

Sermon Notes 11/20/22

# “The Cleansing Gift of Christ”

How should we respond to the gift of Christ?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ the gift of Christ in our relationships.

Titus 3:1-2

Ephesians 4:32

Colossians 3:12-13

2. \_\_\_\_\_ of our past sins.

Titus 3:3-4

Romans 2:4

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

3. \_\_\_\_\_ the gift of Christ in baptism.

Titus 3:5

Colossians 2:12

Acts 2:38

Acts 22:16

Romans 6:3-4

Galatians 3:27

1 Peter 3:21



**Have you received the cleansing gift of Christ?**

# Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 5: November 20-27

Titus 3:1-8

In Titus chapter 3, Paul returns to the theme of doing good works mentioned in the previous chapter (2:14). God wants Christians to be good citizens who are peaceable and considerate to all people. He also wants us to leave the sins of our past in the past. God helps us to do this by reminding us of the gospel and our baptism into Christ (3:4-5). The love Jesus demonstrated for us on the cross is a powerful motivation to live for Him. Along with forgiveness, we also receive the Holy Spirit when we are baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38). The Holy Spirit empowers us to live godly lives (Gal. 5:16-17).

## Read Titus 3:1-8

1. How should Christians respond to rulers and authorities? (3:1)

James Smith notes,

Our obedience should be rendered to government as such irrespective of its particular form or of the person in whom it is vested. These words are so important because in those days the government at all levels was pagan and generally corrupt. Yet that was no excuse for Christians to be rebellious against civil authorities.<sup>1</sup>

2. How does God want us to treat all people? (3:2)

3. What were we like before we came to Christ? (3:3)

4. What appeared in verse 4 that should change us from our old way of life? (See also Romans 2:4)

5. Why does God save people? (3:4-5)

6. What words did Paul use to describe our conversion in verse 5?

Jack Cottrell writes,

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<sup>1</sup> James Smith, *Pastoral Epistles Revisited* (Coppell, TX: lulu.com, 2017), 231.

Titus 3:5 specifically says that the regeneration and renewing that occur in baptism are “by the Holy Spirit.” Jesus attributes the new birth to the Holy Spirit, using the phrase “born of the Spirit” three times in John 3:5-8.<sup>2</sup>

7. When do we experience the “washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit”? (3:5)

Robert Yarbrough observes,

Paul writes first of “the washing of rebirth,” which is surely related to the divine regeneration of the human heart through faith in Christ alluded to in John 3:3-8. Water baptism is a recognition of and catalyst for this spiritual but real transformation. It is difficult, and unnecessary, to make a radical separation between the two.<sup>3</sup>

8. Should we see our baptism as our work or God’s work? (3:5)

In an excellent book on biblical baptism, Cottrell comments,

In the Bible, baptism is thought of not as something *we* are doing but as something *God* is doing. It is indeed “the working of God” (Col. 2:12). No passage brings out this point better than Titus 3:5. The central thought here is something God has done: “He saved us.” In connection with this, two words have an emphatic force, namely, “not” and “we.” ...Thus, to discern the proper emphasis, this is how it should be read: “He saved us, *NOT* on the basis of deeds which *WE* have done.” How, then? By baptism! How so? Because this is where God the Holy Spirit works *HIS* work of regeneration and renewing! It could not be made more plain that baptism is thus God’s work and not man’s, and thus a work of purest grace.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Jack Cottrell, *Set Free! What the Bible Says About Grace* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 344.

<sup>3</sup> Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018), 546.

<sup>4</sup> Jack Cottrell, *Baptism a Biblical Study* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1990), 149-150.

9. How did Paul describe the way God gives us the Holy Spirit in verse 6?
10. What is the result of being justified by God's grace? (3:7)
11. Why did Paul want Titus to teach these things confidently? (3:8)

This is the fifth and final "trustworthy saying" in the Pastoral Epistles. These trustworthy sayings may have been hymns or statements in the early church that were committed to memory and used to teach and encourage one another. C. Michael Moss writes,

Here Paul proclaims the section above, likely 3:4-7, as another of the "faithful" or "trustworthy" sayings of the Pastoral Epistles (cf. 1 Tim 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11). Paul's statement that the saving work of God in Jesus is accomplished by grace is reliable, and the Christians on Crete must live accordingly.<sup>5</sup>

12. Why is it important for Christians to obey civil authorities?
13. Why should Christians be peaceable and considerate to all people?
14. Why is it difficult for many Christians to let go of certain sins from their past?
15. How can the gospel help us to overcome sinful temptations?
16. What comes to your mind when you think about your baptism?
17. If you have not yet been baptized into Christ, what are you waiting for? (Acts 22:16)
18. What role does the Holy Spirit play in your life?
19. What can you do this next week to reconcile a damaged relationship?
20. How can you say thank you to God in the next few days for His saving grace?

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<sup>5</sup> C. Michael Moss, *The College Press NIV Commentary: 1, 2 Timothy and Titus* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1995), 177-178.