More Good Works and the Gospel  

Titus 3: Introduction

- Paul doesn’t seem to tire of certain subjects.
- We probably shouldn’t tire of them either.
- How Christians should behave is one of them. The plain facts of the gospel are another.
- He covers both of these again in this last chapter to Titus who is serving on the island of Crete.

**God Works and The Gospel** are the basics of the Christian life.
We really can’t emphasize them too much.

Titus 3: Outline

1. Act Like This  3:1-2
   - These are high standards if we take all of them seriously.
   - 3:1  **to be subject**  implies “loyal” subjection (Simpson)
   - 3:2  “showing all humility to all men,” literally “all people”.
   - Are we prepared to do just that?
   - We ought to be.

2. One More Summary of the Gospel  3:3-7
   - 3:3  Paul starts with “**we ourselves.**”
   - He includes himself in the group that possessed these qualities.
   - He was outwardly extremely religious, but when Christ picked up the rock of Paul’s religiosity, this is what was squiggling and squirming around underneath it.
   - 3:3  **deceived**  suggests a false guide leading astray (Guthrie)
   - Note how quickly hate can proliferate.
   - 3:4  **love ... toward man**  from which we get our word philanthropy
   - 3:5  Salvation cannot be attained by human effort.
   - God saves us because of His mercy.
   - Paul never gets tired of talking about this.
   - We shouldn’t get tired of it either.
   - It’s a wonderful thing God has done for us – saving us by His grace through faith.

   - 3:7  **Characteristics of an heir:**
   - The heir is confident of the inheritance.
   - The inheritance is a birthright, not an earned form of compensation.
   - The inheritance forces the heir to take the present seriously – it forms part of the heir’s present identity.
   - The heir is not yet in full possession of the inheritance, but must wait for the right time.
The past, present and future of our salvation:

- **Past:** God’s love for us appeared in Christ.
- **Present:** We have the abiding presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit and His constant renewing.
- **Future:** We are heirs according to the hope of eternal life, awaiting our full inheritance.

- **3:4-6** Paul is making a clear-cut assertion of the Trinity.
  - **3:4** “God our Savior”
  - **3:5** God saves us through the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, that is, we are born again.
  - **3:6** “Jesus Christ our Savior”

See also Isaiah 43:11, 45:21.

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3. One Last Faithful Saying 3:8

- We’ve mentioned these before.
- There are five Faithful Sayings of Paul – all of them in the Pastoral Epistles:
  - 1 Timothy 1:15
  - 1 Timothy 3:1
  - 1 Timothy 4:8-9
  - 2 Timothy 2:11-13
  - Titus 3:8

4. Avoid Silly Arguments 3:9-12

- **3:10** Paul takes a “3 strikes and your out” approach to the divisive man.
- **3:11** Stubbornness in causing divisions is the outward indicator of a crooked heart and mind.
- Titus is not to put up with it. The person is self-condemned.

5. Final Personal Remarks 3:13-15

- **3:13** We don’t know anything else about Zenas the lawyer, but it’s kind of fun to know that there was a lawyer on the ministry team.
- One possibility is that Paul kept him around in case of shipwreck.
- *Sharks wouldn’t attack out of professional courtesy.* :-D
Summary: Good Works and the Gospel

- God does not work through us as passive bystanders watching God do His thing.
- They take a high degree of intentionality on our part.
- The tension comes in when we consider that it is God that makes our works effective in accomplishing His will.
- He works through us as we do things.
- We can’t be passive and expect God to override our laziness or fear.
- This is unrealistic.
- We also cannot see ourselves as lone fighters in the struggle for truth and justice.
- This is a road to sure defeat.

Good Works in the Pastoral Epistles:
- 1 Timothy 2:9-10
- 1 Timothy 3:1
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- Titus 1:16
- Titus 2:6-8 & 2:14
- Titus 3:1, 3:8 & 3:14

The Gospel in Titus:
- The doctrinal ideas expressed in these three passages, all in Titus, are as profound as any in the entire Bible:
  – Titus 1:1-3
  – Titus 2:11-14
  – Titus 3:3-7
- Do your best to understand them.
- A deep understanding of your faith provides a deep foundation for a life full of good works.

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