

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

These notes are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye, mistakes can possibly be found. Therefore, he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at pastorpat@waukeshabible.org.

Date: July 22, 2018

Sermon Title: Amazed by God: The Radical Gospel

Sermon Series: Titus

Text: Titus 3:1-3

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Title: Amazed by God: The Radical Gospel
Text: Titus 3:1-3
Emphasis: The Christian's Orderly Response to the Disorder of their Culture

Introduction:

“His words had been written with a reference generally to Christian life among Christians. But there was then a great life outside the little Christian world; how were the people of Christ to regulate their behavior in their dealings with the vast Pagan world outside?”¹

“If you have tasted God’s grace at the cross, you are a changed person. There is simply no way that you can receive God’s gift of eternal life and have your sins forgiven by the blood of Christ, and go on living as you formerly lived. By His sovereign grace alone, God raised you from being dead in your sins, gave you a new heart, gave you new understanding of the truth, and brought you personally to know Him, the living and true God. God’s grace leaves you a different person than you were before. But, at the same time, there are powerful forces at work to cause you to revert to your old ways. The *world* bombards you daily with its false messages that promise satisfaction with its pleasures, apart from God. The *flesh* tempts you from within, promising you fulfillment if you will yield. The *devil* craftily lays his traps, enticing you to satisfy your needs in disobedience to God. All of these powerful forces make us tend to forget what God has done in our hearts by His grace. And so we need to be reminded again and again of how God’s grace has laid hold of our lives.”²

“The world says love yourself, grab all you can, follow your heart. Jesus says deny yourself, grab your cross and follow me.”³

Let us remember the larger context of our study in Titus.

- Appoint Elders (1:5)
- Teach the Church (2:1)
- Remind the Community (3:1)

Let us remember the Melodic line in our study of Titus.

- 1:1-4 The knowledge of the truth
- 2:11-15 The grace of God has appeared
- 3:4-8 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared

Now the Text.

- ¹Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, ²to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. ³For 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” (Titus 3:1-3).

The JESUS SEED always produces GOSPEL FRUIT.

REMEMBER

The link between the two is **unbreakable**.

The two are unbreakable, but **not equal**.

The outcome is **never doubted** or uncertain.

Notice the parallel structure between chapters 2 and 3. The intent is to show the fruit the seed of God bears in the believing community and in the unsaved society at large. It is important to keep the larger structure in mind. This exhortation/descriptive is based on the gospel as reiterated in Titus 3:4-8.

Although we are stressing the thought that the JESUS SEED always produces GOSPEL FRUIT, this does not mean it is without incident. The world, the flesh, and the devil all push against the progress and the ultimate installment of God's kingdom and will on earth even as it is in heaven.

You and I live in a world gone mad. If you watch the news, our current political scene is insane. The actions of its citizens and the verbiage of the press is not Christian. We live in a world of chaos. God calls us to "cosmos."

CHAOS vs COSMOS

OUTLINE:

I. The **Positive** Descriptive (v. 1)

- ¹ Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work,

Our church family, individually and corporately, should be a force for good in the community we live in. This takes time and effort, but our presence should be noted.

ACTION

Submit - Titus 2:5, 9; 3:1

Obey - Ac 5:29; Titus 3:1 [the opposite is in verse 3]

II. The **Negative** Descriptive (v. 2a)

- ² to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling,

Watch what you say of those who govern.

"Sadly, we seem to be living in an increasingly uncivil community. From presidential politics to random internet comments, there seems to be more and more rude, demeaning, insulting, and aggressive language and behavior in our society. Forms of uncivil behavior that should be avoided include the following:

- Interrupting and talking over others who have the floor
- Insults as well as overgeneralized and dispositional character criticisms and attributions

- Use of aggressive, sarcastic, or demeaning language and tone
- Refusal to acknowledge the good points of others.”⁴

LANGUAGE

Blasphemeo - Titus 2:5; 3:2

It is an oxymoron to claim to be Christian and yet act and speak of those in authority with malice.

BIG IDEA

The fruit is a reflection of the root (vv. 3, 4).

“They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work” (Titus 1:16).

III. The **Positive** Descriptive (v. 2b)

- ² to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

IV. The Radical **Gospel** (v. 3)

- ³For 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.

Something happened that changed us from what we were in Adam to what we now are in Christ. This is *the radical gospel*. The reason why we no longer act and speak disparagingly against those in places of authority is because we have been changed by the JESUS SEED.

When it comes to politics, Christians have a tendency to lose their minds and allow their emotions to run ahead of what is true.

1. God has given humanity dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:26).
2. There is hierarchy as to function within society (Rom. 13:1). It is shameful the level of disrespect and distrust we have toward those who seek to keep our society in cosmos as opposed to chaos. There are always corrupt individuals who have little concern for the social good, but the structure is to serve the people by promoting order.
3. You have those who govern and you have those who are the governed.
4. Those who govern are bound by God to obey Him (Rom. 13:1).
5. Those who are the governed are bound by God to obey Him by obeying them. There is, however, a descending / ascending order of responsibility. God first, then everything else (Acts 5:29).
6. Those who govern are placed there by God (Dan. 2:21; 4:32). This does not mean they are believers in God’s person and program.
7. This world’s system is corrupted by the fall and by those who govern. The Bible describes this present age as evil (Gal. 1:4). It has its own prince and it isn’t Jesus (Eph. 2:2). The Book of Revelation calls this world’s governing system, “Babylon” (Rev. 17).
8. This Babylon does not seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness (1 John 5:19).

9. As redeemed and purified people by the blood of Jesus, we are called to obey those in authority and to submit to their rule (Titus 3:1; Rom. 13:1). No matter what, we are to live gospel rich lives both inside the church and outside the church. We are to “till the soil and fill the earth” by making disciples and planting churches (Matt. 28:18-20).
10. These are the non-negotiables of the biblical *Story*.

Friends, I cannot say this strong enough.

There are two competing forces. They are not equal, but both exist. There is the Seed of the Woman on the one hand and the Seed of the Serpent on the other. These two forces are in opposition and they will never be reconciled. There will be peace, but it will come at the expense of the Serpent’s Seed bowing before the Seed of the Woman.

If you do not see the world in these two polarized and competing categories, you will live a disordered gospel-less life. You will have misplaced loyalties and spend your time, energy, and resources on “feeding” Babylon.

What then does this text tell me “to do?” This text is not ‘ROCKET SCIENCE.’

It is unfortunate when we align our theology with politicians. It is good and proper to exercise our freedoms to vote and to stay informed on political issues. However, *no politician will ever solve the world’s problems, just as no politician causes it.* This disorder and chaos is of the devil. There is something greater at work than the fleshly appetites of fallen humanity. Yet, God is still ultimately in control and therefore we can respect authority knowing that the Seed of the Woman triumphs over the Seed of the Serpent. When we “are submissive to rulers and authorities” and “show courtesy toward all people,” the surrounding, watching, and listening world will be *amazed by God*.

“Around the time of the American Civil War, Abraham Lincoln was asked if God was on his side. His response is a classic: ‘Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God’s side, for God is always right.’ He wrote a ‘Meditation on the Divine Will’ in which he said: ‘In the present civil war, it is quite possible that God’s purpose is something different from the purpose of either party.’”⁵

THE CRETIAN

¹²“One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, ‘Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.’ ¹³This testimony is true” (Titus 1:12, 13).

NOW WHAT?

- As a Christian, how you respond to and speak of the authorities is a reflection of the JESUS SEED.
- As children of God, we do not respond to and speak of our governing authorities like the children of Babylon.

- “For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God” (Heb. 11:10).

If you are an unbeliever and have put your confidence in the governing powers, let me tell you that God alone is in charge. He alone will bring an end to this world’s counterfeit kingdom and thoroughly straighten all that is crooked.

It appears overly redundant, but the text seems to accent this and speak to it repeatedly. The intent is that we get it. What is the point? The point is this, “The JESUS SEED always produces GOSPEL FRUIT.”

The gospel radically changes its recipients from the inside out. We are very different than our unbelieving counterparts. We make no arrogant boast as if our own work made us better or more worthy or somehow earned a standing before God. We began with the simple profession that “we can’t, but God can,” concluding with “and Jesus did.”

¹ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers on Titus 3:1.

² <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-10-gracious-reminders-titus-31-7>

³ Francis Chan, <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/1411292>

⁴ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/do-the-right-thing/201607/is-civility-dead-in-america>

⁵ <https://billmuehlenberg.com/2017/03/06/whose-side-god/>