

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

SPREADING THE SOUL-SAVING MESSAGE OF JESUS

TITUS LESSON 3 (Chapter 3)

Introduction by narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. Spreading the soul-saving message of Jesus. And now, Timothy Sparks and Ben Bailey.

Ben Bailey:

“Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work” (Tit. 3:1). I’m Ben Bailey.

Timothy Sparks:

And I’m Timothy Sparks. Welcome to our study of the Book of Titus. This message is being brought to you by members of the church of Christ. We invite you to visit the church of Christ near you. There, you will find people who are sincerely interested in studying the Scriptures, as well as people who are concerned about your soul. They would like to study the Bible with you. If you have never attended the church of Christ, we extend a warm invitation to you to do so. Let them know that you would be interested in studying the Word of God. Also, let them know that you have been watching this broadcast, and that you appreciate their support of these messages.

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Ben Bailey:

The Book of Titus is about “living up to our faith.” We saw from chapter 1 how we live up to our faith in the church as we fill the various roles that God has asked us to fill. In chapter 2, we learned how—as older men, as younger men, as older women, and as younger women—to fill our roles in the home. In chapter 2, we also learned how, as employers or employees, to live up to our faith in the workplace. In chapter 3, we learn how to live up to our faith in the world. Paul wrote, “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work” (Tit. 3:1). Paul is referring here to governmental authorities—those who are in control of the nation in which we live. Christians ought to be the best citizens they can possibly be. Jesus taught, “Render unto Caesar’s that which is Caesar’s” (Mk. 12:17). A Christian should not be the type of person who cheats on his income taxes. We should “render unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s.” We should not be the type of people who steal from the local cable company. We must not do things like that. We should be people who do what we are supposed to do. When it comes to laws established by the government—laws that are not in violation of God’s

law—then we ought to obey those laws, whether they relate to the speed limit or to matters of a more serious criminal nature. If there comes a time when the government issues laws that are in conflict with God’s laws, then we know from Acts 4 that we “ought to obey God, rather than men.” But if the government’s laws are in harmony with God’s laws, then we are bound to obey them to the best of our ability. We must be ready “for every good work.” Christians must be ready, because we have an important role to play. We cannot just “sit back and let someone else do it.” When a good work needs to be done, we ought to be the first ones to volunteer. We can do good works—for the country, or for the church. We simply must make sure that whatever works we do for the country do not violate Christian principles.

Timothy Sparks:

In Titus 3:2, Paul reminds us “to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.” We must not be slanderers, or the type of people who speak evil of others. We must be “peaceable.” As early as Genesis 49:10, we learn of an individual by the name of “Shiloh.” Moses wrote, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes.” The word “Shiloh” means “peace bringer.” Isaiah prophesied that Christ would come as “the Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6). At the birth of Christ, the angels proclaimed, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” (Lk. 2:14). We learn from Colossians 1:20 that Christ “made peace through the blood of His cross.” The Gospel is “the good news of peace” (Eph. 6:15). Christians are to have the “peace of God that surpasses all understanding” (Phil. 4:7). We, as Christians, are to live at peace with all people, as much as is possible (Rom. 12:18). Paul tells us in Romans 14:19, “Let us pursue the things which make for peace, and the things by which one may edify another.” We are to “strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3).

Ben Bailey:

Christians are not to be just peaceful folks, but also humble people. I shouldn’t think more of myself than I ought to. I’m not out to “promote self,” or to become famous at the expense of someone else. I should be humble. I should be a person who is willing to submit to God and to the government. Jesus said, “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Lk. 14:11). It reminds me of the argument Jesus’ disciples were having about who was going to be greatest in the kingdom (Mk. 10). Jesus told them, “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (vs. 45). Jesus explained, “Whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant” (vs. 44). Jesus needed His disciples to know that being a Christian is about humbling yourself, and about looking out for the interests of others. We are to be peaceful, gentle, meek people. And we are to be obedient—obedient to God, to the laws of the land, and so on. In Matthew 7:21, Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.” We must be obedient, and do God’s will. In Luke 6:46, Jesus asked, “Why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things which I say?” According to Romans 13, governments are established by God, and are intended to be God’s tool to work out His purposes, whatever those purposes might be. Our responsibility is to acknowledge the government as God’s “minister of good,” and to be obedient to it, so long as its laws do not violate the laws of God. Christians are people who try to live without malice, and who try to do what is right. We are not hateful people, but gentle and peaceful.

Timothy Sparks:

The greatest example of humility, of course, is Jesus Christ Himself. In John 13, Jesus took a bowl of water and a cloth, and washed the disciples' feet. What a great example of humility! And notice that, inextricably linked to humility, is the idea of "service." If we want to be humble, then we also must be a servant. In John 13, Peter objected to Jesus washing his feet. Jesus said, "If I do not wash your feet, then you have no part of me." Peter's response was, "Then wash me all over!" Later, in 1 Peter 5:5, Peter would say, "Be clothed with humility, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." James wrote, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up" (Jas. 4:10). Peter wrote, "Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time" (1 Pet. 5:6). If **we** do the lowering, **God** will do the raising. Paul is teaching in Titus 3 the same principles he taught in Galatians 5:22-23 when he wrote, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law."

Ben Bailey:

In Titus 3:4-5, Paul said, "But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." The "kindness and love of God"—what a wonderful idea! We are God's creation. But have we always followed and obeyed God's will? No. We haven't done what God said, and we haven't shown our God to love as we should have. We have instead "sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Yet, according to Paul's comments in Romans 5:6-8, "When we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." **There** is God's kindness. Even though we were not friends of God—but His enemies!—He was so kind and loving that He sent His only Son to die on the cross to redeem us from our sins. Where could we ever find a better example of kindness, love, or doing good unto your enemies? Jesus Himself even prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know now what they do" (Lk, 23:34). We see God's kindness and love in that He was willing to save us. God saved me. I did not save myself. I cannot earn or merit my salvation, regardless of how many good things I do, or how many times I go to church. It is not by "works of righteousness" that I am saved. I cannot pull out my "check list" and say, "Look here, Lord, at all the great things **I** did. You **owe** me salvation! Give me what I deserve." The fact is, we **deserve to be lost!** Isaiah said, "All our righteousnesses are like filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6). In Luke 17:10, we read, "When you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'" We are not saved by works of righteousness on our part, but by God's grace and mercy. "Grace" is when we receive that which we do not deserve. God's mercy is when He allows us to escape that which we do deserve. Lamentations 3:22-23 is probably one of the most beautiful passages on God's mercy. There, we read, "Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning." We **deserve** to be consumed in the fires of Hell. But it is due to God's mercy that we do not **have** to be consumed. God has provided a way of escape for us. Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." God did not have to

save us. And we don't deserve to be saved. It is only because of His grace and mercy that salvation has been extended to us.

Timothy Sparks:

In Titus 3:5, Paul makes it clear that the way we access the grace and mercy of God is through “the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.” The phrase “washing of regeneration” has been rendered as “the bath of the new birth.” This is indeed a reference to baptism (immersion). Baptism is an important part of God's plan of salvation for mankind. Baptism is how we get “into Christ” (Gal. 3:27). Baptism is how we receive forgiveness for our sins (Acts 2:38). Jesus told Nicodemus, “Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:5). How are God's mercy and grace accessed? The New Testament makes it clear—through baptism! Paul said in Ephesians 5:26 that it is “through the washing of water by the word” that we are sanctified and cleansed. We gain access to the cleansing blood of Christ only through baptism. Jesus commanded: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Mt. 28:18-20). Peter offered what is probably the simplest statement to understand when he said, “Baptism does also now save you” (1 Pet. 3:21). Baptism is the method that God has established for us to have our sins washed away by the blood of His Son. Paul wrote in Romans 6:3-4, “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” This, then, according to Paul's comments to Titus, makes us “heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Tit. 3:7).

Ben Bailey:

God's mercy and grace make us “heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” We have an inheritance waiting for us. Peter wrote about “an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Pet. 1). We, if we are faithful, will one day get to live in Heaven with God forever. Can we even fathom what it means to live with God “eternally.” Jesus said in John 17:3, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God.” What is eternal life all about? It's about having an intimate relationship with God Himself. It's not “just” the idea of being in God's presence forever. It's also the idea of having a “knowing relationship” with Him.

Paul then moves into one of his “this is a faithful saying” statements—statements that occur repeatedly in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. In Titus 3:8, Paul says, “This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works.” Christianity is not something we do “every once in a while.” It's not something we do “when the mood strikes us” or “when we feel like it.” I've seen people like that. They “get on a binge,” and will be faithful for a while. Then, they just “fade away.” Christianity is not like that. It is something we have to “maintain.” It's about **constantly** doing things that are right, and about **consistently** doing the things God wants us to do. In other words, it's about being faithful **all** the time. Jesus said in Revelation 2:10, “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.” In this chapter on living up to our faith in the world, this is an important point, because for many in the world, my life may be the only “Bible” they ever get to read. I may

be the only example of Christianity that they see. If they see me “red hot” at times, “as cold as ice” at other times, and “lukewarm” on other occasions, that does not present a good or true picture of Christianity. Thus, Paul tells Titus to instruct Christians to “maintain good works.” Yes, we will all have our own personal “down times.” But overall, we have to work to maintain a constant level of good works—not because those works will save us, but because this is what God has commanded us to do. James 2 makes it clear that is impossible to have faith without works to accompany that faith. If someone claimed to “have faith,” how would you know if they were telling you the truth or not, if they didn’t have any good works to accompany their faith? James’ point is that you couldn’t know! Faith without works is dead, James said. How true! We as Christians must be workers in God’s kingdom. We have not been called just to attend church services or to say a few prayers. Christianity is a lifestyle.

Timothy Sparks:

Paul reminds Titus to avoid “foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless” (Tit. 3:9). Paul’s comment that these things are “unprofitable and useless” is reason enough for Titus to avoid them. Paul had previously told Titus that he was to speak things that were “profitable for sound doctrine” (Tit. 2:1). These types of things certainly do not fit into that category. Paul urged Titus to make the most of his time, and to concentrate on good works. That is a good message for **every** Christian. Titus is a book about good works. Paul repeatedly stresses throughout the book things in which we, as Christians, must be engaged. Every aspect our life must center on, and revolve around, Jesus Christ. Christians must “put first things first.” Jesus Himself stressed this in Matthew 6:33 when He said, “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

Ben Bailey:

Each chapter of the Book of Titus urges us to live up to our faith. In chapter 1, we are told to live up to our faith in the church. Elders must be qualified, and members must submit to the elders. As a church, we must all come together to work for God’s glory. In chapter 2, we are taught to live up to our faith in the home and at work. We must respect the various roles in the home—older men, younger men, older women, younger women. All of this ties together in a beautiful way. Fathers and mothers must realize what their roles are. They are to teach and admonish their children. Children must submit to their parents and obey them in the Lord, “for this is right” (Eph. 6:1-4). Chapter 3 teaches Christians to live up to their faith in the world. As long as rulers and those in authority do not violate the Law of Christ, we must submit to them. Why must we do this? Because we remember what our former lives used to be like. We once lived in sinfulness and ungodliness, but now that we have left that old life behind, we live a life of hope in God’s grace and mercy, which saves us. We need to concentrate on good works, and never get caught up in divisive things. In 1 Timothy, Paul stressed church conduct. The key text of that book is found in 1 Timothy 3:14-15, where Paul says, “These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” Each chapter in that epistle tells us how to do exactly that. In the “preachers’ letters” (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus), we find instructions to preachers. In 1 Timothy 1, we learn that our conduct is correct only when we preach and teach the one true Gospel. From chapter 2, we learn that our conduct needs to be right in regard to the scope and role of public prayer. Men must lead, and women

must be in submission. Chapter 3 stresses proper conduct in regard to leadership roles in the church that are occupied by qualified elders and deacons. Chapter 4 complements that idea by telling us that preachers must be good ministers of Jesus Christ. Chapter 5 tells us that the church is conducting itself properly when we give all members the honor they are due. Chapter 6 instructs us not to give in to greed and the love of money.

Timothy Sparks:

The overriding theme of the Book of 2 Timothy has to do with “preaching the Word”—a stern responsibility for every faithful Gospel preacher. Paul told Timothy,

“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables” (2 Tim. 4:2-4).

Perhaps 1 Timothy 4:16 would serve as an adequate summary for the Books of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. Paul wrote, “Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”

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Narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

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STUDY QUESTIONS FOR TITUS LESSON 3 (CHAPTER 3)

1. Each chapter in the Book of Titus is about how Christians should “live up to their faith” in certain areas. With what particular area is chapter 3 dealing?
2. Explain the connection between the teaching found in Romans 13, and that found in Titus 3:1.
3. What was Jesus teaching when he said, “Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s”? (Mt. 12:17).
4. Titus 3:2 explains that Christians are to be humble people. What act did Jesus carry out in John 13 in order to provide an example of true humility to His disciples?
5. To what does the phrase, “the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” refer (Tit. 3:5)?
6. God’s grace and mercy makes us “heirs” to something. What is that “something”?
7. According to John 17:13, what is eternal life “all about”?
8. Explain the connection between Ephesians 2:10 and Titus 3:8.
9. What picture will people in the world get of New Testament Christianity if they variously see Christians as “red hot,” “lukewarm,” or “cold as ice”?
10. According to James 2, what is the proper relationship between faith and works?
11. In Titus 3:9, Paul warned Titus to avoid four specific activities, because they were “unprofitable and useless.” What were those four activities?
12. There are three books in the New Testament that frequently are referred to as the “preachers’ letters.” Name those three books.
13. What one text in those “preachers’ letters” might be considered as a “summary passage” for the content of all three books?
14. Who is the “Shiloh” mentioned in Genesis 49:10?
15. What does the word “Shiloh” mean?
16. Give one other passage from the Old Testament that refers to Shiloh. [HINT: The passage does not use the word “Shiloh,” but instead uses the actual meaning of the word to refer to someone.]
17. In Matthew 7:21, Jesus was stressing a specific concept. What was it?
18. Explain the meaning of 1 Peter 5:6.