

Sunday, November 7, 2010—Titus: The Practice of Grace—Titus 3:1—The Believer and the Government

Introduction

- We have finally made it to chapter 3.
- Two weeks ago we saw in Titus 2:14 that God redeemed us from all iniquity and purified us unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.
- The issue of the proper place of good works has been one of the major themes of the book of Titus. Chapter 3 is going to continue elaborating on this theme.
- Chapter One: the church is to be an orderly organization (Titus 1:5)
 - Saved by Grace
- Chapter Two: the church is to teach and preach the word of God (Titus 2:1)
 - Live by Grace
- Chapter Three: the church is supposed to produce good works (Titus 3:1)
 - Grace motivates believers to produce good works
- This morning as we begin Chapter 3 one of the first issues Paul discusses is the believer's attitude and relationship to the government.

Titus 3:1

- ***“Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,”***
- *“Put them in mind”*—basically means to remind. The Holy Spirit through Paul wanted to Titus to remind the saints on create what their attitude and mind set ought to be towards the government.
- *“to be subject”*—according to *Strong's Concordance* the Greek word here carries the following meanings: 1) to arrange under, to subordinate, 2) to subject, put in subjection, 3) to subject one's self, obey, 4) to submit to one's control, 5) to yield to one's admonition or advice, 6) to obey, be subject
 - I Corinthians 15:28—“subdued,” “subject,” “put all things under him”
 - Ephesians 5:21-22, 24—“submitting,” “submit,” “subject”
 - Titus 2:5, 9—“obedient”
- The Holy Spirit is telling all believers to be obedient and submissive to the ruling authorities.
- *“Principalities and powers”*—are referring to seat of governmental authority that believers to be subject to.
 - Colossians 1:16

- Ephesians 1:20-21
- “*to obey magistrates*”—means to obey a ruler or superior.
- We must keep in mind that Crete was under the control of the Roman government, a totalitarian government which exercised absolute control over the lives of those under it. For believers to rebel against this type of authority could mean certain death. Paul who had just been released from prison knew full well the power of the Caesars and their ability to make life difficult for believers.
- I Timothy 2:1-2—written about the same time as Titus, Paul instructs Timothy to pray for kings and those in authority not so that the government will do everything the way you want them to but so that believers may lead a quiet and peaceable life with godliness and honesty.
- Paul knew the power that secular authority possessed to make life difficult for believers. Paul wrote I Timothy and Titus on the eve of the first great persecution of Christians under the Roman Emperor Nero.
- How much time do you as a believer spend praying for the government to these ends than complaining about it?

Scriptural View of Human Government

- *God created human government to deter evil.*
 - Genesis 9:4-6—God institutes the death penalty as a means to deter evil in the earth.
 - Romans 13:1-5—only people who do evil need to fear the government.
- *Human government follows the principals God established when he created it.*
 - Romans 13:1—is not saying that God places every political leader or governmental system in place. Rather the “powers that be” is referring to the governmental positions of rank and authority that God made at creation (Colossians 1:16).
 - If God put every leader and government into power than one would have to conclude that the actions of Nero, Hitler, Stalin, Hussein or any other made man from world history were the will of God.
 - Romans 13:2—when believers resist the authority placed in those who occupy these seats of authority they are resisting the ordinance of God.
- *The government is run by sinners.*
 - Romans 3:23—a bunch of sinners is running every level of government in this world. Why would you be surprise when they screw things up or refuse to follow Biblical principles.

- Isaiah 9:7—there will be not perfect government on this planet unto Jesus Christ himself returns to set up his kingdom upon this earth. Even then people will rebel against the righteous reign of the creator of the universe.
- *Believers should obey God rather than man.*
 - Acts 5:28-33—understand that when you chose to obey God rather than man there may be consequences for doing so.
 - Daniel 6:1-16—Daniel obeyed God’s word and then took the punishment for his disobedience.
 - As American’s we have not had to worry about this like people have in other countries throughout history. I believe the day is coming where American Christians are going to have to make some hard choices. There is legislation and litigation swirling right now within the highest halls of our government to would make the Bible’s definition of marriage hate speech.
- *Believers should know their rights and how their government operates.*
 - Acts 21:36-40
 - Acts 22:22-30—Paul knew his rights under the law and worked accordingly to his own benefit.
 - How do Supreme Court justices get their jobs?
- *Believers should pay their taxes.*
 - Romans 13:6-7
 - Mark 12:14-17
- *Believers need to vote their conscience according to the word of God rightly divided.*
 - I have never used this pulpit as a plat form to tell believers how to vote or to espouse my own political philosophy. Let me just say that when I vote, I vote my conscience according to the Word of God.
 - Philippians 3:20—I am a citizen of heaven left here on earth as an ambassador (II Corinthians 5:20) of the nation that I represent. Therefore my primary identification is not with any age demographic, union, socioeconomic class, political party, or cultural subgroup it is with my lord and savior Jesus Christ.
 - Therefore, I will always consider the views and beliefs of each candidate or issue based upon the rightly divided word and not the talking points or philosophy of any political subgroup or party.
 - As believers we need to cast votes in line with God’s eternal truth not earthly political sub groupings that are designed to cause strife and division.

Conclusion

- Titus 3:1—believers are to be ready to every good work.
- The Greek word translated “ready” in this verse means to be prepared. Believers need to be prepared so then when opportunities for doing good works present themselves we are ready to fulfill our calling as believers.
- Galatians 6:9, II Thessalonians 3:13