

Truth that Transforms – Titus 3:8/Colossians 3:1-4

**Intro:**

**1) Fishing advice from grandad – “Grandad was right”**

- a. Grandad was one of those old, weathered men – didn’t say a whole lot, but when he did, it usually mattered
- b. Every time they would go out to the lake the grandfather would say the same thing – “Boy, if you want to catch anything worth keeping, you don’t fish where its easy, you fish where its deep...and use the right bait.”
  - i. Like most young folks, the grandson thought he knew better, and did heed the advice
- c. One day in particular, the grandad rows them out between the shore and a deeper part of the lake – pointing to the deeper part the grandfather says – “That’s where the big ones will be”
- d. Grandson looks over and sees an easier cast toward the shore line, shallower, calmer water, and with his new fancy top floating bait, he figures that is a better place to fish
- e. After a couple hours
  - i. Grandson – a couple small fish, no keepers
  - ii. Grandfather – reeled in some monsters, enough to feed them for the week
- f. Frustrated – the grandson says – “What am I doing wrong?”
  - i. Grandfather – I told you this earlier – “You’re fishing in the wrong place with the wrong bait”
- g. And here’s the line that stuck with him the rest of his life: If you want better results, you have to listen to better wisdom

**2) You know what that boy learned that day?**

- a. Not all advice is equal – some advice is really worth listening to

**3) Truth – like that boy – we are all casting out lives somewhere - and we are going to get results**

- a. Question is – are we listening to the right wisdom that actually works?

**4) Notice what Paul says in Titus 3:8 – “This is a faithful saying”**

- a. Faithful – Grk: Pistos – to be trusted, reliable, worthy to be believed
  - i. Translated – believed
  - ii. In the same family of words where we get the word “faith” from
  - iii. Believed is the adjective, faith is the noun
  - iv. IOW – this is worthy to be believed, you can trust this, this ought to impact your faith
- b. This phrase is used some 5 x’s in the Pastoral Epistles usually referring to something faithful about to be said
  - i. 1 Tim. 1:15, 3:1, 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8
- c. However – in this usage – Paul is using it as a concluding statement for what he had just said – referring to Titus 3:4-7
  - i. It is believed that the sentence of V4-7 is actually a creedal statement, a hymn, or even liturgical material used by the early first century church
  - ii. IOW – Paul is using a well-known doctrinal statement and affirming its validity
  - iii. Here Paul is emphasizing that this truth be: believed, spoken of often, affirmed in church, and even sung about
- d. IOW – this isn’t just good advice – this is a trustworthy biblical claim that you can build your life on

**5) What is unique – it is basic biblical truth that Paul shares and encourages Titus to share as well**

- a. Notice what it does – V8b
- b. These faithful truths produce Godly goodness in the life of believers

**6) Text Begs the Question – what does this faithful walk look like practically in a believer’s life?**

- a. How can one “apply the sound doctrine” that was just mentioned?
- b. Pastoral Pause – take time to teach what it looks like when a believer applies Gospel truth
  - i. Another way to say it – what does the regenerate and renewed life look like?
  - ii. There’s a lot of advice given when it comes to answering that question – but as that boy found out – Not all advice is equal, some is worth listening to
- c. Ans – Col. 3:1-4
  - i. In Col. 3 Paul actively addresses the fundamental truths that should characterize a believer’s life in living out the Gospel message

**7) What we have is wisdom on living a faithful walk with Jesus**

- a. IOW - Here is truth you can build a life of faithfulness on
  - i. Here’s what regeneration and renewal looks like practically
- b. Sermon: Truth that Transforms
- c. Text: Col. 3:1-4

**A faithful follower has a Higher Pursuit (3:1)**

**1) Make no mistake about it – a real encounter with Jesus will change the trajectory of your life**

- a. The pursuits of your life should no longer be self-focused, but rather be Christ-focused
  - i. Our aim – Not my will, but Thine be done

***Listen to what Paul says about a Christian's higher pursuits***

**2) Higher pursuits are started by Godly Salvation (V1a)**

- a. Paul begins Chp. 3 detailing what life looks like AFTER you've been saved
  - i. Notice – V1a – “If ye then be risen with Christ
  - ii. Sets the tone – if you have experienced new life in Jesus, the following things should characterize your life
- b. Textual Insight
  - i. If – not an expression of uncertainty, it's an expression of assumed reality
    - 1. “Since” this is the case
  - ii. Risen with – to raise together, denotes a believer's spiritual resurrection in Jesus
    - 1. Aorist passive – a completed action done to you
    - 2. Titus 3:5 – regeneration – Again + Born
- c. Truth - Godly desires don't come when your life gets cleaned up, they come from a soul that's been called up
- d. The truth Paul is explaining is this chapter follows salvation
  - i. Phrase is a Biblical expression of real salvation – Col. 2:12, Rom. 6:4, John 11:25
  - ii. To be risen with Christ means to have eternal life by faith
- e. See – outside of Jesus, there is no such thing as Godly pursuits
  - i. Rom. 6:20,21
- f. Here's what Paul is teaching – you don't live the Christians life without having the life of Christ
  - i. Not – live right THEN be accepted
  - ii. Gospel – Eph. 1:6,7

**3) Higher pursuits are steadfast in Godly Seeking (V1b)**

- a. Truth – eternal deliverance leads to eternal desires
- b. This verse gives a command that should characterize our daily life
- c. Textual insight
  - i. Seek – try to obtain, to pursue with diligence, denotes a desire to possess
    - 1. Same word used in Matt. 7:7 – Ask...seek, and ye shall find..”
    - 2. Present imperative – command calling for continual action (steadfast obedience)
    - 3. Fascinating – stated in the plural – indicates church-wide application
  - ii. Those things above – refers to the realm of God
    - 1. Eternal things, kingdom things, Christ-honoring actions
- d. Truth – before Jesus, you used to “seek” all sorts of things, not your seeking ambitions have been redeemed, regenerated, and renewed
- e. Here's a good way to say it - my pardon in Christ is to be evidenced by my pursuit of Christ

- i. The Psalmist says it best – Ps. 42:1 – “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.”
  - 1. Hart – male deer, known for its agility
  - 2. Pant – to long for, to gasp – denotes a deep, physical craving
  - 3. In the climate of the Ancient Near East – deer would desperately search for water in the dry seasons
- f. This is phrase refers to an intentional seeking, not a casual interest

#### 4) Higher pursuits are saturated in Godly Submission (V1c)

- a. Notice the position of Jesus in V1
  - i. Seated – position of sufficiency – Heb. 10:11,12
    - 1. Present tense – ongoing position
  - ii. Right hand – position of supremacy – power & prominence – Matt. 28:18
    - 1. Right hand:
      - a. Associated with strength, skill, dominance
        - i. Right hand was often used for: fighting, writing, oaths, and blessings
      - b. Associated with highest honor
        - i. Ancient monarchs would place the most valuable and trusted person on the right hand of the king
        - ii. Signals a position of honor
        - iii. A place of chief advisor
        - iv. One who shares in rule and authority
          - 1. 1 Kings 2:19 – Solomon to Bathsheba
      - c. Associated with God’s intervention
        - i. Phrase consistently represents God’s mighty actions
          - 1. Ex. 15:6 – “Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.”
          - 2. Ps. 118:16 – “The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.”
      - d. Associated with the Messiah
        - i. Ps. 110:1 – used by Jesus in Matt. 22:41-45 to show the Messiah is more than David’s son – He is David’s Lord
- b. The phrase declares to us - The pursuits of our hearts must be submitted under the authority of Jesus

#### 5) Application

- a. Reminds us as believers – we are to start every day with heavenly alignment, not earthly anxieties

**A faithful follower has a Heavenly Perspective (V2)**

**1) Although V2 reads similar to V1 – there’s a different emphasis given**

- a. V1 – addressing our pursuits – the heart
- b. V2 – addressing our perspectives – the head

**2) A Command for our Thinking**

- a. Textual Insight
  - i. Set your affections – set your mind on, to direct one’s inner disposition, to be minded
    - 1. Carries the idea of the way you think and the activity of your will
    - 2. Used in Phil. 2:5 – “Let this mind be in you”
- b. Historical insight
  - i. The word translates “Set your affections” comes from the Greco-Roman political world
    - 1. This word rarely meant to simple “think” – it involved ones allegiances
    - 2. In Greek political, historical, and philosophical texts, this word described a person’s alignment or political allegiances
    - 3. Common political phrase – Ta tinos phroneia – “to be of one’s party” or “to side with” a particular group
  - ii. This word was used of one’s loyalty that would direct their entire mindset
  - iii. Essentially – Paul is saying, Let your thinking reflect your heavenly citizenship
    - 1. “Things above”
- c. Truth - The believer now has a heavenly perspective about their earthly endeavors
  - i. We could say – our worldview changes
  - ii. As a Christian, we are called to have a new mindset
    - 1. Rom. 12:2
- d. Salvation impacts the way a Christians thinks
  - i. In the armor of God – what goes on the head?
    - 1. Salvation – gives a picture that redemption not only changes the heart, it changes the head
  - ii. Heavenly pardon leads to heavenly perspective

**3) A Heavenly Perspective changes my values**

- a. The eternal things of heaven should impact the temporal things of earth
  - i. Jesus prayer – Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven...
- b. “Heavenly values are to capture our imaginations, emotions, thoughts, feelings, ideas, and actions.” – Max Anders
- c. Notice what Paul says here – “not on things on the earth”
  - i. Not influenced by earthly things
  - ii. No longer adopting earthly values in my life
    - 1. Standard change – no longer seek the approval of the world
  - iii. Truth – you cannot fix your mind on heaven while still feeding on this world

**4) Application of V2 – make your mind up to be mindful of the things of God**

- a. Every day activity – “set” – present imperative – pattern of life
  - i. Why? There is an everyday battle for your mind – 2 Cor. 10:3-5
- b. Be careful with what is shaping your thinking
  - i. Start your day by setting your mind before the world sets it for you
- c. Guard your thought life
  - i. Grow in knowledge, understanding, and wisdom
  - ii. Learn how to be biblically discerning

**5) Q – is your mind made up when it comes to the things of God?**

- a. I am Resolved
  - i. I am resolved no longer to linger, charmed by the world’s delight, Things that are higher, things that are nobler, these have allured my sight.

**A faithful follower has a Hopeful Perseverance**

**1) Paul, expounding on practical Christian living, now shifts to the Christians future reality**

**2) V3 – A Hopeful Decree**

- a. My trans. – If you're redeemed, the full reality of your redemption is not yet experienced
  - i. In other words, there's more to come!
- b. Textual Insight
  - i. "Ye are dead" –speaking of being dead to sin – Rom. 6:1,2
    - 1. You are either "Dead in sin" or "Dead to sin"
    - 2. Aorist active indicative – complete past action
      - a. Not something that is progressively happening – it already happened
    - 3. To be dead meant a separation of relationship
  - ii. Your life – Grk. Zoe not Bios
    - 1. Bios – physical life
    - 2. Zoe – spiritual life given by God
    - 3. Important distinction – being dead to sin means you still continue on your physical life, but your spiritual life is different
- c. "hid" – secured & shrouded
  - i. Perfect passive – perfect = completed action with ongoing results, passive = done to you by God
  - ii. Culturally – this word referred to treasures that were hidden for protection or documents sealed for security purposes
  - iii. IOW – hid means secured and concealed
  - iv. Truth – This is a statement of Divine Assurance
    - 1. What God hides, nothing can harm – 1 Pet. 1:5
  - v. Your security does not depend on your performance, it is guarded by God himself

**3) V4 – A Hopeful Destination**

- a. A prophecy about the second coming of Jesus
- b. Textual Insight
  - i. When Christ...shall appear
    - 1. When – (hotan) – indicates certainty, not possibility – translated "as soon as"
    - 2. Appear – to be revealed
  - ii. Ye shall also appear – you will be revealed
    - 1. Future passive – you will also be revealed
  - iii. Glory – doxa – in splendor, radiance, honor, in true identity
- c. IOW – because of Jesus' life, there's more to come than the life you are experiencing now

***Now – why in the middle of exhorting on practical Christian living does Paul talk about our heavenly future?***

**4) Your destination impacts your journey**

- a. Only when you know the destination does the journey have significance
  - i. My journey reflected my destination
  - ii. Drive to church

**5) The reason we are called to be heavenly minded is because we are heavenly bound**

- a. And because we are heavenly bound, we are to faithfully persevere in this life
  - i. Is it easy to seek things above – No
  - ii. Is it easy to set your mind on things above – No
  - iii. Is it worth it – yes
- b. We live now with a heavenward heart and heavenward head because we are headed to a heavenward home

**6) Hopeful perseverance characterizes our journey to Jesus**

- a. The Bible highlights the faithful ones are “pilgrims”
  - i. Heb. 11:13-16

**Closing**

**1) As followers of Jesus we are in desperate need of the reminders of what the life of God does in our hearts, heads, and hope**

- a. Here’s what God’s truth teaches us
  - i. Higher Pursuit
  - ii. Heavenly Perspective
  - iii. Hopeful Perseverance