

Insist on THESE Things

“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.” Titus 3:8

The saying is trustworthy...What saying?

“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.” Titus 3:4-7

Trustworthy

- Greek “pistos”
- sure, reliable, faithful, certain to occur, inevitable

Insist on what things?

- The Person of Christ
 - He is the epiphany of the goodness and loving kindness of God
 - He saved us
 - He is merciful
 - He is our access to the Father and provides the Holy Spirit
- The Work of Salvation
 - We were saved not by works but by mercy
 - The Holy Spirit regenerated us
 - The Holy Spirit washed us
 - The Holy Spirit is renewing us
 - We are justified by the grace of God
- The Hope of the Believer
 - We are heirs of an inheritance
 - We have eternal life through Christ

Insist on the Gospel

- “For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” 1 Corinthians 1:2
- “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures...” 1 Corinthians 15:3-4
- “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:16

“...so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works.”v.8

What has Titus had to say about good works?

- **Church leaders need to be a model of good works**
 - “Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works...” Titus 2:7
- **Why Christ died**
 - “...who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” Titus 2:14
- **Good works are not the basis of salvation**
 - “...he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy...” Titus 3:5
- **Good works are the evidence and fruit of salvation**
 - Those who have believed may devote themselves to good works

“The only message that can be trusted to produce good works is the message that tells us our works can’t save us. It seems counterintuitive, but it’s the gospel.” -Justin Dillehay

What are good works?

Good works are the overflow of love for Christ that meets the needs of others.

*“What are good deeds? The term is greatly inclusive. Of course we number in the list works of **charity**, works of **kindness** and **benevolence**, works of **piety**, **reverence**, and **holiness**. Such works as comply with the two tables of command are good deeds. Works of **obedience** are good deeds. What you do **because God bids you do it** is a good deed. Works of **love to Jesus**, done out of a desire for His glory—these are good deeds. The **common actions of everyday life**, when they are well done, with a view not to merit, but **out of gratitude**—these are good deeds. “Be careful to engage in good deeds” of every sort and kind. You are sure to be working in some way; mind that your works are good works.”*

Charles Spurgeon

- Sharing the gospel with people who are lost is a good work.
- Comforting a child in the middle of the night is a good work.
- Helping to translate the Bible to other languages is a good work.
- Showing compassion to hurting people and praying for them is a good work.
- Changing diapers, feeding, and reading bedtime stories to children are good works.
- Employers providing meaningful labor for people to provide for their families are doing good work.
- Workers who are reliable, do their job diligently, and follow the boss’s orders are doing a good work.

“Just as progressive, social-gospel types often want to emphasize good works to the exclusion of the gospel, gospel-centered Reformed types sometimes want to emphasize the gospel to the exclusion of urging people to devote themselves to good works. The former seeks to build a house without laying a foundation, while the latter wants to lay a foundation without building anything on it. Both are contrary to Titus 3, and neither will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior the way Paul intended.”

-Justin Dillehay

But Avoid the Unprofitable and Worthless (v.9)

Avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law

- What is foolish?
 - From the Greek “moros” from where we get moronic
 - Devoid of wisdom, good sense, or sound judgement
 - Speculative
- The result: unprofitable and worthless
 - Pointless and futile
 - Devoid of significance, empty, vain

Foolish	Wisdom
Speculations produce doubt	True revelation produces faith
False teaching produces dissensions and quarrels	Proper teaching produces fruit (good works, love)

- All controversy should not be avoided
 - Jesus debated religious leaders of his day: Matthew 12 and Mark 7
 - Paul debated the issue of circumcision: Acts 15
 - Paul debated religious leaders: Acts 17-18
 - Paul instructed Timothy to fight the good fight of faith: 1 Timothy 6:12
 - Paul instructed Titus that false teachers should be rebuked and silenced: Titus 1:11, 13

The Person Stirring Up Division (v.10-11)

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.” Matthew 18:15-17

“I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.¹⁸ For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.” Romans 16:17-18

Warped: crooked, twisted, perverse, depraved

Self-condemned: describing someone whose own words, actions, or behavior demonstrate their own worthiness for condemnation

The Excellent and Profitable Things

Jesus Christ

- His person: the goodness, kindness, and mercy of God
- His work: saving us by His mercy, not our works; justifying us by His grace
- His power: the fullness of the Holy Spirit washing, regenerating, and renewing us
- His promise: an inheritance of eternal life

INSIST ON THESE THINGS

Discussion

1. When have you found yourself drawn into foolish controversies or quarrels over religious matters? What type of teaching/doctrine was involved?
2. In what ways can speculations produce doubt rather than faith?
3. Who are people in your life who “insisted on the excellent and profitable things” of the gospel? What fruit of good works did they demonstrate?
4. How can we be careful to devote ourselves to good works?

HOW CAN WE PRAY?

Benny Youngblood: *Shepherding Team Pastor*

Dave Lewis: *Shepherding Pastor*

Dave Matthews: *Shepherding Pastor and Trailblazers*

Michael Wichlan: *Shepherding Pastor*

Eric Reebals: *Pastor of Evangelism/Discipleship and Men’s Ministry*

Greg Norfleet: *Director of Counseling*

Michael Johnson: *Special Connections Director*

Chris Thompson: *Mercy Ministry Pastor*

- Pray for these men to lead ministries devoted to the gospel and good works.
- Pray for these men to insist upon the gospel in their shepherding, counseling, and outreach.
- Pray that these men would avoid foolish controversy and would be able to shepherd those stirring up division.
- Pray that these men would be excellent models of good works to the people they serve.

In these days some are occupied with questions about the future state instead of accepting the plain testimony of Scripture. Some give more prominence to speculations drawn from prophecy than to the maintaining of good works. I reverence the prophecies, but I have small patience with those whose one business is guessing at their meaning. One whose family was utterly unruly and immoral met with a Christian friend and said to him: "Do you quite see the meaning of the Seven Trumpets?" "No," answered his friend, "I do not. And if you looked more to your seven children the seven trumpets would suffer no harm." To train up your children and instruct your servants and order your household aright are "good and beneficial for people." A life of godliness is better than the understanding of mysteries. The eternal truth of God is to be defended at all hazards, but questions that do not signify the turn of a hair to either God or man may be left to settle themselves.¹

¹ Charles H. Spurgeon, [*Spurgeon Commentary: Titus*](#), ed. Elliot Ritzema, Spurgeon Commentary Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), 337.