

## Titus 3:8-11 – April 21, 2021

### *Those Causing Division*

JD Farag

Good morning and welcome to our second service. On Sunday mornings, we have two services: The first of which we devote to Bible prophecy. Our second service is our verse-by-verse study through the Word of God. We find ourselves today in the book of Titus, and our text today will be chapter 3:8-11. We're almost done with the chapter and, as such, the book, but not quite. So we're looking forward to what the Lord has for us.

Why don't you stand if you're able? Those of you that are here can follow along as I read, and those of you online can follow along as well. Beginning in verse 8, Titus 3, the Apostle Paul is writing by the Holy Spirit to Titus, a pastor of a church in Crete at the time. He says, "This is a trustworthy saying. I want you to stress these things so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone. But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law because these are unprofitable and useless. Warn [verse 10] a divisive person once, and then warn them a second time. After that - have nothing to do with them. You may be sure that such people are warped and sinful. They are self-condemned." Wow.

Let's pray. Oh Lord, this portion that we have before us today here, in your Word, is one that we readily admit we need the Holy Spirit to help us to open the eyes of our understanding. It's here for a reason, and certainly, we're here for that reason because we know there's something you want to speak to us. There's something you want to show to us, and Lord, we need the Holy Spirit to do that. So, get our attention, Lord, and keep it and hold it. That's not up to me. That's the Holy Spirit. As you do, Lord, we, with great anticipation, look forward to what it is that you have for us in this text that's before us. So, Lord, speak, we pray, your servants are listening. In Jesus' name. Amen and amen. You can be seated. Thank you.

My notes say I want to talk with you today, but that's actually not true. I don't want to talk about this, but I need to talk about this. This is why it is perhaps that pastors and teachers of God's Word who don't teach through the Bible stay away from passages like this because it's kind of a tough "in your face up," "in your grill," "in your kitchen" - you can use whatever metaphor you want, kind of passages.

But it deals with those who sow discord and cause division within the church. If you were to ask me about one of the main problems I have personally struggled with within ministry over the years, this would be at the top of the list. There's a reason for that. I have witnessed firsthand the damage done in the life of a Christian and really in the life of a Christian church. I've seen churches devastated. I've seen lives ruined. I've seen marriages split up all at the hands of those causing division.

In some ways, I think it explains why Paul writes this to Titus by the Holy Spirit. He wrote something similar to Timothy. You might remember in our verse-by-verse study through 2 Timothy. I want to draw your attention to Paul's letter to Timothy because he addresses this same issue, this serious issue, and it's going to be germane to our understanding of the text that's before us in Titus.

Let's start in chapter 2, beginning in verse 14. Notice the similarities again here. He's writing to Timothy, and he says, "Keep reminding God's people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words. It is of no value and only ruins those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the Word of truth. Avoid godless chatter because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly." He continues in verse 23. He says, "Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments..." I love saying that word. You'll forgive me. It's stupid! Okay, I won't say it again - I don't think.

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"...because you know they produce quarrels and the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, [better understood, teach-able, teachable], not resentful. Opponents [verse 25] must be gently instructed in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the Devil, who has taken them captive to do his will." It seems that both Timothy and Titus were dealing with similar issues. It's for this reason that we refer to Timothy and Titus affectionately as the pastoral epistles. They were dealing with real problems in the church, and one of the main problems in the church that they were dealing with was contention, strife, division.

However, while the concerns over divisive people were similar, Paul's letter to Titus seems to deal more specifically and severely. Notice to Timothy, he says, pray for them that God will grant to them repentance so that they'll come to their senses and escape the trap because what the Devil has done has trapped them and is using them, not possessing them. A born again Christian cannot be demon-possessed, but that does not mean that the Devil cannot use a born again Christian to do his work. That's what was happening in Ephesus with Timothy, but he doesn't say that to Titus.

He doesn't say, hey, like I told Timothy, Titus, I want you to just pray for them, gently instruct them, hope that they will repent, and come to their senses. No. He's a little more severe. It's kind of like, "Warn them once; warn them a second time. Don't warn them a third time; kick them out of the church. In Jesus' name. Wow, where's the love? We're going to talk about that.

I found four ways in our text that we are to biblically deal with those who cause division within the body of Christ, within a body of believers. The first one [#1.] is in verse 8, and it's to remind them continually. Here, Paul tells Titus that he's to stress this, emphasize this constantly, repeatedly, and remind them continually to devote themselves to doing what is good. In other words, Titus, you keep on saying it because it needs to be said. Even if they've already heard it, keep saying it regardless of the fact that they've already heard it. Why?

We actually talked about this in a different context in the Prophecy Update, but the more you hear something repeated, it's the repeating equals the retaining. You keep teaching over and over again, and then you're more likely to be reminded of it and learn from it. It's almost like this; it's like Titus says, Paul, come on, man. Give me a break; I've been telling them this over and over again. Paul's response: Keep telling them. Keep reminding them.

If you think about it, we need to be reminded. Because we forget - we forget. I'm almost embarrassed to confess this, but sometimes, not all the time, thank you, Lord. This is a thing; it's because of my lifestyle before Christ, I really did a lot of damage to my brain - for real. I will forget what I talked about the week before. Don't look at me like that, please. I just don't remember, and then I have to go back, and oh, yeah, that's right. Actually, a pretty good sermon; come to think of it.

I don't know if you've noticed this or not, but replete throughout Scripture, what you find time and time again, is a repeating of the same thing. I think about the Communion Table, the Last Supper, the Passover Celebration, and the ordinance and Jesus saying, "As often as you do this, do so in remembrance of me." Why would he say to "remember me because don't we forget? Oh no, we do!

We go about our lives, our lives get busy, and certainly, in this world that we're living in, they're very stressful, and we forget that we're saved. No, think about this. You get in the heat of the battle and the intensity of your day-in and day-out work, and you get all worked up and beat up, "buss up." I like saying that too, "buss up." Then it's like the Lord's going, hello? What are you doing? Why are you so upset? Why are you so worked up? Why are you still yelling at the TV? You're saved!

You're acting like you're going to be here for a while. You live your life like this is your final destination. It's not! You're just passing through. This world is not your home. You're in it, not of it. Quit acting like it because I couldn't tell. I'm speaking of myself, not you, so don't you know...

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I always have to be careful sometimes when I look in a certain direction, and I don't realize it at the time, but I'm like, "lust, pride, greed," and then the people I'm looking at are going, no, that's me! So, I just look down.

Verse 9, we have our second one [#2.], and it's to, "Avoid them astutely." Now I'm choosing and using the word astutely because it speaks to the paramount importance of both an assessment and discernment. I'll explain what I mean by that. It is incumbent upon all of us to utilize our God-given spiritual discernment to assess the person, the situation and determine whether they're looking for an answer or an argument. That's spiritual discernment, and thankfully, the Holy Spirit is always at the ready to provide us with that discernment.

So, you have a situation where somebody is engaging in, as Paul writes to Timothy, godless chatter. We know it by a different word, gossip, "talking stink," spreading rumors. It usually starts like this, hey, did you hear about? What? Oh, you didn't know? What? No, what? Oh, we're really good at it actually because we couch it in very spiritual terms like, we need to pray for so and so. No, what happened? Oh, you didn't hear? How are they doing? What do you mean? Oh, you didn't hear? How are they doing? I don't know. Why don't you go ask them? Oh, I have a better idea. Instead of "talking stink" about them, why don't you pray for them? How about that?

There are some people, and this is why Paul is writing what he's writing to Titus. There are some people that love a good fight. They thrive on it. It's an adrenaline rush for them. They love starting up things and stirring up things. It's very carnal; it's very worldly. I'll add, dare I say, very demonic, and we are going to see why here in a moment.

Number 3 [#3.], verse 10, "Warn them specifically." Bear with me on this because I don't know if it's possible to overstate this. Notice the specificity with which Paul writes this. I mean, this is a pretty specific set of instructions: Warn them once; warn them twice. Do not warn them a third time. There's no such thing as three strikes, and you're out. It's more like two strikes, and you're out. Because when it happens again, after you have warned them twice, you have to deal with them decisively. That's what he's saying: After the second warning, not the third warning, we're to reject divisive people, have nothing to do with divisive people.

By the way, Jesus said the same thing. It's recorded in Matthew's Gospel chapter 18:15-17. Same principle, same template if you prefer. So, somebody sins against you, Jesus says, you go to them one-on-one. If you don't resolve it, then you bring two or more witnesses with you, and you approach them again. If they still don't receive it, then you take it to the leadership of the church, and if they still don't receive it, you treat them (This is the Savior speaking), you treat them as you would an employee of the IRS on April 18. No, that's what he said. A tax collector; Tax collectors were despised. And Jesus is saying that you're to treat them like that and have nothing to do with them? Yeah. Wow. That seems harsh. That seems unloving. Well, nothing could be further from the truth.

In fact, it's the opposite that's true. When the Apostle Paul writes to the church in Corinth, this carnal church, a lot of problems in this church. Get this. There was this young man that was having sex with his stepmom, and everybody in the church knew it. By the way, don't look at the person sitting next to you. And can you believe it? They were boasting about it. What do you mean? They're like, we're so loving and accepting and tolerant. Oh, we welcome you. We don't judge anybody.

What does Paul do? He writes to them. I mean, it is scathing, and rightfully so. He says, "That's not love!" You think you're being loving? You are not loving him. If you really loved him, you would kick him out of the church and give him over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh! That's love. It is? Yeah. You know that famous "Love Chapter," 1 Corinthians 13? We love to quote it. Love is patient, kind - "chicken skin." Do you know why he wrote that? He wrote that because the Corinthians did not know what love is. They thought that was love; Paul says that's not love. This is what love is.

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Do you know what's really interesting about that? In his second epistle to the Corinthians, it seems that the handing him over for the destruction of his flesh to Satan worked because now he's repented. Then he has to rebuke the Corinthians again. Man! Can I just say thank you that you're not Calvary Chapel Corinth? You guys are just an amazing church! I can't even imagine dealing with stuff like that.

Because now he has to rebuke them because the guy comes back, he wants to be restored. He's repentant! The Corinthians are like, ain't going to happen. Get out of here! Paul says, what are you doing? Forgive the guy. He repented; let him back in. Restore him; love on him. That's love. Not only is it loving to them, but it's also loving to the church.

Stay with me. If you let that go "under the banner," of well, we're just loving around here. We're accepting around here. You have just given Satan a signed blank check to write in whatever amount of destruction he wants. You've just given him permission. You have to understand that Satan cannot destroy the church from without. He can do it from within, and that's how he does it.

That brings us to our 4th one [#4.], in verse 11, it's to "Remove them immediately." Here in verse 11, it seems like Paul is answering this question, and perhaps Titus was second-guessing himself. Maybe there were a lot of similarities in their temperaments and personalities between Titus and Timothy. But Paul is reassuring him with this assurance that such people have basically already sealed their fate. Their minds are already made up. Their fate is already sealed. Their heart is already hardened. Their minds are warped; they're already self-condemned.

I can get that because there are times where we've had to, over the years, make decisions that were really hard. Of course, the enemy is right there going, oh, that's not very loving. There was one instance; I sort of hesitate even to share it. It was many years ago. We had a predator here. We welcomed him. We loved on him. You never know if you're going to entertain an angel unaware. All of a sudden, he started talking to the women, and we warned him. We took the biblical approach here in Titus and in Matthew. We warned him a second time. Again, I hesitate to share this, but I gave the guys explicit instructions to get him off of this property immediately when it happened again. If he refuses, we would have him forcibly removed.

This is pre-COVID; we had the potluck at the time. I came out of the kitchen, and I'm walking around, and then we had the line... Some of you new people are going, you did? Sorry. Anyway, the line was all the way back here. I'm walking; I just wanted to say hi to people, meet people and give people a hug. And who do I find in the line? Him! Okay! I went Palestinian! Artie was here at the time. Remember that, Artie? I was yelling at you, "Get him out of here! Everybody is in the line going, who? Me? No! him!! So, Artie just escorts him off the property.

Afterward, I thought, this was after 2nd service... I'm sharing this: it's not in my notes. I really think maybe the Holy Spirit wants me to share this with you. Because afterward, I started going through the whole... Maybe I could have handled that better, these poor people, we had visitors, and, wow, Pastor JD, dude. But then... This was the Lord; to a person, people would come up to me and thank me for doing that. Do you know why? I know you love us, and you are ferociously protective of us. That's a shepherd; that's a pastor. Don't clap for me. Praise the Lord for that.

That's what Paul is saying to Titus, don't second guess yourself. You have to protect the flock of God. I have given you the oversight of the flock of God. It's on you! If there is a wolf or a predator or somebody that poses a threat or harm or is a danger to this church? Oh, you ain't seen no Palestinian yet! I probably could have said that differently, too, I guess. I mean that, and the Lord knows my heart. I love you so much.

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Before God and before you, you have my unwavering, unflinching commitment to protect you from anyone that walks in those doors, so help me, God. If they are a threat to this church? We have ways... We have people... We know people... Artie is looking at me like, okay, stop already.

If you kindly allow me, I want to share with you why this is such a serious issue for the remainder of our time together, why God takes this very seriously. Why Paul is writing to Titus and Timothy about this. This is a serious issue because of the ramifications. I would submit that the seriousness of this, first and foremost, is that Satan gets in and does that, which he cannot do from without, and he does so within.

I'll take it a step further and suggest that one of the enemy's most effective weapons and strategies, and tactics are to get Christians arguing with each other. If he can get Christians arguing with each other, then they're so busy arguing with the saved, they're not reaching the lost. Satan has neutered that church. He has rendered that church impotent. Perhaps we need to look no further as to the reason why the church is feckless in this world today.

To me, it's for this reason that Paul says to Timothy, "The hope is they repent and escape the Devil who traps them to do his will." You know we always talk about what's the will of God. Did you know that the Devil has a will too? I mean, we can do the will of God, but we also have the propensity to do the will of the Devil. What's the Devil's will? Oh! Steal, kill, and destroy as the author of confusion, the accuser of the brethren, and the father of lies. He hates your guts! But Jesus loves your guts. Greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world.

We let him get away with murder, literally in the sense that when you hate your brother or sister in Christ, you're murdering them in your heart. And Satan knows that. By the way, spoiler alert, Satan knows Scripture way better than we do. I would even venture to say that in some respects, Satan knows you better than you know yourself because you know he studies you, right?

The Apostle Paul writing to the Ephesian church, describes this imagery, very picturesque, very graphic, almost that the enemy is like this roaring lion. You know what lions do, right? They stalk their prey; they study their prey.

In the original language of the New Testament in Ephesians 6, it carries with it the idea of a military strategist. I have this image in my mind of those old World War II photos where they're all standing around the table looking at the map, strategizing. The image I have in my mind is the enemy, and all of his demons are hovering over this table, studying and strategizing over the map of my life. They're waiting; they're very patient. They know when I'm vulnerable; they know when I'm discouraged, exhausted, fatigued, tired, and down. And they wait for that time. They also wait for you/me/us to be isolated to get alone because you are kind of protected when you're assembled together.

It's very interesting too with the armor. I always wondered about this. I never really understood this as a young believer. You know when Paul says, "Above all, take ye up the shield of faith, wherewith you will be able to extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one." Now at first read, it would almost seem as if Paul is saying of all of the pieces of the armor, metaphorically, the shield of faith is "above all of them."

That's not what he's saying, and they would have understood this. Because in those days, the soldier would take his shield... By the way, it was dipped in water - a picture, a type of the Word of God. They would take it up above all and lock tongue in groove with the soldier next to them, creating an impenetrable fortress with which to extinguish the weapons of their warfare. These arrows were lit on fire and then fired, and then they would hit. Here's the shield, impenetrable fortress, and it would just hit it, put it out, extinguish it, and fall to the ground.

Now watch this. You get this Christian who kind of leaves - forsakes the assembling of himself/herself together, and now there they're a sitting duck. Satan's like, go! We got him! Because he doesn't have

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the fortress above all - tongue and groove locked together. When Satan gets a Christian alone, he's got him. He studies us, he stalks us, he strategizes, and he waits for the optimum time.

I was thinking about this last week. It's really chilling because of the account when Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, and the Devil tempted him, we are only told about that one time, but I don't think that was the only time the Devil tempted Jesus. Right? There is this one detail in that account that has always stuck with me.

It's in Luke's account of it. He says that the Devil left and was going to wait for a more optimal time to return. I don't want to hear that. Wait, I just resisted the Devil, and he has fled. And he's going to come back? Oh, yeah. Now, think about this. After that, don't you let your guard down? That was close. The Devil's like, okay!

I'm sorry, this is how my mind is wired, and I probably should have asked Artie about this before. But you know when you're driving in traffic, and there's what they call a "speed trap," and when you see those lights, what's your reaction? That means you're speeding. If you were driving the speed limit, you wouldn't have that reaction, right? Let's just be honest; we're in church. So, you come around that corner; you see that light... Am I right? And then the sudden relief when you see that they've already got somebody pulled over. Am I right? Is it just me, or do you look at them when you drive by? You're like, oh, glad that's not me. Then you pass them, and you think, wow, that was close. You start speeding up, and there's another one, and they get you. I'm not likening police to Satan, but I think you get the point. It's just an illustration, okay?

You let your guard down. You think, wow, that was a close one. The enemy is going; I knew he would do that because I study the map of his life, and I know he does that. He thinks, man, that was a close one. Now! Get him, now! Because he's not expecting it. He's not expecting that. That's the will of the Devil. He wants to slither in, stealth, under the radar covertly, and he starts his campaign, his whisper campaign.

By the way, and again, bear with me on this. He wants to come in, and he wants to divide and conquer. And we're not just talking about the church; we're talking about in every arena of life. I talked to our social media team about this and were trying to come up with what we do? We've got people on social media, on the new website, on the Forum, and they are... I mean, these are trolls. They're posting stuff that is just vile and foul, and they're looking for a fight.

I told them, I said, on the Forum particularly, just two warnings using Titus and Matthew as well. Then you block them, and you delete them. Here's the way I explained it. Just like I would never let anybody come into this church that would pose a threat or harm to you. I'm not going to let anybody just come into my home and start causing problems. I'm going to deal with you. I'm not going to let anybody go into our Facebook page or our YouTube channel, or other social media platforms, certainly not the Forum on the website, and start causing division. They're gone; I've got to protect that. The same thing with the church, with the family, with the marriage. When you understand...

I think about the Apostle Paul saying, don't be ignorant with the wiles of the Devil. I love the King James on that, the devices of Satan, don't be so naive; don't be ignorant. He is strategizing. He's got all of these tactics and strategies, and they're literally hell-bent on your destruction. He wants to destroy the church. He wants to destroy your marriage because the marriage is a microcosm and a type of our future marriage to Jesus Christ, as the bridegroom and the family. He hates the family because of what the family represents. It's a microcosm of our heavenly Father. We're brothers and sisters in Christ. We're the bride of Christ. It's the family. It's a microcosm, and he hates that. We're a church family, right? We're a church ohana [Hawaiian for family]. And he hates that because of what it represents.

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When Paul writes of the Galatians in Chapter 5:14-15, I mean, talk about in your face. He says verse 14, "For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" And then he says this, "If you bite and devour each other, watch out, or you will be destroyed by each other." You don't think Satan knows Galatians Chapter 5:14-15?

Romans, 16th chapter, verses 17 and 18, he's pleading with them, "I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery, they deceive the minds of naive people."

And here's the thing about Christians, there is an innocent naivete. We're so trusting. We do err greatly when we're that way because we need to be as harmless as doves but as shrewd as serpents - shrewd as serpents. That's where spiritual discernment comes in.

Never imagine for a moment that God is not going to rush in and give you the discernment because he wants to protect you. Sometimes it comes like this and never go against this. There's going to be just an uneasiness, a check in your spirit. Something's not quite right. Can't put my finger on it. This is kind of weird - That's the Holy Spirit. Yeah, you know they said this to me, and when they approached me, it made me very uncomfortable. Good! That's a good thing. Be on guard. Watch out.

I think about in the book of Acts when Paul... I don't know your picture of the Apostle Paul, but I see this mighty man of God who cried a lot. He cried like a man. He talks about how that he knows after he leaves, in his parting words, his farewell message, he says, I know what's going to happen, and I can't even stand the thought of it. In fact, for three years, day and night, I have wept over this. Wept over what? There are going to be from within your own midst, wolves in sheep's clothing, and they're not going to spare the flock. I know what's going to happen. He's doing all he can, the best he can, to warn them about what he knows is coming upon them. It's not: Is it going to happen? No, it's going to happen. The question becomes, are you going to be aware of it when it does so that you can discern it and deal with it?

Proverbs, Chapter 6, I saved - not the best for last. Actually, the worst for last, if you don't mind. Verses 16 through 19, let me preface this before I read this passage by saying that more than the church protecting the church, loving the church. This is so serious because it's an abomination in the sight of the Lord. Wow, that's pretty strong, Pastor. It needs to be.

Think this through with me again, by way of a preface. God knows firsthand what can happen in heaven. Lucifer - division - discord: "I will ascend my throne above the Most High." The first church split was in heaven, as it were. I've tried to, and thankfully, I've never had to taste from this bitter cup. I know many of you have. But I've tried to imagine.

My parents stayed married, to their credit, until they died - till death do us part. I've never tasted from that cup of divorce as a child having your parents' divorce and split. I do know that it's devastating, and I would argue that is one of the main reasons God hates divorce because of what divorce does to the divorced. You ruin children's lives for basically the rest of their lives but by the grace of God. It's so traumatic. I can't even imagine.

Now, I have tasted in a different way of that same dynamic as far as church splits when I was on the mainland. It just tore me apart, to shreds, because of what it did to the people that were caught up in... Again, by way of a preface, this is why God hates this. This is why it's an abomination to him. This is why it is so serious. I would even say life and death serious.

One last thing, and then we'll read the passage. I want you to think through this with me. Do you realize that many young people are now adults who want nothing to do with the church or the Lord? Do you know why? This! They watch their parents and people in the church devour each other, and you blame them for not wanting anything to do with the Lord when they see that?

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Verse 16, Proverbs 6, "These six things the Lord hates. Yes, seven are an abomination to him." Are you ready for the last verse, 17? I want you to notice something here as we go through this: A proud look; that's where it always starts: pride. As we go through this list, if you put pride at the beginning of it, it explains the rest of it. "A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil..." Notice the comparison to the eyes, the mouth, the hands, the heart, the feet - the body. "A false witness who speaks lies..".

Do you know what the seventh one is that is an abomination to God? "The one who sows discord among the brethren." That's why this is so serious. I want to close with something that I sense the Lord would have me to share, especially for the benefit of those who have been - I'm going to use this word sort of carefully and prayerfully - victimized by this. You've been on the receiving end of this. You've witnessed this firsthand. You've been very hurt by this.

I have a word for you, and it's a word that God gave me to get me through some very painful experiences in this regard. I held on to and withheld really, forgiveness. I held onto bitterness because of what had been done, the division that was caused, and the lives that were ruined. I couldn't let it go, and it was eating me up from the inside out.

Finally, God broke through and ministered to me this life-changing truth, and it changed everything. It's not what they did to you. It's what I did for you. Oh, I was able to forgive because I've been forgiven. Get your eyes off of what they did to you. Because if you don't, it's going to kill you. I mean physiologically, there's research medically and physically what happens to your body, your digestive system, your cardiovascular system, your nervous system, all of the... And God knows that if you harbor...

That's why the writer of Hebrews says, "Don't let bitterness take root and germinate and sprout, no root of bitterness." Because it will defile you, it will eat your lunch. That's a very loose paraphrase. But I think you get the point. So, when I realized that, and came to grips with that and accepted that. Yeah.

It's like Oswald Chambers once said, "It's not: have I been wronged? It's: have I wronged?" Oh, by the way, I've wronged, and so have you. We've all sinned, and God has forgiven us. "Forgive us, O Lord, our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." That's how. If you're having a hard time forgiving somebody? Just allow the Lord to minister to you all that he's forgiven you of, and it will become an easy-do.

It's kind of a silly illustration; it's like the Lord emails me and says I have a file I want to attach. It's a very large file of all of the things that I have forgiven you of. In fact, you're going to need more than 4 terabytes for this file. I got it, Lord. No need. I got it. It's not what's been done to you. It's what Jesus did for you. Let it go.

Why don't you stand, and we'll have the worship team come up? I suppose probably this is as good a time as any to, and I know I say it, maybe you're tired of me saying it. I hope you don't. It is such a privilege, a profound privilege to be the pastor of this loving church. We have never known any of this, going on now 15 years, and I just praise the Lord for that. I mean, you guys are the real deal. Jesus said, "They're going to know you're my disciples by how you treat one another by your love one for another." That's how they're going to; that's a litmus test.

As things have kind of opened up a little bit, we have a lot more online members coming. We had people from California, Colorado, and Pennsylvania. I mean, it was just wonderful today. I love it when they say to me, and they say this to me, "Your church is so loving." I'm like, ahh! Do you know what I tell them? It's what I tell you, if I wasn't the pastor of this church, this is where I would go to church. I thank you for that, and I thank God for that, and I love you so much. You make the pastorate a joy. You make the pastorate a joy, and not many pastors can say that.



**Titus 3:8-11 – April 21, 2021**

***Those Causing Division***

**JD Farag**

Let's pray. Father in heaven, thank you so much. Oh, man! Am I glad this is over with! I'm sorry. This is, again, tough stuff but so needed, Lord. Lord, I pray that you'll take these things that we've seen here in our time together, in your Word, and take it to the next level as only you can by the Holy Spirit.

Lord, for anyone that's here today or even watching online and this hit home, Lord, I pray that you will as you are always so faithful to reveal yourself to them, your love for them, your protection of them. Lord, I thank you that you love us so much, that you died for us. "Greater love hath no man than he would lay down his life for another."

Lord, if there's anyone who's holding onto bitterness and withholding forgiveness, I pray that today would be the day, a reference point really where they're set free and never look back. Thank you, Lord. In Jesus' name.