-29

“good and profitable for men” because the demonstration of the changed life is a powerful witness.