

Open in prayer

Read Titus 3

¹ Remind them to submit to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work,
² to slander no one, to avoid fighting, and to be kind, showing all gentleness to all people. ³
For we too were once foolish, and disobedient, being deceived, being enslaved by various
passions and pleasures, living in malice and envy, being hateful, detesting one another. ⁴ But
when the kindness of God our Saviour and his love for mankind appeared, ⁵ he saved us—
not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy—through the
washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶ He poured out his Spirit on us
abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we
may become heirs with the hope of eternal life.

⁸ This saying is trustworthy and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have
believed God might be careful to devote themselves to good works. These are good and
profitable for everyone. ⁹ But avoid foolish debates, and genealogies, and quarrels, and
disputes about the law, because they are unprofitable and worthless. ¹⁰ Reject a divisive
person after a first and second warning. ¹¹ For you know that such a person has gone astray
and is sinning; he is self-condemned.

¹² When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me in Nicopolis,
because I have decided to spend the winter there. ¹³ Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and
Apollon on their journey, so that they will lack nothing.

¹⁴ Let our people learn to devote themselves to good works for pressing needs, so that they will
not be unfruitful. ¹⁵ All those who are with me send you greetings. Greet those who love us
in the faith. Grace be with all of you.

Introduction

Every religion in the world says climb. Pray harder. Give more. Try better. Be good enough. Christianity says God came down. That's the scandal of grace.

This morning we come to the end of Paul's letter to Titus. And here's the main point. The gospel does not just save. The gospel shapes how you live. Grace-saved people live differently. Not to be saved. Because they are saved.

Here's the way we'll work through the text. First, grace-saved people live gently and submissively. Titus 3:1-7. They submit to authority. They speak kindly. They refuse to fight. Not because the world deserves it. Because the gospel produces it. Second, grace-saved people are devoted to good works. Titus 3:8-11. Grace is not lazy. Grace labours. Grace is not soft on truth.

Grace avoids foolish quarrels. Grace devotes itself to what is good. Third, grace-saved people serve urgent needs. **Titus 3:12-15**. Real needs. A widow's electricity. A brother's empty fridge. A missionary's travel. Grace serves.

Let me ask you something. Say someone followed this past week, Monday to Saturday. What would they say you are devoted to? Your comfort? Your reputation? Your screen? Or the good works God has prepared for you?

You cannot climb your way to a life of good works. But grace does what effort cannot. The same Spirit who washed you and renewed you and poured Himself out on you, and He produces the in you fruit.

Connect to the gospel

We're going to connect to the gospel right up front this morning. I want you to see that in this text, the ethical commands find their grounding in the gospel. **Titus 3:1-15** teaches that we do not do good works to be saved. We do good works because we are saved. Love-saved, mercy-saved, grace-saved believers do good works.

Read **Titus 3:3** with me. For we too were once foolish, and disobedient, being deceived, being enslaved by various passions and pleasures, living in malice and envy, being hateful, detesting one another. Foolish disobedience. Enslaved to various passions and pleasures. These are not small mistakes. Minor misdemeanours. These are the sins that reveal a rebellious heart. **Titus 3:3** reminds us who we were.

Then, **Titus 3:4-7** reveals how we were saved. In **verse 4**, the kindness of God our Saviour and his love for mankind appeared. We are love-saved. The Greek word that translates love for mankind is philanthrōpia. God is philanthropic. What does that mean? Philanthropic means God is warm towards mankind. Generous towards mankind. God gives to those who have nothing to give back to Him. God's philanthropic love saves us. We are love-saved.

In **verse 5**, he saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy. We are mercy-saved. God mercifully withholds from us what we deserve. We lived in malice and envy. We were hateful. We detested one another. We deserved punishment. But God is merciful. He withheld from us what we deserved until we came to saving faith. We are mercy-saved.

And then, in **verse 7**, having been justified by his grace. We are grace-saved. All of God's riches are ours at Christ's expense. God gives us what we do not deserve, in abundance. We are grace-saved.

We needed salvation because we lived in foolish disobedience. So God sent

His Son. Jesus appeared. The personification of the love, and mercy, and grace of God. As it is written, because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. The cross stands behind every word in **Titus 3**. The kindness of God appeared in a manger. The kindness of God was nailed to a tree. The kindness of God rose from a tomb. God's love, and mercy, and grace, are abundantly applied to all who repent and put their faith and trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

Now, to what end? Why have we been saved? **Titus 3:8**. ⁸ This saying is trustworthy and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed God might be careful to devote themselves to good works. The gospel produces something. The gospel is not inert. The gospel is not impotent. The gospel is potent. The gospel is a good root that bears good fruit. And the fruit of the gospel is good works. That's what Paul wants us to be devoted to.

The ethical commands in **Titus 3:1-15** are grounded in the gospel. We do not do good works to be saved. We do good works because we are saved. Love-saved, mercy-saved, grace-saved, saints do good works.

So, what does a grace-saved life look like? That's the question. And the first answer is, grace-saved living is gentle and submissive.

1) **Grace-saved living is gentle and submissive** (**Titus 3:1-7**)

¹ Remind them to submit to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work,
² to slander no one, to avoid fighting, and to be kind, showing all gentleness to all people.

Grace-saved living is gentle and submissive. The good works that God expects from His children are so practical. Submit to rulers. And be kind to everyone. Of course, submission isn't absolute. When human authority commands what God forbids, we obey God not men. But the default posture of a grace-saved person is not rebellion; it is submission and obedience.

Do you submit to the authorities you did not choose? Whichever authorities God has placed over you? Do you obey them? Are you a model citizen? And in the community you live. At home. At work. At church. Are you known as a person who does not speak ill of anyone? Who avoids conflict? And is gentle and kind? Or does your tongue betray you?

Submission to authority would have been a sensitive topic for Cretans. Roman authorities were often corrupt. And they were not kind to Christians. In South Africa, we know what it is to distrust authority. But grace-saved people submit. Not because the authorities deserve it. Because the gospel produces

it. We speak gently. We refuse to slander. We are peaceable. Even when provoked. What would it look like for us, as a church, to be known for this?

If you are not in Christ, these commands are not a ladder to climb. They are a mirror. You cannot do this. Not perfectly. Not consistently. Not from the heart. And that is the point. Your good works cannot save you.

³ For we too were once foolish, and disobedient, being deceived, being enslaved by various passions and pleasures, living in malice and envy, being hateful, detesting one another.

Remember what you were like. Your memory of who you were fuels humility. This is why we are gentle. Remember you were not naturally nice. No, you were once the fool. You were once the disobedient. You were once deceived. Paul isn't stirring the dark memories of your past to pull you down. He's stirring the dark memories of your past to remind you that you were once rotten, and now you don't have to be. That old-self died with Christ. You get to live differently now that He is in you.

Remembering your past produces gentleness toward those still trapped in their sin. You did not save yourself. You were rescued. Act like it towards others. I see my past self in this list. I'm so glad I'm not the man I used to be. But it pains me to confess that sometimes I see my present self in this list too. I need the same love, and mercy, and grace that I preach from the pulpit active in my own heart. Praise God He isn't short on love, and mercy, and grace. He has enough. Enough for me. Enough for you.

⁴ But when the kindness of God our Saviour and his love for mankind appeared, ⁵ he saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy—through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶ He poured out his Spirit on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we may become heirs with the hope of eternal life.

This is the gospel. This is the motivation.

Do you see the Trinity here? God our Saviour appeared. The Holy Spirit washed us and renewed us. The Father poured out His Spirit on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Each member of the Trinity has a part in saving us.

And what is this washing? It is the Spirit cleansing us from the filth of verse 3. What is this renewal? It is the Spirit making us new. Not a fresh coat of paint. A new heart. And He poured out His Spirit abundantly. Not a trickle. A flood.

Paul uses a rare word here for regeneration. It appears only twice in the New Testament. Here and in Matthew 19:28, where Jesus speaks of the renewal of

all things. The Spirit's work in you now is a foretaste of what is to come.

And why? So that, having been justified, declared righteous, by grace, we may become heirs. Not servants. Or slaves. Sons. With hope of eternal life.

And the goal? Heirs with the hope of eternal life. This hope is not a vague feeling. It is an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. The future grace of eternal life is what makes present good works possible. We labor now because we know the inheritance is secure.

The kindness of God appeared. He saved. He washed. He renewed. He poured out. He justified. He made us heirs. **What more do we need?** Nothing! Christ has paid it all! Christ has done it all! Christ has given it all!

We get to rest in this. We get to stop striving. Stop performing. Stop comparing. And allow the Spirit of God to produce in us gentleness and submissiveness. Flowing from gratitude. But hear me. This is not passivity. Grace does not make us lazy. Grace makes us labour. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, Paul says, for it is God who works in you. The same Spirit who washed you and renewed you and poured Himself out on you, He produces the fruit. Not by your effort. By His power. So we rest. And we work. Not to earn favour. From favour.

So, what does a grace-saved life look like? That's the question. And the first answer is, grace-saved living is gentle and submissive. But grace does not stop there. Grace makes us devoted. And grace makes us protective. Second, grace-saved living is devoted to good works.

2) **Grace-saved living is devoted to good works** (Titus 3:8-11)

⁸ This saying is trustworthy and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed God might be careful to devote themselves to good works. These are good and profitable for everyone.

Insist on these things. **What things?** The gospel. Mercy. Grace. Love. The kindness of God that appeared. The washing of regeneration. The hope of eternal life. Insist on the gospel. Not as a theory to debate. As a truth to live.

The gospel produces something. It is not inert. It is not impotent. It is potent. The gospel is the engine. Good works are the carriages. It's like a train. The engine moves. The carriages follow. The gospel moves. Good works follow.

So who is watching your week? If someone traced your steps, Monday to Saturday, what would they say you are devoted to? Your comfort? Your reputation? Your hobbies? Your screen? Or the good works God has

prepared for you?

Devote yourself to good works. Not to be saved. You're already saved. Not to earn favour. You already have favour. To display gratitude. To adorn the gospel.

⁹ But avoid foolish debates, and genealogies, and quarrels, and disputes *about the law*, because they are unprofitable and worthless.

Avoid. Not every hill is worth dying on. Not every theological debate is profitable. Some quarrels are worthless. Some genealogies produce nothing but division. Some disputes tear down what grace builds up. When Paul says avoid, he means avoid. Do not engage. Do not entertain. Do not share the post. Do not forward the email. Avoid.

But let me be clear. This is not a call to abandon doctrine. **Jude 3** stands. Contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. The gospel is not a foolish debate. The Trinity is not a genealogy. The resurrection is not a quarrel about the law. Paul is not telling us to be silent about essential truth. He is telling us to stop fighting about the stuff that doesn't matter.

And this is not a small matter. Gossip is not a mistake. Factionalism is not a weakness. The need to be right, the love of controversy, these are the sins of weak churches. The Prince of Peace will not have his children squabbling about silly things when they should be about the business of His kingdom.

This is an easy sin to fall into. The gospel must kill the need to win every argument. Free us from the tyranny of being right. Because we do not need to prove ourselves. Defend ourselves. We can let a foolish debate die.

¹⁰ Reject a divisive person after a first and second warning. ¹¹ *For you know that* such a person has gone astray and is sinning; he is self-condemned.

This is hard. It should be hard. Paul says reject division. Warn once. Warn twice. Then act. This is not a witch hunt. This is not vindictive. This is protective. A divisive person damages the flock. A wolf does not need to be loud to scatter sheep. The wolf only needs to be persistent. So, after two warnings, the church must act.

And how do we act? Firmly. We do not delight in rejection. We grieve it. But we protect the flock. Christ died to make one new humanity. He tore down the dividing wall. When someone is divisive they try to tear down what Christ died to build, the church must act. Because we love what Christ loves.

The goal of warnings is repentance and restoration. The same goal Jesus gives in **Matthew 18:15-17**. We warn because we love. We reject when the

divisive person persists, and even then we grieve. Self-condemned means their own refusal to repent condemns them, not our verdict.

So, what does a grace-saved life look like? First, grace-saved living is gentle and submissive. But grace does not stop there. Grace makes us devoted. Second, grace-saved living is devoted to good works. But what does that look like in ordinary life? In travel plans and greetings and practical service? Paul ends with everyday life. Grace-saved living serves urgent needs.

3) Grace-saved living serves urgent needs (Titus 3:12-15)

Verse 12, When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me in Nicopolis, because I have decided to spend the winter there.

Note the ordinary. Paul makes plans. He asks for company. He wants Titus with him. Not theological argument. Friendship. Partnership in the gospel.

Verse 13, Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey, so that they will lack nothing.

Note the imperative. Help. Diligently. Zenas and Apollos are travelling for the gospel. The church is to provide for them. This is practical. This is hospitality. This is patronage for the mission.

Support missionaries. Give. Host. Send. Pray. Grace-saved people are generous people. Not because they must earn favour. Because they have received mercy.

Verse 14, Let our people learn to devote themselves to good works for pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.

Note the purpose. Learn. Devote. So that they will not be unfruitful. Good works are not optional. They are the fruit of grace. They meet urgent needs. They display the gospel. Serve urgent needs. The church is not a social club. It is a rescue station. Urgent needs arise. Serve them when you see them.

What is an urgent need? Let me give you criteria. First, it is pressing. It cannot wait. It is not a preference. It is a crisis. Second, it is real. It is a need, not a want. Third, it is within your reach. You cannot meet every need. God has given you specific resources. Fourth, it is gospel-aligned. Meeting it does not enable sin. It does not undermine the mission. It displays grace. Fifth, it starts with the household of faith. Then it moves outward as God gives opportunity.

But hear me. This is not a call to burn out. You cannot do everything. You are not the Saviour. Christ is. You are a vessel. So ask, Is this need mine to meet? Has God given me the capacity? If yes, then give. If no, make Yolanda aware

of the concern. She represents our social concern. The elders maintain lists for benevolent need.

Oh, and do not do this to be seen. Do not do this to be praised. Do not do this to earn favour with God or man. Love because God loved you. Serve because you are an heir.

Look around. **Who is in urgent need?** A widow whose electricity is about to be cut off. A family fleeing abuse who needs safe lodging. A brother who lost his job and cannot feed his children. A sister who is ill and cannot cook or clean. A missionary like Zenas and Apollos who needs travel provisions. A refugee that needs legal help. These are pressing needs. Meet them. Be fruitful.

Verse 15, All those who are **with** me send you greetings. **Greet** those who love us **in** the faith. **Grace** be **with** all of you.

Note the grace. The letter ends where it began. Grace. Grace be with all of you. Greet one another. Love one another. And rest in grace. Grace be with all of you. The weary. The suffering. The doubter. The mature. The unbeliever who is still listening. Grace be with you.

Conclusion

Every other religion tells you to climb. Christianity says God climbed down. But grace does not leave you in the dust. Grace raises you to new life.

At the start I asked what your week says you are devoted to. Here is the answer grace gives. Not comfort. Not reputation. Not screen. Christ. And because Christ has saved you, you now live differently. Not to be saved. Because you are saved.

So what does this life look like? Grace-saved people live gently and submissively. Grace-saved people are devoted to good works. Grace-saved people serve urgent needs.

Do you see? The gospel is the engine. Good works are the carriages. The engine moves. The carriages follow. Grace moves. Obedience follows. Not fear. Not duty. Love. Mercy. Grace.

The kindness of God appeared. He saved. He washed. He renewed. He poured out. He justified. He made you an heir. **What more do you need?** Nothing. Christ has paid it all. Christ has done it all. Christ has given it all.

So rest in Him. And work from Him. Serve from fullness, not for fullness. You are already loved. Already forgiven. Already an heir. Live like it.

Grace be with all of you. Amen.

Close in prayer

Benediction

Titus 3:4-7, But when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, he saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy—through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. He poured out his Spirit on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior so that, having been justified by his grace, we may become heirs with the hope of eternal life.

Homiletic indicators

- The operative word in the sentence is underlined.
- R – Instruction
 - **Body:** Natural, one hand gestures.
 - **Voice:** measured, firm.
- ^ – Uncion
 - **Body:** Forward, expressive.
 - **Voice:** Raised, faster.
- Ø – Fear
 - **Body:** Narrow eyes, still shoulders, lift your chin slightly (exposed posture).
 - **Voice:** Breathy, higher pitch, quick shallow breaths. Speak into the back of the throat.
- O' – Anger
 - **Body:** Jaw forward, stable feet (no shifting weight), sharp hand strikes (karate chop motion).
 - **Voice:** Hard attack on consonants. Drop pitch slightly, but increase volume on key syllables. Staccato.
- P – Happiness
 - **Body:** Relax shoulders, soften the brow. Open palms, wider stance.
 - **Voice:** Rise in melody at the end of phrases. Bright, forward resonance (smile while speaking).
- Å – Sadness
 - **Body:** Heavy eyelids, slight forward slump, hands still or clasped low.
 - **Voice:** Lower volume, monotone descent (each phrase ends lower than it started). Use mostly single-syllable words.
- □ – Disgust
 - **Body:** Wrinkle nose, pull back your head, sharp turning away from the pulpit.
 - **Voice:** Nasal, sharp, with a "negation cadence" (rising then falling sharply on the sin's name). Hard glottal stops.
- ɹ – Surprise
 - **Body:** Eyebrows up, slight backward step or open-mouth inhale.
 - **Voice:** Bright, high onset. Use a sudden upward interval (a leap in pitch on the unexpected word).
- ● – Pause
 - **What it does:** Allows the last sentence to land, convict, or heal.
 - **Length:** 1 second (colon), 2 seconds (period), 3+ seconds (after a weighty statement or call to worship).
 - **Body:** Stop moving. Hold eye contact. Do not smile or nod. Let the silence be uncomfortable.
 - **Delivery note:** A pause feels longer to you than to them. Trust it. Hold one more beat than you think is comfortable.

1) The command to live peaceably and its gospel basis (Titus 3:1-7)

i) The command: live submissively, gently, and peaceably toward all (Titus 3:1-2).

¹ Remind [PAM] them

- a.) 1.) to submit [PMN] 1.) to rulers 2.) *and* authorities,
- 2.) to obey [PAN],
- 3.) to be [PAN] ready [for every good work],
- b.) 4.) ² to slander [PAN] no one,
- 5.) to [PAN] 1.) avoid fighting [be peaceable],
- 6.) *and to be* kind,
- 7.) showing [PMP] gentleness [to all people].

ii) The reason: remember your past life of foolishness and hatred (Titus 3:3).

[G] ³ For we were [IA] once

- 1.) foolish,
- 2.) [*and*] disobedient,
- 3.) deceived/being deceived [PMP],
- 4.) enslaved/being enslaved [PAP] by various 1.) passions 2.) [S] and pleasures,
- 5.) living [PAP] [in 1.) malice 2.) [S] and envy],
- 6.) hateful/being hateful,
- 7.) detesting [PAP] one another.

iii) The motivation: God saved us and poured out His Spirit so that we may be heirs (Titus 3:4-7).

[Adv] ⁴ But 1.) *when* the kindness of God our Saviour
2.) [S] and his love for mankind appeared [API],

⁵ he saved [AAI] us

[−] —not [by works] [of righteousness] that we had done [AAI],

[+] but [according to his mercy]—

[through the washing] of 1.) regeneration 2.) [S] and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

[P] ⁶ He poured out [AAI] his Spirit [on us] abundantly [through Jesus Christ our Saviour]

⁷ so that, having been justified [APP] by his grace,

we may become [APS] heirs [with the hope of eternal life].

2) The charge to do good works and the warning against foolish debates (Titus 3:8-11)

i) Positive charge: insist on these things so believers devote themselves to good works (Titus 3:8).

[Ft] ⁸ This saying 1.) is trustworthy 2.) [S] [and] I want [PMI] you to insist [PMN] [on] these things, [In] so that those who have believed [RAP] God might be careful [PAS] to devote themselves to [PMN] good works.

These are [PAI] 1.) good 2.) [S] and profitable for everyone.

ii) Negative warning: avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, quarrels, and disputes about the law (Titus 3:9).

[Adv] ⁹ But avoid [PMM] 1.) foolish debates, 2.) [S] [and] genealogies, 3.) [S] [and] quarrels, 4.) [S] and disputes about the law, [G] because they are 1.) unprofitable 2.) [S] and worthless.

iii) Specific case: reject a divisive person after two warnings (Titus 3:10-11).

¹⁰ Reject [PMM] a divisive person [after a 1.) first 2.) [S] and second warning].

¹¹ For you know [RAI] that such a person 1.) has gone astray [RMI] 2.) [S] and is sinning [PAI]; he is [PAP] self-condemned.

3) Final instructions and greetings (Titus 3:12-15)

i) Personal request: make every effort to come to me in Nicopolis (Titus 3:12).

1.) [C] ¹² When I send [AAS] a.) Artemas b.) [A] or Tychicus [to you], [E] make every effort [AAM] to come [AAN] [to me] [in Nicopolis], [G] because I have decided [RAI] to spend the winter [AAN] there.

ii) Missionary support: help Zenas and Apollos on their journey (Titus 3:13).

2.) [C] ¹³ Diligently help [AAM] 1.) Zenas the lawyer 2.) [S] and Apollos on their journey, [E] so that they will lack [PAS] nothing.

iii) General exhortation: learn to be devoted to good works for urgent needs (Titus 3:14).

3.) [C] ¹⁴ Let our people learn [PAM] to devote themselves to [PMN] good works [for pressing needs], [E] so that they will not be [PAS] unfruitful.

iv) Final greetings: greet those who love us in the faith; grace be with all (Titus 3:15).

3.) ¹⁵ 1.) All those who are [with me] send you greetings [PMI]. 2.) Greet [AMM] those who love [PAP] us [in the faith]. 3.) Grace be [with all of you].

This is how I parse Greek verbs:

- I use a three-letter combination in square brackets (e.g. [PMI] for Present, Middle, Indicative) after a verb, which I underline.
 - First letter indicates the tense. Tense deals both with time and kind of action.
 - Second letter indicates the voice. The relation of the subject or agent to the action.
 - Third letter indicates the mood, participle, or infinitive.
- Tense:
 - P: present, continuous or linear action.
 - I: imperfect, continuous action in the past.
 - F: future, both progressive and punctiliar action.
 - A: aorist, expresses punctiliar action that has happened.
 - R: perfect, represents an action that is complete but has an ongoing resultant state of being.
- Voice:
 - A: active, reflects the subject that performs the action.
 - M: middle, the agent participates in the results of the action.
 - P: passive, subject is being acted upon by someone or something else.
- Mood/participle/infinitive:
 - I: indicative, reality, that which is actually occurring.
 - S: subjunctive, likely to occur.
 - M: imperative, a command that is possible.
 - P: participle, participles are verbal adjectives that behave like a verb and an adjective..
 - N: infinitive, verbal nouns that use the preposition "to", and they can also be used with "ing".

This is how I indicate the function of conjunctions:

- I put a letter in square brackets before a clause to indicate a logical relationship.
 - [S] - SERIES, Each proposition makes an independent contribution to the whole (and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [P] - PROGRESSION, Each proposition is a further step toward a climax (then, and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [A] - ALTERNATIVE, Each proposition expresses an opposite possibility arising from a situation (or, but while...).
 - [W] [Ed] - WAY-END (ACTION-MANNER), Statement of an action and one which tells more explicitly what is involved in carrying out this action (in that, by).
 - [I] [I] - COMPARISON, Statement that clarifies an action or idea by showing what it is like (even as, as...so).
 - [-] [-] - NEGATIVE-POSITIVE, The relationship between two alternatives in which one is denied so the other is enforced, implicit in contrasting statements (not...but).
 - [Gn] [Sp] - GENERAL-SPECIFIC, Statement of a whole and one or more statements which set forth parts of the whole.
 - [Ft] [In] - FACT-INTERPRETATION, Statement and clarifying statement; does not set forth a distinguishable part of the preceding whole.
 - [G] - GROUND, Statement followed by the argument or reason on which it stands; supporting proposition follows the supported proposition (for, since, because).
 - [I'] - INFERENCE, Supporting statement followed by the conclusion drawn from it; supporting proposition precedes the supported proposition (therefore, wherefore, consequently).
 - [C] [E] - CAUSE-EFFECT (ACTION-RESULT), One action and another action which results from the first as an automatic consequence (that, so that, with the result that).
 - [C?] [E] - CONDITIONAL, Like cause-effect except existence of the cause is only potential (if...then, if, except...).
 - [M] [Ed] - MEANS-END (ACTION-PURPOSE), One action and another that is intended as the goal or purpose of the first (in order that, that, lest, to the end that).
 - [T] - TEMPORAL, Proposition and the occasion when it occurs (when, after, before).
 - [L] - LOCATIVE, Proposition and the place where it can be true (where, wherever).
 - [Adv] - ADVERSATIVE, Main clause that stands despite a contrary statement (although, yet, but, nevertheless).
 - [Q] [A] - QUESTION-ANSWER, Statement of question and answer to that question (question mark ?).
 - [S] [R] - SITUATION-RESPONSE, The relationship between a situation in one clause and a response in another.
 - [B] [L] - BILATERAL, A proposition which supports propositions in both directions, rarely used.

This is how I indicate prepositions:

- I put the phrase in square brackets.
- I indicate the preposition by **highlighting it in Orange**.

This is how I use colour highlighting:

- **Orange**: structure indicator, conjunctions, and prepositions.
- **Yellow**: verbs, Greek, and Scripture reference.
- **Green**: keywords.
- **Red**: repeated words.
- **Pink**: imperatives.
- **Blue**: main idea.

Sermon preparation worksheet

Passage: Titus 3:1-15 **Preaching Audience:** Benoni Baptist Church, a diverse congregation, with non Christians in attendance.

1. How has the author organised this passage? a) Sections, b) Strategies, c) Emphasis.

- a) 1) The command to live peaceably and its gospel basis (Titus 3:1-7) – i) The command, ii) The reason, iii) The motivation.
2) The charge to do good works and the warning against foolish debates (Titus 3:8-11) – i) Positive charge, ii) Negative warning, iii) Specific case.
3) Final instructions and greetings (Titus 3:12-15) – i) Personal request, ii) Missionary support, iii) General exhortation, iv) Final greetings.
- b) I identified the text type as discourse, so I traced the logical and grammatical flow. I read the whole letter of Titus to see how Titus 3 relates to Titus 1-2. I used grammatical analysis, noting imperatives such as remind, submit, obey, avoid, reject, make every effort, help, learn, and greet. I also noted indicatives, infinitives, participles, and subjunctives, which revealed subordination. I marked conjunctions and logical relationships: ground (for, Titus 3:3), adversative (but, Titus 3:4), purpose (so that, Titus 3:7), means (so that, Titus 3:8), adversative (but, Titus 3:9), ground (for, Titus 3:11), cause/temporal (when, Titus 3:12), and cause (so that, Titus 3:13-14). I observed tense shifts: Titus 3:1-2 is present; Titus 3:3 is imperfect with present participles; Titus 3:4-7 is largely aorist; Titus 3:8 returns to present. I noted key words and repetitions: good works, foolish, devote, grace, mercy, peaceable, gentle, Spirit, heirs. I also observed shifts in function: exhortation (Titus 3:1-2, Titus 3:8-11), declaration (Titus 3:3-7), and greetings (Titus 3:12-15). This shows that ethical commands are grounded in the gospel.
- c) Gospel grace produces a peaceable, good-working, division-avoiding life.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage? a) Literary, b) Historical, c) Cultural, d) Biblical.

- a) In Titus 2:11-14, God's grace appeared, training believers to live godly lives while awaiting Christ's return. Titus 3:1-8 applies that grace to public conduct and church life. Titus 3:9-11 fits the false teachers already described in Titus 1:10-16. Titus 3:12-15 is a typical Pauline greeting.
- b) Paul writes to Titus, whom he left in Crete to appoint elders and set things in order (Titus 1:5). The Cretan churches faced false teaching, Jewish myths, genealogies, and quarrels about the law (Titus 1:10-16; 3:9). Believers lived under Roman authority, and Crete had a notorious reputation (Titus 1:12). Paul likely writes in the early 60s and plans to winter at Nicopolis (Titus 3:12).
- c) Submission to rulers and authorities was a sensitive issue for early Christians under Rome. Good works included practical service and civic responsibility. Debates about genealogies and the law reflect Jewish religious disputes. The mention of Zenas and Apollos (Titus 3:13) assumes a culture of travel, patronage, and hospitality. Washing of regeneration uses cleansing imagery familiar from both Jewish and Christian language.
- d) Titus 3:4-7 echoes Old Testament promises of cleansing and the Spirit (Ezekiel 36:25-27; Joel 2:28-29). It is the Spirit which produces fruitful good works in the life of the believer.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

In light of salvation, live peaceably, devoted to good works, avoiding foolish divisiveness.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ? a) Connection, b) Function, c) Significance.

- a) The passage describes our need in Titus 3:3 (we were once foolish), the means in Titus 3:4-7 (God our saviour appeared and saved us justifying us by grace), and the fruit in Titus 3:8 (good works).
- b) The gospel motivates the ethical commands in Titus 3:1-2 and Titus 3:8. We do not do good works to be saved, we do them because we have been saved by mercy. It also fuels humility toward unbelievers and unity in the church.
- c) For Christians, the gospel kills legalism, and motivates gentle, good works. For non-Christians, it announces that salvation is by grace alone, through Christ alone, not by moral effort or religious debate, which is good news for people trapped in sin, self-righteousness, or divisive religion.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

How to live a grace saved life full of peace and good works.

6. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Title, b) Outline.

- a) How do grace-saved people live?
- b) 1) Grace-saved people live gently and submissively (Titus 3:1-7)
2) Grace-saved people are devoted to good works (Titus 3:8-11)
3) Grace-saved people serve urgent needs (Titus 3:12-15)

7. What applications will you make? a) Christians, b) non-Christians.

- a) Because you are saved by grace alone, live peaceably, devote yourself to good works, and avoid foolish divisions. Do this by the Spirit's power: submit to authority (Titus 3:1), speak gently (Titus 3:2), remember your past to be humble (Titus 3:3), rest in God's mercy (Titus 3:4-7), insist on good works (Titus 3:8), avoid foolish controversies (Titus 3:9), reject divisive people after warnings (Titus 3:10-11), support missionaries (Titus 3:13), and serve urgent needs (Titus 3:14). This will be applied after each point.
- b) Your good works and religious arguments cannot save you; God's mercy in Jesus Christ can. Turn from self-reliance and divisive religion, trust Christ's saving work, and ask God to renew you by His Spirit. This will be applied at the end of point 1 and again in the conclusion.

On my sermon preparation sheet, these are the questions and an explanation:

1. How has the author organised this passage?

- a) An outline: The author's organization (or structure) is a way of talking about the shape or form of a biblical passage. Beneath the surface of each passage is an underlying arrangement of material and a logic that the author has used to organize the passage. And each part of the passage has a role to play in that structure.
- b) Tools: Identify the text type (Discourse traces argument flow, conjunctions, and grammatical subordination, narrative tracks scene changes, plot development, and character contrasts, and poetry notes stanzas, parallelism, shifts in speaker, or imagery changes), and any grammatical tools used to identify the structure.
- c) The emphasis: The structure will reveal an emphasis that the author is making.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?

- a) Literary context: How do the passage that comes before and the passage that comes after relate to your passage?
- b) Historical context: The historical situation or circumstances experienced by the first audience at the time when the book was written.
- c) Cultural context: The setting in the daily life of the people/characters in the book and how that will have been understood by the first audience. This is distinct from historical context in that it does not relate to a particular audience in a particular place at a particular time, but the details of life that the people/characters in the text had in common. Anything that requires extra-biblical knowledge should be treated skeptically.
- d) Biblical context: Is the author citing or alluding to some previously written Biblical passage? What connections could the author have reasonably expected his first audience to make.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

The author's main point is a way of talking about the aim of a passage as a whole. It can be descriptive or prescriptive. It is not simply a summary statement. But rather, it is the idea of which the author is trying to persuade his audience. As you work on articulating the author's argument, please keep in mind that it needs to be specific enough to the passage that it clearly comes from the particular passage (and not any other passage), it is for the first audience, it should be one single sentence that is both short and clear, and captures the argument of the passage.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

What part of the gospel (the death and resurrection of Christ) is in view? Every part of the Bible, every passage of Scripture, in some way relates to the gospel of Jesus Christ. What parts of the passage connect to the gospel? The connection must be legitimate and textually driven.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

6. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Sermon outline, b) Sermon title.

7. What applications will you make? a) To believers, b) To unbelievers.

The main point of a sermon is the fundamental statement of what you, as a speaker today, are trying to convince your audience today. It will certainly be intimately related to the author's main point for his original audience and it will consider the gospel connection. It should be well reasoned and, perhaps, articulated as the result of proof (so depending on premises and building arguments).

On my sermon preparation sheet, this is how questions relate to one another:

- 1 a) should be driven by the text.
- 1 c) should be driven from the outline in 1 a).
- 2) should be directly relevant to 1 c).
- 3) cannot be disconnected from 1 c), and should be clarified by 2).
- 4) must be found in the text.
- 5) cannot be disconnected from 3), and should be driven by 4).
- 6) should flow from 5).
- 7) should structurally relate to 1 a), and make the argument in 5), and show relationship to 6).