

## Titus: “Doing Good” series

Week 6: Preaching the Gospel . . . to yourself

September 6, 2026

*Titus 3:1 Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, 2 to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone. 3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. 4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. 8 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.*

### Introduction

- In the timeline of most people's lives, there are key points that shape who we are.
- It's like we are a lump of Clay that is being shaped by what happens in our lives.
- We live day in and day out, going to school, getting a job, raising the kids, playing sports, watching TV, then going to school, working at our job, raising the kids, playing sports, watching TV, then going to school . . .
- But periodically some things happen, an event, a word, a situation or something that alters the way we live or what we do.
- It can be positive.
- But it can also be negative.
- If we could make a timeline of our lives, we could point to those transformation events.
- To those markers in our lives. Those points where our lives are changed, transformed, made different. It's where the course and direction we were going was irrevocably altered.
- It's how we are molded and shaped into who we are becoming.
- What happens is that these begin to form the narrative, the soundtrack, of our lives.
- We develop a way of preaching to ourselves. About who we are, why we are that way, and our outlook on life.
- You probably don't even realize that you are preaching to yourself every day.
- "You got this. You can do anything."
- "I can't believe you did that again. You can be so stupid."
- "Discipline is the key. You can do what others can't."
- "You are so fat."
- "I'm so busy and tired all the time."
- "I wish I was more, but I don't think I can get there."
- "I'm exactly what my mother always said I was."
- And every time we preach to ourselves, we reinforce certain views, actions, opinions about ourselves or about others.
- The truth of the matter is that what we preach to ourselves has a significant impact on our outlook in life, how we act, and our perspective on the circumstances we encounter. It affects our impact on others and this world.
- Just like this chunk of clay, we are continually being molded, punched, squished, shaped and poked. We are becoming something. The narrative of our world and our lives wants to shape us, and often not in a way that is profitable.

- And the good news this morning is that no matter what our past, no matter what things have happened to us, no matter what things we have done, God's transforming love can shape us in new and better ways.
- As we get close to the end of the book of Titus, a letter from Paul to his young apprentice, Titus, on how to live and do good, we are reminded today to practice **preaching the Gospel of Jesus to ourselves regularly**. It is not about saying some mantra or self-talk – it is regularly soaking our minds with the Good News of Jesus such that it impacts every area of our life in a positive direction.

## Main Sermon Text

*Titus 3:1 Remind the people*

- The first word in this section of Paul's letter is to "remind" them. This means Paul is telling Titus to keep on telling his church what they already know. It is not new information, but it can be easily forgotten, at least in a practical sense.
- We get so easily distracted, or we forget, or we get focused on something else, or our eyes wander to what's right in front of us. In doing so, we can lose sight of marvelous truths that are a part of our lives and experiences.
- Just like Titus is instructed to do, we are going to be "reminded" today – and not just for today, but how to continue to **preach the gospel**, the good news, **of Jesus to ourselves regularly**.
- If we can really practice this, it will allow God to shape us into something that is pleasant and useful.
- What exactly was Titus supposed to remind them of that they were forgetting, or prone to forget. There are three things from what Paul writes that we should preach to ourselves regularly.

## I. God has redeemed you through Jesus.

- He has thrown you a lifeline. He has saved you from a pointless life. You have been set free from being stuck in guilt and shame and condemnation.

*3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.*

- This was your state without Jesus.
- Foolish. You had no spiritual understanding. You could not find your way to him. No matter how good or spiritual might try to be, it accomplished nothing. Decisions would lead to damaging consequences.
- Disobedient. Against God and his laws. Living for yourself. Selfish.
- Deceived. Means thinking you were OK when you were really not. You lived by your standards and they maybe even made you feel OK, but they were ultimately destructive.
- Enslaved. Not in control, but being controlled. It felt like you were your own person, and you got to decide how life went, but in reality, you were a slave to sin. Under the control of the devil and your own selfish desires. Even things that seem fun or pleasurable just made a silver lined cage.
- Malice and envy. Our tendency to do wrong, to have an attitude of ill-will. The kind that criticizes and puts down others who don't agree with you.
- Being hated and hating. Having relationships that are broken. With animosity, anger and bitterness growing up in us all the time.
- It is like Paul is saying, "Don't kid yourself. You were not good. You were not going to heaven. Your life was not a bed of roses. You were a selfish, prideful, inward focused person with no future.

- You used to be like this lump of clay. [THROUGHOUT THIS SECTION, BE PINCHING AND PUSHING THE CLAY WITH NO RESULT] You were at the whim of the events around you.
- Life was all about you and you would do whatever it took to make you feel better. But ultimately, you were dead, alone, with no future, enslaved to sin.
- If you came to know Jesus when you were a kid, as I did, you did not experience , as a teenager, or as an adult. It is irrelevant whether it was a long time ago or just recently.
- Without Jesus, you had no hope and try as you might, you could not change yourself.

*4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us.*

- BUT . . . the word that changes everything.
- When God sent his son Jesus it changed EVERYTHING.
- What a great picture of what Christ did for us.
- Whether it was saving us from what we were in, or where we could be headed, Jesus came.
- It's so easy to begin thinking that our salvation, our rescue, has something to do with us. Even if it is a little corner of our minds that thinks if we act right, and do the right things, God will then love us and be pleased with us. The truth is:

*5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.*

- He was extravagant in his salvation. It is so vast, this mercy.
- It only happens through Christ.

*He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior.*

- There are two components to this saving, transformation process.
- You were saved FROM the power and penalty of sin. He says we were saved through the washing of rebirth. This is the process of being cleansed from our sins. It was confession and repentance and being baptized. Paul connects coming to know the forgiveness of Jesus and following him in baptism.
- You were saved TO a life empowered by the Holy Spirit. When we follow Jesus, he gives us the Holy Spirit. That is God with us all the time. It is Christ's lavish provision for us to change.
- So if I'm preaching to myself that Jesus has redeemed me, how does this help me? What exactly am I being reminded of?

*7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

- The "so that" is what God's redemption looks like.
- I am justified by grace (my past)
- God does not look at me with disdain. I am not defined by my past. I can be free from that guilt and shame I carry. God is not waiting to punish me for my past. I do not have to strive to earn his favor.
- I have a new and secure identity (my present)
- I am not who I was. What other people think of me does not determine my value. To be his heir means I am his. I am not adrift. I belong. I am loved incredibly deeply. I have both rights and privileges as God's child. He delights in me.
- I have a secure hope (my future). I have the hope of eternal life. I will live forever with him. Without him, I was destined for hell. Not oblivion, not just a not nice future. But forever torment apart from the creator of the universe.
- So how does preaching these truths to myself regularly help me?
- Consider how you see yourself. You look in the mirror and despise how you look, or you get angry at yourself for blowing it again or when you feel guilt and shame that keeps you from opening up to others.

- Or consider how you see others. That they don't do enough. That they are sinful. How awful those people we see in the news are.
- You remind yourself that is not how God sees you. He sees you through Jesus. You can take a deep breath. You don't have to berate yourself. You can be honest. Courageous. Vulnerable. You remind yourself that without Jesus, you would be just like those people you despise or have a problem with. That God loves them and desires good for them as much as he does for you.
- When you are lonely and feel like no one pays any attention to you, you don't have to think you are unlovable. God assigned enough worth to you to die for you. You don't have to pursue ultimate fulfillment elsewhere – God sees you. He knows you.
- When you struggle with ongoing health issues. When life is drudgery. Or when you are tempted to worry because the world is a mess. Remind yourself that the future is secure. Your future. And it is a glorious one.
- We need to regularly preach the gospel to ourselves. To remind ourselves what God has done and who we are. But this is not just because God wants us to feel better about ourselves. There is a practical connection.

## II. The gospel frees you to live differently.

- The purpose of our redemption is to live different to lead other people to the same thing. *1 Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, 2 to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men.*
- Christ does not come into our lives, rescuing us and extravagantly pouring out his mercy and love to settle our past, present and future for no reason.
- He wants us to be different.
- When we know that God has redeemed us from what we were. When we know that Jesus lived, died and rose again for every person. When we know that our identity is already set, not determined by the opinions and actions of others. When we know that we have an eternal future secure in God. When all these are true, we live differently. Paul lists some key ones.
- Subject to rules and authorities. Be willing to submit and follow. A voluntary acceptance to various forms of government.
- Obedient. Practical obedience to particular orders. This is about not putting me first.
- Ready to do what is good. Prepared, a predilection for the right actions, not the wrong.
- Slander no one. Not so curse or use vicious epithets, but to build up.
- Peaceable and considerate. To refuse to engage in quarrels and arguments. To put others before ourselves.
- Show true humility. To put us second. Note that it says "to all men", not just the good ones.
- My friends, the gospel is what makes this possible.
- When I am secure in my identity, I can obey and follow even when it doesn't make sense, because I am not trying to prove anything.
- I can treat people with grace, even those who don't deserve it, because that's what I received myself.
- I can put myself second in my marriage, with my kids, friends or parents because God is looking after my concerns and I don't have to demand my rights.
- I can live with peace and joy because my circumstances don't set those for me.
- We need to **preach the Gospel of Jesus to ourselves regularly.**
- Paul closes this section with a final thing that we need to preach to ourselves.

*8 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.*

- “This” means what he has just finished saying. To remind yourself of the truths of the good news of Jesus, how it has changed you, dealt with your past, present and future, can be trusted.
- Because it can be trusted, it will change how you live.
- And then he says what we often miss. These things are “excellent and profitable.” We don’t believe this or do these things just because that’s what God says. It isn’t just some duty we perform.

### **III. The gospel applied is to my benefit.**

- When we preach the gospel to ourselves regularly and let it sink into our heads, hearts, hands and habits, it is a better way to live. It is worth more. It makes our lives matter. It has eternal consequences. We will be better for it. And those around us will be better for it.
- When we preach the good news to ourselves, and are reminded of its implications, we will do life better. How we respond to our lives and relationships will improve. We will have more peace, more joy and more love.

### **Conclusion**

- There are two kinds of people here today.
- Maybe you are here and have never decided to let Jesus have control of your life. To ask him to forgive your sins and make you clean. If this is you, don’t leave today without taking this opportunity to confess, believe in Jesus and accept him into your life. This means telling Jesus you cannot get better on your own, that you need his forgiveness and that you believe that he died in your place, and so you commit to follow him as your king.
- Many of you have already done that. You have asked and Jesus has forgiven you.
- If that is you, then the question is whether or not you are being transformed by the glorious truth of the gospel. Are you letting Jesus mold you and transform and renew you into the kind of person he wants you to be.
- Or are you resisting him? Are you holding parts of your life back? Are you struggling to give something up? Are you holding onto bitterness or anger? Is your trust in something or someone else day by day?
- Maybe it’s been a while since the truth of the gospel has sunk deep into your heart.
- We are going to celebrate communion together this morning. Communion is the practice that Jesus gave us to remind us of the good news about him. It is a regular practice where we preach the gospel to ourselves.
- So this morning, as we take communion, let God preach the gospel to you.
- God has redeemed me through Jesus
- This frees me to live differently
- When I do this, it is to my benefit