

Titus 3

“The true Christian is the true citizen, lofty of purpose, resolute in endeavor, ready for a hero's deeds, but never looking down on his task because it is cast in the day of small things; scornful of baseness, awake to his own duties as well as to his rights, following the higher law with reverence, and in this world doing all that in his power lies, so that when death comes he may feel that mankind is in some degree better because he lived.” Theodore Roosevelt

Read verses 1 – 2

1. Paul starts this chapter telling Titus to remind the people to be obedient “*to rulers and authorities*”. If Paul had expounded on this thought, he would have brought up that this earth is not your home. In Hebrews 13:14 (NLT), Paul wrote, *"For this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come."* Keep in mind that Paul believed that Jesus' return was eminent.
2. By subjecting yourself to “*rulers and authorities*”, you would have had less trouble in your life. Being rebellious would have brought you beatings, imprisonment and possibly death. Civil obedience was not something that Paul had not taught about. In Romans 13:1-7, Paul says the same thing. We should subject ourselves because God has put these people in charge for His purposes. He says that if you rebel against them, then you are rebelling against God.
3. Peter taught the same thing. In 1 Peter 2:13-17, Peter covers the same topic and tells believers to “submit yourselves to human rulers”. In verse 14, Peter says, *“For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.”* He says that God is punishing the Israelites through the treatment by these rulers. If you look at the history of the Israel from the exiles to the Roman rule of Paul’s day, they were being punished for not being obedient to God.
4. In verse 2, Paul tells us how to treat others regardless of whether they are Christian or not. He says, “*to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate,*

and always to be gentle toward everyone.” This behavior is contrary to what you see on the highways in the U.S.

Read verses 3 – 8

“He urged us to recall our past alienation from God and our disobedience and then to remember that our righteousness comes from God's mercy and grace. Our goodness is not self-generated. Purchased by Christ, it is empowered by the Holy Spirit.” (Holman)

5. In verse 3, Paul reminds us all Christians that before we were saved we were enemies of God. Paul says this in Romans 5:10, *“For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!”* We were lost sheep and now we have salvation through Jesus Christ.
6. Paul goes into more detail explaining what we were like before Jesus came into our lives. He says, we were *“foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures.”* We are sinners saved by grace. I often think of the Hebrew nation in the wilderness. God made them wander around in the desert for 40 years because they were disobedient. When you think about it, we would and do have behave exactly the same way. God tells us that He has great things for us and then we get caught up with the “when” or we lose focus on God and ignore Him completely.
7. When I read these verses, I think of the end of the Love Chapter. 1 Corinthians 13:11 says, *“When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.”* In these verses, the childish behavior is “*At one time.*” Paul takes away the age limit of acting foolish, being disobedient and being self-absorbed. In the 70’s, the Hippie motto was, “If it feels good do it.” Some people spend a lifetime with this attitude.
8. In the second half of verse 3, Paul says that before we asked Jesus to come into our lives, *“We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.”* I have met nonbelievers that are not this way but I have known many that do

have these attributes. Without Christ, we tend to focus on ourselves. I think of children arguing over a toy. Both children are screaming “Mine, mine!” As humans we have something inside us pushing us to self-preservation, self-absorption and survival of the fittest mentality. Jesus knew it. Why do you think He said the second most important commandment was to love others as ourselves.

9. This all changed when we brought Jesus into our hearts. He changed us from a self-absorbed individual to a faithful loving Christian. As Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:17, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”*

“Remembering this work of God builds four things in us.

- First, gratitude for how God changed us.
 - Second, humility as we see that it was His work that changed us.
 - Third, kindness to others in the same place.
 - Finally, faith that God can change those who are still in that place.” (Guzik)
10. The great thing about this is that God will continue to work to transform you into the image of Jesus until you are just like Jesus. Philippians 1:6 tells us so, *“being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”*
 11. Verses 4 and 5 says, *“But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us”*. It is not because we deserved it. It is not because we earned it. It is because of who He is. Lamentations 3:22-23 says, *“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”*
 12. When I read the story of the exodus from Egypt, I am amazed that He did not wipe them out. Psalm 103:8 says, *“The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.”* In the midst of God’s 400 years of silence after Malachi, He sent His only begotten Son as a Savior for the world. Again, not because they deserved it but because He is merciful.

13. Verse 5b says, “*He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.*” (NLT) The NIV says, “*He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*” John the Baptist said that Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit. If we look at the change that occurred in Jesus’ disciples when the Holy Spirit came upon them, it was truly a “*rebirth and renewal.*” They began to speak boldly.
14. “Acts 1:8 says, “*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*” This is the Holy Spirit coming into you which is a life changing influence. Where does the power come from because it was not there before you accepted Jesus? It comes from God through the Holy Spirit living in you.
15. Verse 7 says that we are justified. We are made clean “just as if I’d never sinned” through the grace of God which we get because we have faith in who Jesus is and what He did for us, His work on the cross. It is all about Him and not about me. When God looks at me, He sees Jesus, my savior all because of His grace poured out through Jesus Christ.
16. Here we are again. It always comes back to John 3:16. God sent His Son so that whosoever believes in Him will have everlasting life. In verse 7, Paul says that we are heirs and our inheritance is eternal life. Again, it is not because we deserve it, it is because of grace through faith. It would take a perfect life lived with no sin, obeying all 10 commandments perfectly with no slip-ups in action or in thought to earn your way into Heaven.
17. In verse 8, Paul tells us why God saved us. Paul says that God saved us so we can do good. The salvation doesn’t come from doing good, it what God expects from us as His children. He saved us because He is merciful and full of grace. We in turn are to do good. The doing good does not benefit us at all. We are not saved because we are good, we are saved to do good, God’s idea of good and not ours.

Guzik says, “Our salvation isn’t based on any works of righteousness which we have done. In and of itself, response to an altar call does not save. Saying the sinner’s prayer does not save. Baptism does not save. Church attendance does not save. Giving does not save. Reading the Bible does not save. Each of these may be

wonderful works of righteousness, but they do not save us. Instead, according to His mercy **He saved us.**

18. Ephesians 2:8 and 9 says it so perfectly. *“8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.”* As Pastor Brian has said numerous times, “Preaching won’t save you. Singing in the choir won’t save you. Being a deacon won’t save you.” It is not what we do but what He has done for us.
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Read verses 9 – 11

20. In verse 9, Paul says, “Don’t get pulled into disagreements about the Law because these arguments are useless or not beneficial.” In Paul’s day, there were Jews around every corner. These Jews as we said previously wanted to make salvation about the Law. They wanted Christians to go through circumcision or be forced to adopt Judaism for salvation.
21. In verse 10, Paul says, “If they want to argue the Law, warn them twice, don’t get drawn in, then just move on.” Even for Paul, who was a Jew’s Jew, it was difficult to convince the Jews that salvation comes by God’s grace and not by works or keeping the Law. Even the Christian counsel in Jerusalem at that time made it about works or being “good”. (Acts 15:29)
22. In verse 11, Paul gives the state of men willing to argue the Law. He says that they are “warped and sinful”. He says that they are “self-condemned.” Interesting how man cannot save himself but he can easily condemn himself. Salvation by works means that you have a stake in your own salvation. It means that you have to follow these 10 steps to get into Heaven. Again, our salvation is all about Him and not about us. Not to the point of Calvinism which says that God chooses whether or not you are saved. Your salvation is still open to your freewill.

Read verses 12 – 15

23. My NIV Bible calls this section “Final Remarks”. Paul is closing the letter to Titus. This letter does not have nearly as much detail as the letters to Timothy but I believe that Titus had access to those letters too.

24. Paul does what he has done in many of his letters. He handles the planning and logistics of ministry. He tells Titus where to meet him so Paul can teach him more. He says, “I will be wintering in Nicopolis so come meet with me there.” A Wiki page on Nicopolis says that “historical and biblical evidence strongly suggests the Apostle Paul went to Nicopolis in the winter of 65–66 AD.
25. Paul says that he is sending Artemas or Tychicus to Titus provide him with help or even possibly temporary replacements in the ministry on the island of Crete.
26. In verse 13, Paul tells Titus to provide Zenas the lawyer and Apollos with meeting their physical needs as they travel through Crete. It was not unusual for the early churches to provide financial support or a place to stay during their travels.
27. In verse 14, Paul gives one more reminder that as Christians we all are to do “good”. Being good is not a prerequisite of salvation but is a result of loving God and being obedient to Him. There is nothing worse in Paul’s eyes than being an unproductive Christian. James 2:14-26 tells us that faith without works is dead. However, we don’t all do that same jobs. In this case, just meeting the physical needs of missionaries like Zenas and Apollos is a good work. We are not all called to be the missionaries.
28. In some of the final verses of the letters, Paul goes into great detail on who is with him. But in this letter to Titus, he just says, “*Everyone with me sends you greetings. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.*”

“The closing benediction harmonizes with the opening salutation. It is a benediction of grace, the only difference being that whereas at the beginning it was addressed to Titus, at the close all those to whom he ministered were included.”
(Morgan)