

Sunday, December 5, 2010—Titus: The Practice of Grace—Titus 3:8-9: The Faithful Sayings of Paul

Introduction/Review

- Last week in verses 5-7 we studied how we are not saved as well as how we are saved according to the hope of eternal life.
- The issue of good works has been discussed in all three chapters of Titus:
 - Titus 1:16—speaks of those of are reprobate concerning good works.
 - Titus 2:14—speaks about believers being zealous of good works.
 - Titus 3:1—tells us that we should be ready to every good work.
- Today we are going to see the conclusion to Paul’s argument regarding the proper place of good works.
 - Unbelievers are not capable of producing any good works that God will accept.
 - Good works don’t save the sinner.
 - Good works are the reasonable service of the believer. They steam not from fear of punishment but from gratitude for all God has done for us through Christ Jesus.

Titus 3:8

- ***“This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.”***
- *“This is a faithful saying”*—five times in the Pastoral Epistles Paul uses this phrase. A *saying* a statement that is significant or important enough to justify frequent repetition, while a *faithful saying* is one that can be thoroughly relied and acted upon.
 - I Timothy 1:15—“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinner; of whom I am chief.”
 - I Timothy 3:1—“If a man desire the office of a bishop he desireth a good work.”
 - I Timothy 4:9—“. . . bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things.”
 - II Timothy 1:11-12—stresses the great advantage of a willingness to suffer for Christ.
- In Titus 3:8 the faithfulness of this saying is elaborated upon when Paul writes, *“and these things I will that thou affirm constantly.”*
- *Affirm*—means to assert positively; to tell with confidence; to aver; to declare the existence of something; to maintain as true; opposed to deny. (*Webster’s, 1828*)
- *Constantly*—firmly; steadily; invariably; continually; perseveringly. (*Webster’s 1828*)

- So this is a faithful or true saying that needs to be firmly, steadily, continually, and constantly affirmed. Do you get the idea that this is an important saying?
- *“that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.”*—is the content of this statement.
- The expression *“have believed in God”* is critical to understand. Remember that verse 5 told us that our salvation was not accomplished by *“works of righteous which we have done.”*
 - Titus 1:16—the reason why these people are reprobate concerning good works is because they are relying on their religious good works to save them. In other words, they make profession to a belief in God but they have never come to God in God’s way, i.e., by grace through faith (Titus 3:5-7).
- There is no such thing as good works until the sinner has been saved, regenerated, renewed, and justified by the grace of God.
 - Ephesians 1:10—as the workmanship of Christ, God has ordained for the believer to walk in good works. We should possess a desire to do what is right not because we fear the wrath and punishment of God but because we are grateful for all Christ has done for us.
- Romans 12:1—it s reasonable for us to live a life of service to Christ.
- Titus 3:8—we need to be careful to maintain good works. This should not be an afterthought for the believer.
 - Titus 2:14—told us to be *“zealous of good works”*
 - Titus 3:1—told us” *to be ready to every good work”*
 - Titus 3:14—tells us *“to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful”*
- As believers we need to maintain good works because *“These things are good and profitable unto men.”*

Titus 3:9

- ***“But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.”***
- In verse 9 Paul turns our attention back to one of the other main topics in the book of Titus combating false teachers.

- “*But avoid foolish questions*”—one popular saying is that there is no such thing as a doubt question. According to the Bible that statement is not a faithful saying.
 - John 3:25—a question in this verse is another way of saying there was a dispute, argument, or disagreement
 - I Timothy 1:4, 6:4
 - II Timothy 2:23

- “*and Genealogies*”—is a reference to records of descent or lineage. This something the Jews were particularly taken with, trying to prove they were the physical seed of Abraham.
 - Philippians 3:4-6—Paul used to trust in his physical pedigree as the seed of Abraham.
 - I Timothy 1:4

- “*and Contentions*”—is another word for strife, wrangling, or fighting.
 - Romans 1:29—debate
 - I Corinthians 3:3—strife
 - Galatians 5:20—variance-- difference that produces dispute or controversy; disagreement; dissension; discord. A mere variance may become a war. (*Webster’s 1828*)

- “*and strivings about the law*”—literally means fighting about the law.
 - II Corinthians 7:5—fightings
 - James 4:1—fightings

- The reason these things are to be avoided is because “*they are unprofitable and vain.*” Notice how these behaviors are set in direct contrast good works which is profitable unto men in verse 8.