

## REMINDER IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

---

### Titus 2:11-3:11

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. 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, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 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. These things are good and profitable to men. But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.

---

This epistle, or letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to Titus, is what is called a pastoral epistle. There are only three such epistles in the New Testament. Titus being one and then the other two pastoral epistles are 1 & 2 Timothy. Paul addressed both Timothy and Titus as sons in the faith yet Titus, as well as Timothy, were not new-born believers that needed a basic understanding of the faith that is in Christ Jesus. In fact, in 1:3 Paul makes mention that Titus was left on the island of Crete, which is south east of Greece in the Mediterranean Sea by the way, and his responsibility was to establish elders, or what we'd call pastors today, in all of the cities. He was a pastor of pastors. Yet nevertheless, even though Titus was certainly qualified for the task and considered trustworthy in his responsibilities, Paul still sent him a letter to "remind" him of what to be aware of as well as what to "remind" others in the church.

Our faith that we are called into, in Christ Jesus, is not a stagnant and lifeless calling of which we are called to just believe and then let it be. We know, from Scripture, that the Word of God is living and active (or powerful) (**Hebrews 4:12**) and that the Word of God is in Christ-"In the beginning was the Word [Jesus], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." (**John 1:1-3**) "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (**John 1:14**), and just as Jesus said to Philip, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." (**John 14:9**), It is then in Christ Jesus of whom we believe on and THEN receive Him into our hearts-"But as many as received Him [Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." (**John 1:12**) The Holy Spirit, also called the Spirit of Christ (**1 Peter 1:11**) then begins working in us, making us into the very image of Christ, in His Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption. (**1 Corinthians 1:30**)

Really, just as we can see how the people of the world operate in a certain way or flow, the people of God, the children of God, are called to a different path. We're like a salmon swimming upstream while the rest of the world is swimming downstream. Jesus warned His followers, "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." (**Matthew 7:13-14**) Let that not discourage you. There is a whole community of people out there that does not know and does not follow or serve God but Jesus assures us, "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life," (**1 John 5:12**) and as Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (**John 14:6**) That life that Jesus speaks of is THE life that God has purposed for us, THE abundant life, of which is an eternal life, and that includes today, for those who put their trust in Christ Jesus.

That for some or most of you is what would be considered a reminder, a rehearsing of the workings of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. I know that the more I rehearse all of that, the easier it becomes for me to share it with others. The same goes with knowing where those passages of Scripture are, so that you can show someone or have them read it for themselves. With all of that said, we see that Christianity, that is the believing and receiving of Christ, is like no other religion in that God is our Righteousness and that in Christ Jesus we are reconciled to God and that it is a personal relationship with God when we receive Christ into our hearts as Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." (**John 14:23**)

That is what each and every one of us were born for on this earth, that we were made for His purpose and pleasure and that we would be His for all of eternity, and oh how He is "longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

As we looked at last week, as Christ Jesus has reconciled us to God, he has also given us the ministry of reconciliation. We are ambassadors for Christ. That is where we get the honor and privilege of sharing the love and good news or the gospel of Jesus Christ. What we also come to realize is that praying for others plays a huge role in that. **We get to be part of God's building of His eternal kingdom.** And as Jesus is recorded as saying "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works." (Matthew 16:27) For those who have yet to put their trust in Jesus, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2) There is no guarantee of tomorrow, so, I implore you, turn to the Lord and be reconciled to God today. While *carpe diem*, is translated as "seize the day", it implies for one to seize the present moment for your own satisfaction, we are being called by God to right now, as the offer is right before you, to seize the gift of God in Christ Jesus [to cling to God] for He is our life. Even for a seasoned Christian, that call is before us each moment of every day. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6) Are you going to follow God's way or your way?

So let's go to our passage of Scripture in Titus. After Paul's greeting, he goes through the qualifications for being a church elder, those called a bishop, and then tells Titus what to say to the older men and women, and to the younger men and then the bondservants. That gets us to the passage of Scripture we'll look at today beginning at chapter 2 verse 11. "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men." Who is this God that you speak of, someone may ask you. After all, every religion has their own god, even the religions that make one's self their own god. But there is but one God who, in the beginning, created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1) There is but one God that it is said of Him, "The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein." (Psalm 24:1) There is but one God that it can be said, "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus [doesn't that sound like what we can experience together when we worship in Spirit and Truth, or when we fellowship together in Christ Jesus?], that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ

Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (**Ephesians 2:4-10**) What that should say to each of us is that, each and every person that has been born into this world has been given this life for God's eternal purpose and that it had to be God who would do the work in reconciling us back to Himself. And then it is not by works we are saved, for we are saved by the wonderful grace of God in Jesus Christ, but we will be rewarded for our works. What that says to me is that we will be rewarded for our obedience to the Holy Spirit that works in us since Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (**John 15:5**)

That grace of God, which is the undeserved favor from God, is explained in 3:4-7, "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, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life." The kindness and love of **God, our Savior** speaks of Christ being fully human, but also fully God. It also tells us that God loves each and every one of us much more than we can possibly imagine. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (**John 3:16-17**) Where it says we are "heirs according to the hope of eternal life" it is saying, in Christ we are guaranteed eternal life AND we are heirs to the kingdom of God. The Apostle Paul explained that we will be joint-heirs with Jesus (**Romans 8:17**) "Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen 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**)

Another issue at stake, of what we are to be reminded of is in what Jesus said, that "The thief [who is Satan, the devil, the enemy of our souls] does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." (**John 10:10**) Jesus also said the devil is a liar and the father of all lies. (**John 8:44**) And the Apostle Paul tells us, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (**Ephesians 6:12**) what that means is that we ARE in a spiritual battle and that there are two paths we can follow, towards that abundant life in Christ Jesus or in the lies of Satan that leads

to death. We know then, that just as we are in a spiritual battle, so are those around us. We are to remind ourselves and others though that Jesus is our exceedingly great reward (**Genesis 15:1**) [and He is heir to all of God's kingdom, so then we will be joint-heirs with Jesus, as we are IN CHRIST]. Also we are to be reminded that "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (**1 John 4:4**) Jesus assures us of this, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (**John 16:33**)

"As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God." (**Romans 3:10-11**) "For all have sinned [against God] and fall short of the glory of God." (**Romans 3:23**) Sin separates us from God but Jesus reconciles us to God. Jesus calls us to repentance to have a new perspective, and a new way of life, looking unto Jesus, and in our passage of Scripture God is telling us and reminding us, that the Holy Spirit and His Word is "teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority." That is the abiding in Christ that Jesus speaks of in John 15, to where He says, once again, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." We are His own special people! "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy." (**1 Peter 2:9-10**)

Receiving Christ is a covenant between us and God to where we are committing to live for God and give up the living in ungodliness and worldly lusts and living soberly. The Apostle Paul explained, we are to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive in Christ, living for God and not for our own lustful pleasures, "For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

(Romans 6:5-11) That is what Jesus said is being born-again or being born of the Spirit. We are committing to having God work in us His ways, and we are no longer following our own ways that are contrary to His character. The world is always going to be calling you back, with drinking, drugs, lusts of the flesh, seizing the day for your own pleasures, but God is telling us to abide in Christ, let Him work in you as He is preparing us for His eternal kingdom. This is His testing ground, who wants to live eternally in His Righteousness and in His glory?

"Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." That all can be summed up in what Jesus said is the greatest commandment, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31) That goes for all men and women. Our nations leaders, local authorities, and those who are just considered common people. That doesn't mean we have to agree with them or that we should even be around some of them. "But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned." We have been called to love God and love our neighbors. Sometimes the best way we can love someone is to just be praying for them. If everytime you talk to someone they try and entangle you in disputes, contention, or anything that is not edifying to your soul, then the best thing that you can do for them is to politely move on and then to pray for them. If someone is consistently drunk or on drugs it is most of the time impossible to talk with them beyond just being pleasant with them. But you can be praying for them. God desires for none to perish, we should always have the hope that God will lead someone to repentance, or deliverance, or a healing, that may be physical, mental, or spiritual. With God all things are possible.

"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." We are not doing good works for our salvation or to please God. We do good works in obedience to God, as God is working in us to bear fruit for His eternal kingdom and for His glory. Once again, Jesus is telling us, "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to

his work." (**Revelation 22:12**) We are NOT guaranteed tomorrow, for tomorrow we may be standing before Him, giving an account for what we have allowed Him to do in us. What greater blessing can we have than to stand before our precious Lord and Savior and have something to offer Him of what He has done in us. That is where it has been said by others, that as He gives us a crown of glory so that we can cast our crowns before Him. I hope you are looking forward to and hoping as much as I am for Jesus to say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." (**Matthew 25:21**)

Heavenly Father,  
I confess that I have sinned against You.  
I ask that You forgive me of my sins.  
I believe that Jesus  
died on the cross for my sins,  
I confess with my mouth  
that Jesus is my Lord,  
and I believe in my heart  
that You raised Jesus from the dead,  
so that I can have forgiveness of sins,  
and be reconciled to You,  
God, My Father.  
I now commit to You,  
that I will repent of my sins,  
and live in the newness of life,  
being led by Your Holy Spirit,  
all this I pray,  
in Christ Jesus,  
my Savior and Lord.  
Thank You Lord!