

## “When Love Appeared”

### Introduction

Last week we examined a portion of Paul’s letter to a young pastor named Titus.

Titus was a Gentile convert of Paul who served with him on many of his journeys.

Paul left Titus in Crete to establish the churches in that area. Paul encouraged Titus to remind Christians concerning the expected behavior of anyone claiming to be a follower of Jesus Christ. We are to live differently because we are different.

*This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men. Titus 3:8*

Paul instructed Titus to educate various groups in the church to “adorn” the gospel message by the way they lived. Live lives draw attention to the message. Paul told Titus to teach people to live differently “FOR” “because” ... Our passage begins with the word “for” alerting us to a reason why we should live differently.

Why should we live differently? Paul told them to live differently BECAUSE God’s grace appeared. God fully illuminated His favor through the coming of Jesus Christ.

*The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14  
For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. John 1:17*

Threat of punishment may bring about reluctant conformity to a standard.

Grace motivates willing conformity out of gratitude. Live differently because we are different through the favor (grace) of God. God’s grace made salvation possible.

*by the works of the Law NO flesh will be justified in God's sight... Romans 3:20*

God’s favor brought salvation. God’s favor continually instructs us about living differently. Here, Paul affirmed that God’s grace teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age.

Titus included additional motivation besides the appearance of God’s grace. He urged them to live differently by reflecting on the blessed hope and appearing of Jesus in all His glory. He also urged them to live differently by remembering the great sacrifice that redeemed us from every lawless deed and purifies us as a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

Paul continued this line of exhortation in the very next section of his letter.

*Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men. Titus 3:1-8*

Paul’s argument again centers on the idea that we must live different because we ARE different. Titus chapter three unfolds something like this...

**Adopt a new way of living (with some specifics)**

The last specific has to do with showing consideration to all people. The way we do that is to remember what we were like and what God did for us.

**Remember the old foolish way of living**  
**Remember the loving intervention of God**  
**Continually live differently today.**

## I. Adopt a new way of living

*Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.*

In addition to the life changes urged previously, Paul added several more. He told Titus to constantly remind them of these things. The term means “To put into the mind, bring to remembrance, suggest to the memory”. We are forgetful people. We need to be reminded. That is why the writer of Hebrews told Christians...

*Encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Heb 3:13*

He included exhortation concerning our response to authority.

**Continually be subject and obedient to rulers and authorities.**

Paul used two words connected to our responsibility to authority. “Be subject” is a word meaning to place yourself under, submit to, be in subjection. “Obey” actively obey or conform to those in authority.

Who are we to obey and put ourselves under? “Rulers and authorities.” Paul used these terms to specify all levels of government. The people of Crete were notoriously turbulent and quarrelsome and impatient of all authority. Polybius, the Greek historian, said of them that they were constantly involved in *“insurrections, murders and internecine (domestic, internal) wars.” Barclay’s Daily Study Bible (NT).*

Both Paul and Peter challenged Christians to respect and submit to earthly government authority; to be good citizens. Remember that these were the same governments that crucified their Lord and eventually killed them.

*Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Romans 13:1*

*Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. 1 Peter 2:13-14*

Peter included a reason to live in subjection to authority.

*For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. 1 Peter 2:15*

Paul called government a “minister of God for good”. This topic deserves further discussion but it is not the focus of my message today.

**Continually be ready for every good work.**

“ready” means to be prepared, fit, adjusted. “good” refers to that which is beneficial

“work” = toil, labor, deed. The exhortation is to always be on the lookout for how we can benefit others, do good. What can we do to further the kingdom?

*“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 5:16*

Our enthusiasm for actively serving God causes people to think about God. The previous chapter indicated that we were redeemed to be a people fervent for good works. What does your attitude toward kingdom work tell others about your commitment to God?

*We proclaim Christ, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me. Colossians 1:28-29*

### **Continually treat others well.**

The common thought in the next three life admonitions has to do with how we treat others.

#### **1. Speak evil of no one**

Paul used the term “blasphēmēō” from which we get our English word “blaspheme”. This word conveys the idea of speaking evil about someone for the purpose of injury. It covers any speech that causes harm to others. Paul insisted on just the opposite.

*Let NO unwholesome (rotten or corrupt) word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Ephesians 4:29*

#### **2. Don't be contentious**

Many translations take the positive side but the actual word used is “not a brawler”. There are some who immediately argue or debate or get into a confrontation. Later in this passage, Paul told them to avoid contentious people.

*Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned. 3:10*

On the positive side Paul encourages them to be gentle.

#### **3. Be gentle**

The word means to be mild, patient, moderate. This speaks of a controlled attitude or manner toward others.

*The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, 2 Timothy 2:24-25*

He also includes the proper action with the attitude.

### **“Showing meekness or consideration to ALL”**

Our general demeanor and action toward others must be gentleness and consideration. We can't pick and choose who we treat this way; it is to ALL people.

The next verse provides a motivation or thought process by that enables us to do this. Basically, by remembering that we ourselves used to act contrary to God's ways.

### **II. Remember the old way of living**

*For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. Titus 3:3*

The rebellious heart is full of self-serving attitudes and actions. We should not be so quick to judge others. We are better able to relate to them with gentleness realizing that we used to be that way. We need to also remember that God had mercy on us as we should on others.

### **III. Remember the loving intervention of God in our life.**

*But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us*

When the kindness and love of God came down in the person of Jesus Christ, He SAVED US! When grace appeared He saved us! When kindness and love appeared He saved us! There are so many passages that recount our miserable condition before revealing our miraculous conversion by the grace of God.

On what basis did God demonstrate this overwhelming kindness and love?

*He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, Titus 3:5*

It had nothing to do with anything we ever did. It flowed out of His heart of infinite mercy and love.

Paul clearly spoke of unearned salvation in his second letter to Timothy another pastor.

*God saved us and called us with a holy calling, NOT according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel... 2 Timothy 1:9-10*

Of course Paul's letter to the Ephesians equally asserts this same truth.

*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that NOT of yourselves, it is the gift of God; NOT as a result of works, so that no one may boast. Ephesians 2:8-9*

Because of that mercy, God effected a supernatural change in the core of our being. Not only did God do a work FOR us but He does a work IN us. God "washed" us. The last chapter referred to this "purification" by the sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf. God gave us a cleansing bath from the old way of life. Jesus "cleanses" us through the word. We are transformed by the renewing of our mind. Jesus' cleansing ministry was illustrated when He washed the disciple's feet (John 13). Jesus differentiated between a thorough cleansing bath and the necessity to occasionally wash our feet. He affirmed that His disciples (minus Judas) were already cleansed through relationship with Him and now only needed regular foot washing from daily life in a broken world.

Paul used two great words to describe this phenomenal change. Both refer to a life transforming act of God. Both indicate a fundamental change at the core of our being. Salvation comes about through a core change.

### **"regeneration" / "Renewing"**

Salvation involves a new birth. Salvation involves a transformation.

*If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, he (the one in Christ) has become (and still is) NEW. 2 Corinthians 5:17*

The agent of this fundamental change? The Holy Spirit! God richly or generously "poured" out the Holy Spirit into our life to convey new life. The Holy Spirit is the agent of the new birth as Jesus explained to Nicodemus in John 3.

What a contrast to the "pouring out" of God's wrath on those without Christ.

*"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." John 3:36*

Because of Jesus, we receive the Spirit of life instead of death.

*It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. Joel 2:28*

*He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. John 7:38-39*

So when God demonstrated his love and kindness through His son Jesus, He saved us.

*God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8*

That salvation has nothing to do with anything we did or would do. That salvation comes about on the basis of God's pure mercy. Salvation comes about by a cleansing work of the Holy Spirit who renews and regenerates us. God abundantly and fully provided the Holy Spirit to us. All this "so that"... (When you see a "so that" it points to an ultimate purpose.) It is usually translated "so that" or "in order that". It indicates the next step in a

sequence or result. "I stopped for gas "so that" I could finish my trip." "I put on gloves so that I would not cut up my hands." God saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit **so that...**

*we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life having been justified by His grace. Titus 3:7*

God saved us to bring us into His family and give us an inheritance of eternal life. This future inheritance provides the confidence and assurance we need to survive in this dark world. We could never qualify without an essential heart change.

*...giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. Colossians 1:12*

Nothing we could do would qualify us. Our qualification comes from God. Again we come across the reference to God's promise of future blessing to encourage perseverance in the present. God desires meaningful relationship with us. He didn't save us to send us to some paradise free of pain and suffering. He saved us to reconcile us to Himself and have unimpeded relationship for eternity. The core of the gospel message is reconciliation with a God that we fatally offended. The motivation to trust Jesus must not be just to escape hell or enjoy heaven. The motivation to trust Jesus has to do with joyous reconciliation with God.

*Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18-19*

God had to bring about a fundamental change in the core of our being in order to bring about that reconciliation.

*God made Jesus, who knew no sin, to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

Having been justified we become heirs of the eternal life of Jesus.

*As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. John 3:14-17*

Paul reinforced his theme to, "Live different because you are different."

#### **IV. Continually live differently today.**

*This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently (strongly affirm), so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men. Titus 3:8*

Paul instructed Titus to confidently preach and teach these truths "so that"... There is another indicator of the next step in a sequence or a cause effect. The effect of preaching and teaching the things found in Titus is that all true followers of Jesus Christ; those who claim to be Christians will actually live that way. Paul wanted those who had put their trust in God to give careful thought to continually engage in good works. A life engaged in kingdom works is what God created for us.

*We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would live in them.*

*Ephesians 2:10*

Think about your life. When God's love and kindness appeared in Christ He saved you! He saved you to engage in kingdom work until you come into your eternal inheritance of life everlasting in meaningful relationship with God and each other. Get to work!!!! Adjust your schedule. Rearrange your priorities. Carve out time. Eliminate the clutter.

*No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. 2 Tim 2:4  
Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Hebrews 12:1-3*