

# TITUS

## Chapter Three

In Titus chapter one, Paul gave Titus directions about doctrine and duty in the church. In Titus chapter two, Paul gave Titus directions about doctrine and duty in the home. Now in chapter three, Paul moves on to doctrine and duty in the world.

Paul moves from the inner circles of our closest contacts—church and home—to our outer circle of secular society.

Paul begins this chapter much like the others. He begins with ethical instruction and then moves on to doctrine and the “why” Christians should do what they do.

Christians must be ready for good works. Ephesians 2:10 says we are created in Christ Jesus for good works. Good works flow from those who are saved. The order is important! Good works do not save us, but salvation drives us to do good. Paul provides seven commands in these first three verses.

**The first two verses of Titus chapter three** deal with Christians in public life. Specifically, Paul first addresses the need for submission to the authorities and then to consideration for everybody.

In verse one, Paul starts out with “Remind the people...”. This means this teaching has already taken place at some point and simply needs to be reinforced and/or brought to mind again. It is always good for us to have teachable spirits and to receive correction and direction. We often need to be reminded of things so we can stay on task...especially if things

appear to be going sideways. Scripture warns us over and over about the dangers and pitfalls of forgetfulness.

Teachers, what we should do the least is search for ways to be original in our teaching. Scripture is Truth and as such, our goal is to simply teach old truths.

**Verse one** – Christians should be submissive to rulers and authorities. As Paul mentioned in Romans 13, Christians should remember that it is God who puts rulers in charge and removes those in charge. Just because we are Christians (and just because these new believers in Crete were new Christians), we should not disrespect the rulers in charge of us.

**“Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. The authorities are God’s servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God’s servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience.**

**Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority.” (Romans 13:1–7)**

The Cretans' character was turbulent. The Cretans had been taken over by Rome in 67 BC and since that time, been unsettled under Roman rule. Paul had likewise told Timothy to encourage believers to pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1) and now he was encouraging Titus to encourage the believers to obey the rulers and authorities.

However, note, there is a difference between unconditional allegiance to a state and obedience to the rulers and authorities. To give total allegiance to a state would reverse the order of whom we should honor and respect first. We must first give all honor and allegiance to God. Then our obedience and respect from that overflow. Once we realize who is the supreme being in charge, we will acknowledge His sovereignty in all things. When we respect rulers and authorities, we are first showing our allegiance and respect to God.

However, even though we are called to respect authorities, when what they are doing or asking us to do comes into misalignment with what God says to do, our allegiance to God must always come first...even at the risk of death (such is the case with persecuted Christians and/or rulers asking people to recant their faith). As Peter said in Acts 5:29, we must always obey God rather than men.

Christians should not only be law-abiding, Christians should also be public-spirited. Christians need to be ready (eager and not reluctant) to do whatever is good, whenever we have the opportunity. Christians should be the ones leading the charge in good will in our societies. Paul says the state has the double duty to punish evil and do good (Romans 13:4). When the state is solely pushing evil, Christians must do even more good...to help all those in need regardless of whether they are Christians or not. When we help all, we can reach all with the Gospel. This leads us to verse two.

**In verse two**, Paul doesn't limit the Christian's reach to only those within the church. He uses the words "no one" and "everyone" as it relates to society at large.

Paul reminds Titus to remind people not to talk bad about anyone nor should Christians stir up strife among people. Christians are to avoid quarrels.

Paul also reminds Titus to remind Christians to be kind, considerate, and humble toward all people. To be gentle, humble, courtesy, considerate, and meek is to be like Jesus. Show all gentleness to all men. If Jesus did it, so should all Christians.

In verses three to eight, Paul explains why Christians can have a social conscience and to behave responsibly in public life. In these verses, Paul spells out the ingredients of salvation. Salvation is what changes and motivates a Christian because **He saved us** (verse 5).

### **Application for today:**

When you say, "**because He saved me,**" what comes next in your statement? Does your life look different because He saved you? What about your actions, the way you treat others, speak to others?

In the middle of the chapter (**verses three to eight**), Paul again hammers home why Christians do what they do and how they can do it all (or should do it all). Paul isolates six ingredients of salvation:

1. Its need – why it is necessary
2. Its source – where it originates
3. Its grounds – what it rests on
4. Its means – how it comes to us
5. Its goal – what it leads to

## 6. Its evidence – how it proves itself

### 1. Its Need

In verse three, Paul reminds Christians of what they looked like outside of a saving relationship with Jesus. He also points out to non-believers reading these words what their sin is doing to separate them from a holy God. If our Christian lives contain any of what Paul mentions in verse three as what our lives looked like before salvation, we should pause right there and reflect (and perhaps repent) of sinful attitudes.

Disobedience leads us to separation from the Father. Enslaved represents us being yoked to the sins of the world and trapped with the one who seeks to kill and destroy us (Satan). Lacking true love leads people to live with envy and malice. Christians should be encouraging to others around them. We shouldn't be haters.

**“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:24–25)**

The kind of people Christians should be should look completely different from the way we were before salvation. It is a contrast between submissiveness and foolishness, obedience and disobedience, a readiness to do good and an enslavement by evil, kindness and peaceableness on one hand and malice and envy on the other, humility and gentles and hateful and hating.

### 2. Its Source

We cannot save ourselves. New Age philosophy will tell us we can, but we can't. In verse three, Paul spoke of our depravity but in verse four he

turns to “God our Savior.” In depravity, we are hateful and disobedient but because of His love, we can be saved from it all. Salvation originated in the heart of God out of His kindness, love, mercy, and his grace for all mankind.

### **3. Its Grounds**

God’s mercy, not our righteousness, is the grounds for our salvation. This was opposite of what some of the false teachers were saying as they tried to interweave the Law with the Gospel. His love was revealed through the person of Jesus.

### **4. Its Means**

He washed away our sins through the sacrifice of His son (Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection). He washes our sins as white as snow (Isaiah 1:18). The Father draws people to Himself through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said in John 3:5–8:

**Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”**

### **5. Its Goal**

Those whom God has justified and regenerated will become heirs because He saved us for this purpose. “We are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17). We are assured that one day we will receive our full inheritance in heaven (eternal life), and unlimited fellowship with God. In this life, we live with this secured hope.

Paul says this is “trustworthy” just as he does a total of five times in the Pastoral letters. This is the only “trustworthy” saying in Titus.

## **6. Its evidence**

Although Paul seems to end here on the hope Christians have, he doesn't leave it there. Paul never leaves it at “us” because Jesus never left it at “us.” Just as Jesus said to love God (that represents our hope in salvation and whom we should submit to), He also said to love others. We can't be one-sided Christians solely concerned with our salvation and experience. We must also show love to others. Our good works are evidence of our salvation. We do what we do because we love God and simply cannot get over the fact that He loved us so much to forgive us and give us a hope and a future. Our works flow from the overflow of our salvation.

Good works is a major topic of the Pastoral Letters. As Paul was encouraging the early church through Timothy and Titus, good works and correct doctrine take center stage. A healthy church can't exist without sound doctrine and good works. If only sound doctrine is being taught but the people aren't motivated to good works, the impact of the Church is short-sighted. Good works counteract false teachers (because false teachers weren't promoting good works) and help draw others to the Christian life.

The expression “good works” occurs fourteen times in the Pastoral Letters.

In the final verses of this chapter, Paul provides some final, more personal messages, to Titus involving requests or instructions to do something.

Just like he did with Timothy, Paul encouraged Titus to stay above reproach. He reminded Titus to avoid foolish controversies and genealogies. These are senseless things that take up time. It also alerts Christians that we all need to be careful not to get caught up in the things of this world. We can't think we won't. If we are in it day and day out, there is a danger of it getting stuck on us if we are not careful. The genealogies were what the false teachers in Ephesus were stuck on, too. They would elaborate on stories and/or require things that just weren't true and were the Gospel plus something. "Don't major on the minors."

Paul gives permission to Titus to handle divisive people. This word is later translated as "heretic" but wasn't a word yet in this context. It basically meant a school of thought, a sect, and was applied in Acts to the Sadducees, Pharisees and Christians. Someone who intentionally comes in and tries to break things up.

Paul said there were three stages beginning with two clear warnings. If after the first two warnings the offender remains unrepentant, and refuses the opportunity of forgiveness and restoration, he or she is to be rejected. Harsh, maybe, but Christians are to have a spirit of unity and not chaos. Disorder and chaos stem from the enemy. Without addressing it, we are allowing the enemy to have his way.

Paul then tells Titus to join him at Nicopolis once Titus has found a replacement for his position in Crete. We don't know anything about Artemas (he is not mentioned anywhere else in Scripture), but Tychicus was one of those chosen to take the collection to Jerusalem. Paul spoke of him as a faithful servant and a dear brother (Ephesians 6:21).

Next, we don't know anything about Zenas except that Paul references him as a lawyer. Apollos may have been the one who ministered faithfully in Corinth. These were the two who had been sent to deliver the letter to Titus. Paul wanted to make sure that Titus did everything he

could do encourage the church in Crete to make sure Zenas and Apollos had everything they needed to continue the rest of the work they were to do wherever that would be next.

Paul then again reminds Titus that Christians should do good by meeting the urgent needs of others so that they will produce fruit. No one wants an unproductive fruit tree nor should Christians desire to live unproductive Kingdom lives.

In the final verse, Paul sends his greetings to Titus from not only himself but to all those who are with him. This embodies the Christian Church at large. We are all for one another regardless of where we are. Titus is to then pass on the greetings to all the believers there. This is a symbol of encouragement and reminder that they are not in this thing along. Paul gave a blessing, as was customary in his letters not just to Titus but to all...**May God's grace be with you all.** The Christian life is not singular; it is community. God's grace is not just for one or for some. It's for all who believe and receive it. It is not a competition for best place in the Kingdom. It's a cooperative team, what should be a healthy body/family, pulling together to do good for not only those on our team, but for those on the other team as well for His glory.