

Sunday, November 28, 2010—Titus: The Practice of Grace—Titus 3:5-7: Heirs of Eternal Life

### Introduction/Review

- Two weeks ago before our Right Division 101 Sunday we studied our condition in Adam (verse 3) and saw that despite the depth of our sin “the kindness and love of God our savior toward man appeared.”
  - Romans 5:8
  - Ephesians 2:4
- Our verses for this morning are a continuation of the thought Paul was expressing in verse 4. Verses 5 through 7 explain the depth of the kindness and love God has demonstrated towards us.

### Titus 3:5

- ***“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;”***
- This is a unique verse because it tells us in one sentence how God *did not* save us and how he *did* save us.
- The first phrase tells us how God did not save us; it was not by works of righteousness which we have done. How many people view their eternal salvation as a scale with good works on one side and bad works on the other side? According to this view if your good works outweigh your bad God will let you into heaven.
  - Romans 3:23—how can a sinner produce any work that God will accept?
  - Isaiah 64:6—all our righteousness are as filthy rags.
  - Romans 4:4-5—working for salvation only bring one deeper into debt before God.
  - Revelation 20:13-15—when God judge men according to their works they will experience the second death and be cast into the Lake of Fire.
  - Ephesians 2:8-9—salvation is not by works of righteousness because if it were we could boast before God and if we could save ourselves Christ did not need to die.
  - I Corinthians 1:29
- ***“but”***—since no one could ever be made righteous or become saved by their own works, God has provided a distinctly different way by which he is saving sinners. The strong conjunction translated “but” contrasts God’s effective method, with mankind’s ineffective efforts.
- ***“according to his mercy”***—God’s method of saving sinners is based upon his mercy.
  - Mercy—That benevolence, mildness or tenderness of heart which disposes a person to overlook injuries, or to treat an offender better than he deserves; the disposition that

tempers justice, and induces an injured person to forgive trespasses and injuries, and to forbear punishment, or inflict less than law or justice will warrant. In this sense, there is perhaps no word in our language precisely synonymous with mercy. That which comes nearest to it is grace. It implies benevolence, tenderness, mildness, pity or compassion, and clemency, but exercised only towards offenders. Mercy is a distinguishing attribute of the Supreme Being. (*Webster's 1828*)

- Ephesians 2:1-5—we must acknowledge and understand that it is on account of God's great love wherewith he loved us that he had mercy upon us. God's love precedes his mercy it is on account of his love towards us that he was merciful to us. His mercy is an expression of his love.
- “*he saved us*”—the primary definition of the Greek word translated “saved” means to keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction, according to *Strong's Concordance*.
- Notice that God saved us we did not save ourselves. God rescued us from the eternal destruction we were all headed towards.
  - I Corinthians 1:18—the power of God is expressed by the message of the cross.
- “*by the washing of regeneration*”—according to *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* regeneration means: “new birth by the grace of God; that change by which the will and natural enmity of man to God and his law are subdued, and a principle of supreme love to God and his law, or holy affections, are implanted in the heart.”
- This verse is often used as a proof text for those who teach baptismal regeneration. The theological view that the waters of baptism save or place the lost sinner into a right standing with God.
  - Mark 16:16
  - Acts 2:38
  - I Corinthians 1:17-18
  - I Corinthians 6:11—the Holy Spirit is the one who washed the Corinthians. We learn in Titus 3:5 that the Holy Spirit's spiritual washing of the sinner results in our regeneration.
- “*and renewing of the Holy Ghost*”—God the Holy Spirit accomplishes both of the things mentioned in the second half of verse 5. The Holy Spirit makes new again, repairs, renovates, and restores back to a right relationship with God.
  - Romans 12:1-2

### **Titus 3:6**

- “*Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;*”

- The Holy Spirit from the end of verse 5 has been shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our savior in verse 6.
- I Corinthians 12:13—spiritual baptism into the body of Christ
- I Corinthians 2:13—H.S. is our teacher
- Ephesians 2:22—we are the habitation of God through the spirit
- Ephesians 1:13, 4:30—seals us unto the day of redemption

### Titus 3:7

- *“That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”*
- *“That”*—once again tells you the purpose and the intent of what he just said.
- *“being justified by his grace”*—those of us who have trusted Jesus Christ are in a state of having been justified. This verse is not talking about our justification as an ongoing process but as the current state of affairs and position of the believer. This is a onetime transaction in which God does the justifying.
  - Romans 3:24—to be justified means to have the very righteousness of God imputed to your account. The justice of God is obligated to give eternal life to anyone with perfect righteousness.
  - Romans 4:25
  - Romans 5:1, 9
  - I Corinthians 1:30
- Notice that the Grace of God is the active agent in our justification. Not only does the mercy of God stay the execution of God’s wrath upon us and make provision for our sins, but the grace of God freely gives the sinner what he does not deserve justification and eternal life.
  - Ephesians 2:5, 8-9
- *“we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”*—the expression “we should be made” means to become, begin to be, or to bring to pass. Through the grace of God we have received acquired and obtained (heirs) the portion allotted to us, i.e., eternal life.
- Notice that reception of this wonderful inheritance is “according to the hope of eternal life.” Remember how Paul started the book of Titus?

- Titus 1:2-3—Paul is preaching about the hope of eternal life that God promised before the world began. This message was kept secret until it was made known and manifest to the apostle Paul in due time.
- We are not saved by the accomplishment of any religious rite, or any work of righteousness,” but by the grace of God, “which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (II Timothy 1:9), “according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 1:1)
- Now this is something to be thankful for this holiday season.