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A Godly Man's Picture  
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## A Godly Man is Born Again

Titus 3:1-8

Thank you men for being here this morning as we begin our study together of what the word of God teaches about being a godly man. One of my favorite things about being one of your pastors is having the opportunity to meet with the men on Wednesday mornings and talk about salvation. As our world continues to spiral out of control from an early perspective it's encouraging to gather with other men and think about what is most important. The sovereignty of God in salvation. There are some things we can think about too much, but the gospel is not one of those things. We cannot think about the gospel too much. A Pastor I admire named Philip DeCoursey says, "When you preach the gospel to yourself often you will preach the gospel to others often."

We will not be able to go through everything from Genesis to Revelation about being a godly man this summer but we have chosen some things we trust will help. We want to begin our study in Titus 3, so please take your Bible or turn on your Bible to Paul's short letter to Titus and find Titus 3. **The starting point for being a godly man is making sure you're born again.**

The gospel is the power of God for salvation to all who believe. It's the main message of the Bible and it is one message with a multitude of applications. Read all of Paul's letters and you see how he always starts with the gospel and then applies it to every area of life. Dave Harvey writes, "Accurately understanding and applying the gospel is the Christian life."

The majority of our study is going to be about what God wants us to be. But that's not the starting point for being a godly man. **Godly men are born again.** Being a godly man starts with saving faith in Christ because only Christ can make us godly men. This is the starting point for our study because we don't want to take anything for granted. Life in Christ precedes growth in Christ. Being precedes doing.

This is what we see in Paul's short letter to Titus. Everything Paul tells Titus to do on the island of Crete to help men in local churches live for Christ is connected back to the gospel. We see this in every chapter. Chapter 1:1-4 begins with the gospel, then Paul circles back to the gospel in Titus 2:11-14 and he circles back to it again in Titus 3:3-7. Everything Paul tells Titus to help men be who God calls us to be in Titus is connected back to the gospel.

Just a minute for historical background before we jump into Titus 3. Titus had some unique spiritual advantages. He was saved by Christ and personally mentored by the apostle Paul. He had

someone who had seen the risen Christ writing him personal letters of encouragement. Back in Titus 1:4 Paul describes Titus as my true child in a common faith. Titus had quite the spiritual father figure pouring into his life. Titus was saved and personally disciplined by the apostle Paul. That sounded nice to me.

Not only that, Titus was called to serve Christ on a beautiful Greek island in the Mediterranean sea. When this letter was written Titus was ministering on the island of Crete. I checked the forecast for Crete yesterday in my office and it looks like a decent week there. All sun and a high around 80 degrees and a low in the upper 60's. Not bad. The average temperature on the island in the winter is between 50-60 degrees.

Titus is saved and gets to pastor people on the beautiful island of Crete and he doesn't have to wonder what he needs to be doing. The apostle Paul lays it out for him. Titus has the spirit of God and the playbook to glorify God while he serves Christ on the island of Crete.

All that sounds awesome until you read through the letter. Titus was left on this island of Crete with a very difficult assignment. The Spirit was clearly working on the island of Crete but Satan was also working. There were still lots of people on the island who were still stuck in sin. Paul describes them in Titus 1:13 using a saying of one of their own, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." That was the unholy Trinity of the majority

of the people who lived there. Crete was not an easy place to live for Christ, It was equally challenging inside the church. There were false teachers working on this island to introduce destructive heresies that needed to be dealt with.

Paul left Titus on the island of Crete to set things in order in the local church's that had been established there through the preaching of the gospel. Titus was tasked with putting the right men in the right positions to serve Christ in different local church's on this island. Church's had been planted but leaders had not yet been appointed.

One thing becomes clear in Titus - Men, the right kind of men, are essential for God's plan to glorify Himself both inside and outside the local church. Contrary to what the world says, the Word says that from the very beginning men have been given a leadership role in the church and in the home and in the world.

What we learn from this short letter that takes about 15 minutes to read is that all men are called to be leaders in the church, but all men are called to lead in different ways. Paul reminds Titus of the qualifications for men to be elders in chapter 1. In chapter 2 we see the plan God has for older men in the church and younger men in the church. Then in chapter 3 Paul tells Titus what men are to be like outside the church. **There really is a specific role given for men of every age in the local church.** Knowing your

role and pursuing it in the power of the Spirit is essential for Christ being glorified in Cornerstone Bible Church.

Here is the question for the morning - The question for the morning is not what does God want men to be like in the church. **The question is how do we do it?** How do we keep glorifying God in the midst of a wicked culture? This is what Paul reminds Titus in Titus 3:1-8. Paul reminds Titus that the power to live for Christ in the midst of a Christ hating world is the power of the Holy Spirit. **He is both the regenerator and renewer.** He is the life giver and growth giver. What we could never do in the flesh we are empowered to do in the Spirit.

Years ago I got to go on a short term missions trip to Brazil. We worked with a group called Athletes in Action. The missionaries lived on a piece of property that had different fields (I won't say what kind of fields they were because Kirk told me to never talk about soccer in a sermon) - There were fields and there were basketball courts. They would invite groups of kids to come out and play games and then they would share the gospel.

One morning we were playing baseball with the kids. Growing up in America we know how baseball works. It was shocking to me how little these kids knew about baseball. I remember one kid walking up to the plate and he had no idea where to stand or how to hold the bat. We finally got him in position and he finally hit the

ball and he took off running to third base. It was shocking for me to watch because I knew how baseball works.

The sad reality is that there are many men who are a part of the church today who wrongly assume that being a Christian is more about what we do than what Christ has done. Many men are trying to run the bases in the Christian life without getting on first base. First base in the Christian life is making sure you're born again. Making sure you have life from above. Life from God is the starting point for walking with God and living a life that pleases Him.

My goal this morning is to get on base and then the next 7 weeks we will talk more about how to run the bases - How to be a godly man in some specific areas. Let's read Titus 3:1-8 and be freshly reminded about the power of the new birth.

Titus 3:1-8.

Titus 3:1-8

- 3:1 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work,
- 2 to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.
- 3 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing

our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

- 4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,
- 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,
- 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,
- 7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
- 8 The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

In Titus 3:1-8 we are going to see three foundational truths that we all need to remember to be a godly man:

1. Remember Your Past Sinfulness
2. Remember Your Present Salvation
3. Remember Your Purposeful Service

What is Paul doing in this section? In chapter 2 Paul helps Titus help new believers understand how to live for Christ inside the church. In chapter 3 Paul is helping Titus help new believers live for Christ outside the church. Paul wanted Titus to make sure

men in the church live consistent lives for Christ both inside and outside the church.

In the first two verses in chapter 3 Paul describes what our attitude should be to pagans in positions of power or normal everyday unbelievers. **The first two verses are about our approach to a lost and dying world.** Do any of you need help living for Christ in the midst of people who live for sin? Is it harder to live for Christ in here or out there? Most of us would say that it is harder to live for Christ outside the church than inside the church. It's not always easy to be the salt and light Christ calls us to be but the Lord wants us to live consistent lives wherever we are. No duplicity or hypocrisy.

How do we keep shining for Christ in the midst of a dark and decaying world? What's the motivation? Verses 3-7 are the motivation to live as salt and light in the midst of a decaying culture. **Why we do what we do matters as much as what we do.** The truth is that you may be the only Christian man in your home or where you work or where you live. You're not there by accident. God has you there to be a light for Christ. But how do we do it? How do we keep shining for Christ in a dark and decaying world? **We live for Christ through the power He provides through the new birth.**

Let's start with a reminder of our past sin:



### Titus 3:3

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

For takes us back to verses 1-2. Again, this is a section about living for Christ in a hostile world. What our attitude should be to pagans. Paul grounds his exhortation for godly living in a godless society with a reminder in Titus 3 that at one time we were just like them. **Unbelievers are now what we all once were.**

The first part of verse 3 describes our attitude toward God apart from Christ - We were foolish, disobedient and led astray. We were sheep without a shepherd. Isaiah 53:6, "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned - every one - to his own way." That was us prior to salvation. Doing life our way and not God's way.

The middle part of the verse describes our attitude toward sin - slaves to various passions and pleasures. Ephesians 2:2-3 says, "in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind."

The last part of verse 3 describes our relationship with other people - passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. We were relationship destroyers through ill will, envy and hatefulness. What is interesting is that Paul includes himself and Titus in this list. **If an apostle includes himself in this list why would any of us think we're any different. We're all on the same spiritual boat by nature and it's called the titanic.**

**Why does Paul take Titus back through a description of their former lives of sin? I think going back through these verses does two things - It keeps us humble and it helps us maintain compassion for lost people.**

Men, when we forget who we were apart from Christ we lose compassion for people who are still in need of Christ. If you see your heart growing cold toward lost people go back and remember what your life was like before Christ. Remember what life was like when you lived in sin without hope and without God in the world. All you had to live for was the fleeting pleasures of sin that deceived you and destroyed you. Remember the way of the transgressor is hard.

Unbelievers are what we once were - foolish rebels who were deceived by sin that destroyed our lives.

I was listening to a sermon recently and the pastor said, "The problem with evangelism today is that we start in Titus 3:4 instead of Titus 3:3." I agree. Salvation starts with conviction of sin. **It starts with our ruin in sin before the remedy.** It starts with realizing I'm on the titanic and I have to get off or I'm going to die. The reason Paul reminds Titus who they both were in verse 3 is to help them maintain compassion for those who are still lost and to remind Titus that the gospel does what no other message can do.

So why are you different? What makes you different from our sin celebrating society? That's where Paul turns in Titus 3:4-7 - From our past sin to:

## 2. Our Present Salvation - Titus 3:4-7

Titus 3:4-7 shows us what God did to save us from our sins:

### Titus 3:4-7

- 4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,
- 5 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,
- 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,
- 7 so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

But in verse 4 contrasts the difference between what we deserve and what God did for us. It's an explanation of what happened to move us from degenerate people to regenerate people. **If someone asked you what verses in the New Testament clearly articulate how God saves sinners it would be difficult to to Titus 3:4-7.** We see the Trinity at work in our salvation. These verses are a vivid description of how God saves sinners and gives spiritual life in Christ to people who are spiritually dead. I don't think we can remember or review these four verses too much.

These verses explain the why, the how and the what of our salvation and we need to spend time in each section but we are running out of time. That's what every preacher says who is about out of material.

The main phrase in these verses is in the beginning of verse 5 - Three of best words we can ever hear, especially in light of what we read about ourselves in verse 3. What makes believers different? "He saved us." Saved us is in what's called the aorist tense. **It views salvation as a decisive act performed at a point in time. Our salvation is rooted in actual historical events. When Christ came our salvation was accomplished.**

Why did He save us? Paul reminds Titus that it is not because of anything we have done or will do. Man in sin cannot save

himself. We're not drowning in sin, we are dead in sin and only God can give spiritual life to men who are spiritually dead.

God's saving activity through Christ is rooted in God's kindness and love. God saw our need and He met our need. Only God could do this, right? The One we sinned against is the only One who could do anything about it. Instead of leaving us in our sin God sent His Son to save us from our sin.

D.A. Carson, "If God had perceived that our greatest need was economic, he would have sent an economist. If he had perceived that our greatest need was entertainment, he would have sent us a comedian or an artist. If God had perceived that our greatest need was political stability, he would have sent us a politician. If he had perceived that our greatest need was health, he would have sent us a doctor. But he perceived that our greatest need involved our sin, our alienation from him, our profound rebellion, our death; and he sent us a Savior. "

How did God save us? Verse 5 says that God saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives life, the flesh profits nothing Jesus said in John 6:63. What is this a description of? This is a description of the new birth. This is how God causes sinners to be born again. Regeneration is the work of the Spirit of God through the gospel of God.

It consists negatively of removal of filth and positively of a renewing, both brought about by the Holy Spirit. Regeneration changes our nature. The Spirit of God uses the word of God to wash us, making us clean through the new birth. It is the Holy Spirit who washes us, not externally but internally. Ephesians 5:26 says that we are washed through the water of the Word.

Thus the Spirit and the Word work together to unite us to Jesus Christ. The Spirit is poured out upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. God doesn't give us a little of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. He gives us all of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. Notice in verse 6 it says that God poured out His Holy Spirit richly through Jesus Christ our Savior. Richly. God held nothing back. He gave us His Son to save His and His Spirit to seal us.

We are not only given new life, we are given a new status. Now we have a new legal status before God and we are co-heirs with Christ. Titus 3:7, "so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." To be justified means to declare righteous. When the Holy Spirit gave us new life in Christ God imputed all of our sin to Christ and God imputed all of Christ's righteousness to us. Now we stand before God clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Cleansed by His blood, clothed in His righteousness. We are declared righteous by God and adopted into His family as His own dear children, co-heirs

with Christ. We belong to Christ and what belongs to Him belongs to us.

**Men, we can think about a lot of things too much but we cannot think about salvation too much.** This is what keeps our heart tender toward the Lord. When we remember who we were in sin and who we are solely because of God's kindness and love and mercy we will want to live for Christ. **The gospel changes our ought to to a want to.**

One thing that annoys my three girls is when I tell them the same story from my childhood. I still remember when I was a kid we went to my aunt's house in Austin, Texas and she made beef tenderloin with some sauce that was utterly life changing. I remember dipping this beef tenderloin into this bernaise sauce and putting into my mouth and nothing ever tasted so good.

**Titus 3:4-7 is beef tenderloin for the soul.** This is a sweet reminder of what God did for us to save us entirely by His sovereign grace. God didn't have to save us, God chose to save us. Salvation is from Him and through Him and for Him.

So, men, is this you? Does Titus 3:4-7 describe you? Salvation is not earned. Regeneration is not something you work up from the outside. One author puts it like this, "On your best day you have nothing to give God, and if you have never realized that,

then you have never been saved. No, we cannot work our way into heaven."

Paul reminds Titus that he is what he is because God saved him, God regenerated him, God renewed Him and God justified Him. He was no different than the wicked world around him. Were it not for grace he would be still on the slippery slope of sin but because of grace he is secure in his salvation. Is this you? Can you hold up Titus 3:4-7 and see your reflection in these verses or do you take credit for your salvation?

What should that security lead to? We learned how God saved us but we still need to learn why God saved us. How does our present salvation, our new life in Christ, change how we should live every day moving forward?

Paul reminds us of our past sin in verse 3, our present salvation in verses 4-7.

### 3. Our Purposeful Service - Titus 3:8

#### Titus 3:8

The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.



Good works is a repeated theme of Titus. But it is something we have to make sure we get the order right. Paul is clear in Titus that good works are not the cause of our salvation but the result of our salvation. Good works flow from being united to Christ. Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

God has a life of good works prepared in advance for every believer and yet Paul reminds Titus that believers are to be careful to devote themselves to good works. Careful has the sense of paying close attention. One commentator writes, "Those who have trusted in God (cf. God as "Savior," 1:3; 2:10; 3:4) are "to be careful" (in the sense of "paying close attention") "to devote themselves" to "good works." In so doing, they will be like the One in whom they have trusted. Paul observed, "These things are excellent and profitable for everyone." Good works constitute "these things." Such intrinsically good works will surely be "profitable" or useful to "everyone" (lit. "men," in the sense of *society* in general)."

What the world needs is authentic examples of the life transforming power of the gospel. Matthew 5:16, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." Men, because we can live for Christ we have to be careful to live for Christ.

That's what we are going to be learning on Wednesday morning moving forward. How to live for Christ in 8 specific areas. I hope you'll keep coming. I hope you will make it your goal to grow over the summer. To be the man inside and outside the church God wants you to be for His glory and the good of the church and the good of this broken world.

Many of you know the name Jonathan Edwards. As a young man, after God saved him, Jonathan Edwards sat down and carefully thought through how he would use the rest of his life to serve His Savior, not to earn favor with God but because He had God's favor. Remember grace is not opposed to effort, grace is opposed to earning. He begins with, "Being sensible that I am unable to do anything without God's help, I do humbly entreat him, by his grace, to enable me to keep these Resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake. Remember to read over these Resolutions once a week.

1. Resolved, That I will do whatsoever I think to be most to the glory of God, and my own good, profit, and pleasure, in the whole of my duration; without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence.  
Resolved, to do whatever I think to be my duty, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general. Resolved, so to do, whatever difficulties I meet with, how many whatsoever, and how great whatsoever.

2. Resolved, To be continually endeavoring to find out some new contrivance and invention to promote the aforementioned things.
3. Resolved, If ever I shall fall and grow dull, so as to neglect to keep any part of these Resolutions, to repent of all I can remember, when I come to myself again.
4. Resolved, Never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God, nor be, nor suffer it, if I can possibly avoid it.
5. Resolved, Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

Those are the first 5. There are sixty five more resolutions. What is that all about? Jonathan Edwards was careful to engage in purposeful service for Christ once he was saved. He was careful to devote his life to good works. God used Him to accomplish much good. John Kitchen, "It is the believer's calling to busy himself in performing good deeds."

Paul ends verse 8 with a reminder that busying ourselves with good deeds that flow from salvation are excellent and profitable for people. As believers live out their salvation in a life of good works the world takes notice. I think Paul still has evangelism in mind. How will sinners on the island of Crete benefit from local church's set up on the island? Through the life of believers who are careful to obey God out of the overflow of salvation.

The first reminder in this class on a godly man's picture is that godly men are born again. Titus 3:3-7 reminds us of our past sin, our present salvation and our purposeful service. I would encourage all of you men to spend some time in Titus this next week and make sure you are connecting the true grace of God to your daily life. That is the first step to being a godly man. Let's pray.