

Titus Chapter 3

"Don't forget"

Physician to patient: "If I've told you once, I've told you a hundred times--I do not treat amnesia cases!"

There's a story about a man who lived in the city, but who was visiting relatives on a farm and the farmer gave a whistle and his dog herded the cattle into the corral, then latched the gate with her paw. "Wow, that's some dog. What's her name?" The farmer thought a minute, then asked, "What do you call that red flower that smells good and has thorns on the stem?" "A rose?" "That's it!" The farmer turned to his wife. "Hey Rose, what do we call this dog?"

Sometimes it seems as though we so easily forget those things that should be most obvious, the things that should be closest to our hearts and our minds retention. and Unfortunately when it comes to the Word of God, who we are, where we've come from and what Christ has done on our behalf it's no different. We forget, and because of that it drastically affects our entire way of living, from the way we perceive others, to how we consider ourselves, and the way we handle ourselves in a given situation. We spoke last week of how belief impacts our behavior, how our outlook shapes the outcome, and along those same lines when those things that should be right at the surface of our hearts and minds keeping us in check, keeping us humble, meek and lowly of heart are forgotten, it begins to impact our walk with Christ in an incredibly negative way. Your integrity begins to crumble as your humility is replaced with pride, you start thinking that because you know Jesus, you're just a little bit above those who've not responded to His love and grace, and it's a dangerous place to be. and So Paul is writing to Titus here, and before he signs off there are some things that he wished to remind Titus (and in fact all of us of). In essence he's saying, "Don't forget these things. You may know them, you may've heard them a thousand times, but that's ok you need it, lest you forget."

Peter said, "*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.*" 2 Peter 1:12-15 (and So we have 2nd Peter) But you see Pastors often have a problem, and that is that there are many things in the bible that are repeated, the same things stated over and over again. Often times pastors feel as though they're being very redundant and often get accused of saying the same things over and over again. and So they're always looking for the new insight, or the fresh nugget to give they're people, but a couple of things that have really helped me keep from getting wedged in that trap is #1 to know that the nuggets have already been found. It's a very real possibility that I'm not going to discover something that a couple of thousand of years worth of preachers before me haven't seen, it may be new to me, but it's not a new truth or something no one else has ever seen.

If you do find something there that no one else ever has I would be very leery of your find, that's how people get into weird doctrines, always looking for the new thing, reading things into the scriptures that don't exist for the purpose of staying fresh and new. But maybe you've heard this little phrase, "If it's new it's not true, and if it's true, it's not new." Solomon said, "*That which has been is what will be, That which is done is what will be done, And there is nothing new under the sun.*" Eccl 1:9 The other thing that really helped me was when I learned (or maybe I should say, received the reality) that because all of God's Word is inspired, there's not one word that's there by mistake, and the amount of times that God has seen fit to repeat Himself corresponds directly with how many times I need to hear it. Because if I didn't need to hear it, God wouldn't waste His breath.

The reason "grace and peace" are so often repeated, is because I need to hear of the grace of God often, because I need it, and if I'm not reminded that God desires to give me His peace through His grace, I'll be on the edge all the time and freaked out about everything. But when I'm reminded often of these things, it keeps me where I need to be, and likewise Paul is saying, "Don't forget these things" "You need to be very aware of them and allowing them to impact and influence your life, these are things you need to abide by." and As for our outline; 5 words to etch down in your margin, now bear in mind that the entire ch is sort of enveloped with the idea of things we aren't to forget. But #1 in vs 1-2 "The Reminder" a specific exhortation that we need not forget, #3 Vs 3-7 "The Reason" remember the reason that you're being reminded of these things. #3 In vs 8 "The Reiteration" as if being reminded wasn't emphatic enough, "Titus I want you to reiterate this constantly." # 4 Vs 9-11 we'll call, "The Rejecting" or if you want to keep it simple, the word in view here is "reject" those who won't heed these things are to be rejected following a protocol of church discipline. and Finally # 5 we'll just include the rest of the ch here, in vs 12-15, "The Responsibility" and we'll kind of zero in on vs 14 with that one.

Vs1-2

So for those of you who like to break a text apart into bite size pieces we see here in this exhortation 7 specific orders that we're to observe. But before we isolate those to any real degree we notice that he's to "Remind them", and the question is; remind who? and This is another one of those areas that I'm not sure why those who divided the ch breaks decided that this was a good spot for this one. Because in vs 15 of ch 2 you recall that Titus was to speak, and to exhort those things which make for sound doctrine, that in regards to such things (when necessary) he was to rebuke with all authority. and The last sentence there says, "Let no one despise you" and so in a narrow scope we could possibly apply this to those who would challenge Titus' ministry, remind them of their God given place, to be subject to those who are over them. But in a little bit broader scope this surely applies to all of us in that Paul was just giving instruction for the older man, the older woman, the young women, the young men, and the employee/employer relationship. Now we all fit into one or more (including possibly the employee/employer category) of those classifications. So that in essence Paul is saying, "Remind them" that is all of them of these 7 things listed here in vs 1 and 2.

In vs 1 we see 3 of the 7 and the way that I've broken it down is, #1 "Be subject", #2 "Be obedient", and #3 "Be ready."

#1 We're to be subject, that is "submitted" to rulers, and authorities, in other words, don't rebel against the government and obey the cops. and I think Romans 13 addresses this the most effectively so lets look quickly to Romans 13 (Vs 1-7). You remember when the Pharisees challenged Jesus regarding taxes, and Jesus said, "Hey, render to Caesar that which is Caesar's and to God that which is God's." and The debate wasn't over if the tax money was being used properly, it was simply this is the law, and so it doesn't ask you to compromise your Christianity so obey it. Now God created you, so render to God that which is God's, give Caesar his tax that's fine, but give to God your life. So submit yourself to the law, and obey those who are over you, now although he addresses church issues in a just a minute, this still includes spiritual authority just as much as it does physical authority. Heb 13:17 exhorts us, "*Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*" Try these vs on for size (though they may fit a little better over around vs 9-10 I think you'll get the point.) "*Now the man who acts presumptuously and will not heed the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear and fear, and no longer act presumptuously.*" Deut 17:12-13 Can you imagine what would happen if we practiced this in the church today? Most of us would be dead, but this is how serious God takes the necessity to respect authority, why, because He's the One who places that authority in our lives. and So rebellion against that authority is in reality rebellion against Him, we're to be subject to rulers and obedient to authority. and #3 "Ready for every good work", I want you to underline or somehow draw attention to those 2 words "good work," we're to be prepared to do the good and right thing in any given situation, everyone else is cheating on their time cards, you're to be honest. Everyone else is taking 40minute lunches, you're to stick to ½ hr, and we'll focus a bit more on this principal of good works as we progress.

#4 vs 2 "Speak evil of no one" and again notice the words "no one" not your Pastor, not your President, your boss, your husband, or your wife, or that individual who always gets on your nerves, man can you imagine the problems that would be solved if we as the body of Christ would simply obey this word? "Speak evil of no one" now on the contrary the bible says, "*I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.*" 1 Tim 2:1

What a different place this world would be if even we believers would speak evil of no one, but pray and intercede and give thanks for everyone. Now I think the rest of these are pretty clear, be peaceable, don't be a peace breaker, be a peacemaker, is the contribution you're making to the situation making for peace or breaking the peace? Be gentle, Jesus said, He was gentle and lowly of heart, we're to show humility to all men, if the Lord of all creation walked in humility and lowliness of heart, then how much more (if He being our Master exuded Himself in such a manner) should we? Vs 2 could be summed up, "Be quiet", "Be peaceable" "Be gentle" and "Be humble." Why, what's the reason?

Vs3-7

This is the reason that we're to be the way we're to be, and in reality if you really narrow it down we're to emulate our Lord, vs 1-2 are a simple exposition of the qualities readily found in Him. But one of the reasons that we're to be humble and peaceable and all towards the people that we're around, even the non-believer is because in reality we've been there ourselves, and Paul is saying, "Remember where you came from." Don't think that you're a cut above everyone else who doesn't know the Lord because but for the grace of God there goes everyone of us, and that very thought ought to tremendously humble you, and humble me, to think of where I've been and what I've done and yet God in His love and in His kindness, according to His tender mercies saved the likes of me and the likes of you. I know what I deserve, and if you're true to yourself you know what you deserve to, and it's not mercy, it's not forgiveness, it's judgment, and hell throughout all eternity due to my own wickedness and wretchedness, and sinfulness, but God has reached down through the person of Jesus Christ and snatched me out of the very pit, and saved me from such an end, how humbling is that?

But what we have in view here is the before and after concerning our lives as it pertains to Jesus Christ much like Paul shared in Eph ch 2, lets look at it together, Eph ch 2 (vs 1-10). So the before and after, and here we have the before and after as well, and at one time we were foolish, being disobedient to God, and deceived as to our own condition. We were slaves of sin serving various lusts and pleasures of the flesh, and our lifestyles were marked by malice, envy, (that lack of satisfaction with what we have, and desire to have that which we don't which others do, it follows real tight with covetousness). Envy is the motive that delivered Jesus to the cross, Matthew tells us of Pilate concerning Jesus, *"For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy."* Matt 27:18 So definitely an emotion not to entertain or mull over, but rather crucify it, because don't be deceived it's a dangerous position to be in. and Our lifestyles (all to variant degrees) were caved out in being hateful and hating one another, doesn't matter who I need to walk over to get where I need to be, or who gets hurt in the process, I'm in this thing for myself. Just miserable, hateful, and being hated, but aren't you glad for next vs, aren't you glad that God loved man in such a wicked and heinous state of heart? and In that while we were yet sinners God demonstrated His love for us through the death of His only Son Jesus Christ taking upon Himself the penalty of our sin so that we might be rescued from our own detriment, the position that we got ourselves into.

Vs4-7

When you read these vs what should be leaping out of the pages is the fact that every aspect of every detail of the salvation that's been given to you, that's been given to me is from God, and God alone. It's from the kindness of love of "God" not by any work of ours but according to "His" mercy, "He" saved us, "He" poured out the washing and renewing of the Holy Spirit upon us, that we might be justified by "His" grace.

Man it just doesn't get any clearer than that, there is nothing we can do to warrant God's attention, to say, "Hey, here I am, look at me, now that I've done *this* or been apart of *that* surely I can get into heaven now. I mean after all, I'm a pretty good guy, do right by people and all, surely that'll get me somewhere." Yeah, cast into the lake of fire where the smoke of your torment will ascend day and night forever and ever. Job 15:14 says, "*What is man, that he could be pure? And he who is born of a woman, that he could be righteous?*" David put it like this, "*Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.*" Ps 51:5

In other words you never stood a chance to enter into God's presence on your own because there was sin present upon your conception, passed on to you innately from Adam, and hence the problem, because it's sin that separates us from God, and no matter what you may do (works wise) that doesn't remedy the sin issue, and that's what God is dealing with. and People try and circumvent their sin nature by doing more good than bad and it's simply futile, because the presumption is that man is basically good and that eventually if given enough time he'll get it right. But the bible teaches that man is emphatically evil, and that the heart is desperately wicked and that if left to himself he'll self-destruct and only grow vehemently worse and worse until eventually he's completely corrupt and completely debased. and The wages of sin is death, not only physically, but spiritually, eternal separation from God, so you see from the very moment we're conceived we're prey to the wages of sin and there's nothing we can do about it.

"Well that's not fair, if there's nothing I can do about it then I shouldn't have to pay for it." Well than who should, God? "Yeah, He created us let Him pay for it." My friend that's the whole point of the gospel, God did pay for it, and if you'll allow Him, He'll be overjoyed to wipe out the debt you've accrued and stamp paid in full over your account. You see here we were in this wretched condition and yet still loved of God, and in due time the love and kindness of God our Savior appeared toward man in the helpless and hopeless state in the person of Jesus Christ and It wasn't by any work of righteousness of our own because they don't exist, but it was according to His mercy that He saved us. It was *His* work that saved us, the work of the cross, the shedding of His blood, the breaking of His body that by His stripes you might be healed. The only part God leaves up to you is to believe; you remember one day the people asked Jesus, "*What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?*" *Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."* John 6: 28-29

You see there is no work that you can do to save your soul; you can only believe in the work that Jesus has done on your behalf. It's according to His mercy that He saved us, believe me you don't want justice before God; you want mercy.

You remember the story that Jesus told about the 2 men who went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax collector, the Pharisee prayed with in himself, “God thanks that I’m not like this guy, or other extortioners or adulterers and all, I fast, I pray, and I pay tithes of everything I have.” But the tax collector wouldn’t even so much as raise his head and lift his eyes toward heaven, or come near to the temple, but standing afar off he just smote his chest and said, “God be *merciful* to me a sinner!” Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, that man went away justified, but the self-righteous Pharisee walked away in his sins.” You see God saves by grace, according to His *mercy*, “through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.” John ch 3, we’re talking here about being born again, receiving new life in Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart. *“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”* 2 Cor 5:17 and Notice (in vs 6) that the renewing of the Holy Spirit and the regeneration that takes place in your life via the Holy Spirit is poured out on you and on me in abundance. Everything God does seems to be with surplus, you cannot exhaust the resources of God, there’s more than enough forgiveness to go around for all who are willing to receive Jesus Christ and All that God has for you, and for me is wrapped up in Jesus, apart from Him there is nothing. The package deal comes to us in Christ, *“And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.”* 1 John 5:11-12

God has given us peace, and he who has the Son has peace, he who does not have the Son does not have peace, God’s given us love, and he who has the Son has love, God’s given us joy and he who has the son has joy, God’s given us forgiveness, he who has the Son has forgiveness. God’s given us righteousness, and he who has the Son has righteousness. Everything God has for you is found in Jesus, and apart from Jesus God has nothing for you, it’s all wrapped up in Him, God’s given us salvation, and he who has the Son has Salvation, Jesus Christ is our Savior.

Vs7

As you know justified means to you and me, “Just as if I’d never sinned at all” and again what’s the justifying agent of God, His grace, where do we receive grace? In Jesus, all my sins were placed upon Him and He paid for them upon the cross being crucified for my transgression and raised for my justification. and We couldn’t even begin to tap the enormous implications of that 5-lettered little word there, “Grace.” It’s God’s means of salvation, justification, sanctification and growth for the believer, and through this justification before God by grace we become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ Peter put it like this, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.”* 1 Peter 1:3-4

Vs8

You see catch the flow here, Paul is reminding us of the way we're to compose ourselves, being respectful and showing humility in our dealings with others knowing where we've been and from that which we've been rescued, not by anything we've done but by the work that Jesus has done upon the cross, for by grace you have been saved. and If grace is at the root, vs 8 is telling us then that good works will be the fruit. You see God isn't interested in what you do prior to His saving you; you don't have good works to offer because there's nothing good that dwells in you, that is in your flesh. But once you've given your heart to Christ, Paul is saying it's time to act like it.

John the Baptist would put it like this, "*Bear fruits worthy of repentance*" Matt 3:8 If you've given your heart to Christ don't just tell me about it, show me by the way you lead your life, you see grace through faith equals fruit. You show me your faith with out your works, and I'll show you my faith by my works because the fact is, faith with out works is dead. Now it might just as easily be understood that works with out faith are dead as well, because works aren't a substitute for faith, they're an expression of faith. My works don't save me, but they can testify to the reality that I'm saved, and this is what Titus is to constantly "reiterate" that if you truly believe in God then let your light so shine so that as men see your good works, you father in Heaven will be glorified. and Good works aren't limited to serving in the church though that's commendable, but anywhere and at anytime as we mentioned in vs 1 "Be ready for every good work."

Vs 9-11

Now Paul gives a few examples here, but the bottom line in vs 9 is reject foolish disputes, so many people want to engage you in foolish disputes and quite frankly there's just no time for them. "Where did Cain get his wife?" You know I'm always leery of someone who's interested in another man's wife anyway? Now God will go a long way to prove Himself to the honest skeptic, but foolish disputes are just that, unprofitable, and useless. and I have found that the high 90 percentile of foolish disputes are generally over someone wanting to either deny the Word of God, or twist the Word of God so as to justify sin in their life, so avoid those things. and As for the divisive individual, or maybe your bible says, "Heretic" or "factious man" we're to warn him once, and then admonish him again and after that reject him. We're talking here about self-willed individuals who refuse to submit themselves to those over them and give way to the Word of God.

John MacArthur makes this comment, "The factious person will not submit to the Word or to godly leaders in the church. He is a law to himself and has no concern for spiritual truth or unity. Although false teachers certainly are the most devastatingly factious, Paul is here casting a broader net, which includes *anyone* in the church who is divisive and disruptive. Because the consequences of insubordination, nonsubmission, and bickering can be so destructive of unity among the Lord's people, the apostle commands that a factious man, or woman, as the case may be, should be rejected by the church if they do not heed a first and second warning. The issues themselves may be trivial, but arguing about them is not."

So the leaders should seek to reason with them, and try even again, but after that the fruit is evident, they're self-willed and unwilling to submit, they're warped and sinning, and because they're self-willed, it follows that they're self-condemned. So "the rejecting" of the individual who's really not interested in doing things according to godly standards, but just wants things their own way.

Vs12-15

Vs14, our "responsibility", and notice again the emphasis on works, good works, good works, good works, 3 times brought up in this ch alone. How is it that your profession of faith is demonstrated practically? Maintaining good works, and meeting urgent needs, these things motivated by the love of God are not only our responsibility as believers, but to a very real degree they're the fruit of your faith. and Jesus said, *"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."* John 15:8

Maybe you're here today and you've never given your life to Jesus Christ you're leading a life of disobedience to God, and have been deceived as to your position before Him. But today God has opened your eyes and revealed Himself to you, and He's let you know that He doesn't want you to do anything for Him to gain His favor. He wants to give you His favor, life, peace, joy, forgiveness and righteousness, but these things are only found in His Son. and Today He wants to wash you, to give you new life, according to His mercy He wants to save you, and justify you by His grace, but you've got to open your heart and receive Jesus Christ to repent of your sin and surrender your life to Him.