



The following is the summary of the Sunday sermon that is sent to the body at Steadfast in an email called "The Weekly"

Titus 3:9-15

Your Foundation Matters

Growing in our understanding of God's grace is not optional if we want to live for Him. It's foundational! Titus 3:9-15 tells us that growing in God's grace helps us know what to avoid and what things we need to engage in. God's grace through Jesus Christ saves us, instructs us, and empowers us to live for Him. That includes discerning what is fruitful and what is worthless. In every church and ministry, there are people who are problems. They often appear very spiritual and claim their intentions are good. These people were in the churches on the island of Crete as well. They were leading people away from the truth and were causing all sorts of problems. They were divisive, engaged in fruitless discussions, and raised questions without any intention of seeking answers. They were leading people out of the liberty of grace into the bondage of legalism. These people who cause problems often come across as arrogant, loving to argue about Scripture instead of applying Scripture. Paul tells Titus not to engage in worthless conversations with them. However, if a person continues to engage in divisive behavior they are to be confronted. Paul's advice was similar to what Jesus said in Matthew 18. The goal is restoration, but if he/she continues in their unrepentant divisive behavior, after a first and second warning, they are to be rejected (no longer accepted). Paul says that they are perverted (warped, have turned away from the truth), are living in sin, and are condemned by their own actions! If they are not stood up to and dealt with, they will create a tremendous amount of disunity and unhappiness in the church. God's grace helps us discern what is fruitless and what is fruitful. It empowers us to know what to avoid and helps leaders know when they need to "stand up" and confront the unruly person to protect the body. In verse 14, Paul reinforces a major theme of this letter, "the gospel of the grace of God at work in the life of the believer will result in the believer engaging (the word means "to engage with intense devotion") in good deeds. Paul concludes this letter demonstrating family affection that is part of a healthy church, "All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all." As you seek to apply this passage to your life, ask yourself these questions:

- **Have I come to grips with the reality that growing in God's grace and being trained by God's grace is not optional if I want to live for Him?** It's not optional, it's foundational! It's required! Living these verses that we covered is impossible without it. God's grace

through Jesus Christ saves you and it also instructs you and empowers you to live for Him. That includes discerning what is fruitful and what is worthless. When God's grace is at work in a believer's life, it is training them to reject godlessness and embrace godliness. His grace is teaching and training us to say no to the things that have nothing to do with Him, and yes to things that have everything to do with Him. His grace trains our attitudes, actions, and our motives.

- **Do I understand that God's grace through Jesus Christ, at work in my life by the power of the Holy Spirit, will result in good works?**
- **Am I humble enough to admit that I need others and then live like it?** When you read Paul's letters you realize that he needed others and considered it a wonderful privilege to do ministry with others.

Pastor Matt