

Titus 24-08-04a

Good morning. Welcome to the Sunday morning services at Grace and Truth Bible Church. This is the 4th of August 2024.

We're in the book of Titus and we're at the threshold here and entering the door of chapter three. Bless God's blessing on fellowship and study and get started. Father, we thank you for this wonderful spiritual nourishment that we find in the pastoral epistles in general and this book in particular.

It seems so pertinent for the day in which we live and guides us clearly and provides wonderful reflective stripes on each side of the narrow road. We pray that as we look at it together that your Holy Spirit will impress it on our hearts, help us to understand its pertinence and application in our own lives as we seek to negotiate the circumstances and challenges and opportunities of this life and live in a way that pleases you and fully represents the grace and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. We ask it in his name.

Amen. We are familiar now, I think, with what we've seen in the first few chapters of Titus and the upshot here is that the grace of God has appeared to all different kinds of people. This was the closing thought of chapter two.

The grace of God has epiphanero, it has it has epiphanied, it has been made manifest. And that's an important word. I give you the Greek because it matters here.

It has been manifested to all men. It has made itself manifest and it teaches us. This again is another important word.

Both of these words are going to recur, but teaching us that. The word teaching is, as I said last time, from paidō, where we get the word pedagogue, and it is the word for training. Paidos is a child, a growing child, one that is old enough to be trained.

And this whole concept has the idea of training, but not just training. What does training do, if you think about it? Different training that you've been subjected to or have participated in, there are two results. You're trained in a skill, and so you learn to do something you weren't proficient at before, and you become someone who possesses that skill.

Both things are true, right? So the emphasis is both practical, what comes forth by way of works, and intrinsic, what do you become as a result of possessing these skills? You go to boot camp, they teach you how to wear your uniform, how to rig it, how to clean and operate weapons, and so on. And in the course of acquiring these skills, those skills define you because as they become muscle memory and instinctive, you are now truly a marine. You're defined by those skills that you possess, and whether you're actively exercising them or not, and this is one of the keys, you are someone who is defined by

them.

And they are two facets of the same idea. One is intrinsic, and the other is extrinsic. So this grace that has manifested, saving grace, trains us, it Paiduos us, and that training has two effects.

It causes us to become someone, and we've been seeing this emphasized in our recent studies, that purity, a good conscience, a sincere faith, and so on, are characteristics. This is what we become. And when we become someone who is defined by those traits and expressions manifest themselves as a result, the good works.

So that's why it ends up saying that the teaching, the training here is to both do negative things and positive things. When we look at ourselves as believers, how are we doing? How am I doing as a believer? I've got Bibles in every room. I've got notes that span the decades.

I can quote some scriptures. I can offer some points of doctrines. I can tell you the things that Jesus accomplished at the point of salvation.

If I go grab my list, I can find the 36 things that happened at the point of salvation. Redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, the five ministries of the Holy Spirit, baptizing, filling, sealing, gifting, and so on. But how am I actually doing? What is the measure? It's one thing to have passed a test.

You see plenty of lawyers who have passed the bar, but how long was that? And are they today an effective, desirable lawyer to represent you in court, to further your cause, to seek and find justice for you? The fact that they learned a bunch of things and can regurgitate a lot of truths about the law doesn't necessarily make them a good lawyer. It is the practice. Have they truly become a good lawyer by both training and experience? Same thing with a mechanic, same thing with a doctor, same thing with any number of specialized identities, and none more so than we as representatives of the Lord Jesus, members of His body, believers who in this generation, at this time, at this moment, in this place, we are the presence of Christ.

The Holy Spirit is not indwelling trees. He's not indwelling books. He's not indwelling videos.

The Holy Spirit is here providing presence and power so that we can represent the Lord Jesus. He has gone away. We are here in His place to accomplish the same goals.

In order to do that, remember it says that the Lord Jesus Himself learned obedience by the things that He suffered. We are learning obedience by the things that we suffer. Suffering is not pleasant, but many times the outcome is.

Ask any patient who undergoes discomfort or worse in order to have a therapeutic

procedure to fix their health, to set a bone, to fill a cavity, whatever it may be, right? And we know that the chastening of the Lord after the unpleasantness produces the peaceable fruit of righteousness. So we have to remind ourselves of these things constantly. It's easy to panic at the difficulty, at the pain, at the uncertainty.

And this is why it is necessary for us to have a genuine faith, pure heart, good conscience, sincere, genuine, take it to the bank and deposit it faith. It has to be material. It has to be substantial.

It's got to have traction. It's got to stabilize us. And it is part of that triad of Christian virtues.

Faith is the means of living our life. Hope is the motivation. And he's going to be talking about that in this section.

This training that on the negative side teaches us to deny worldly desires, cosmos desires. I want to have accomplishment, satisfaction, recognition, or whatever it may be, even just comfort and lack of difficulty, lack of pain. There's nobody that sticks their hand in the air and says, yes, afflict me and nobody in their right mind.

But we like to have surcease. We like to have relief. We like to have a period of recovery and restoration.

We don't want to be constantly burdened, constantly pressured, constantly suffering. This relates to our situation in the world. So is this a healthy desire or an unhealthy desire? It's difficult to say, well, looky there, I've got an unhealthy desire.

I need to get rid of that. Go away, unhealthy desire. Go away, worldly lust.

You can't order it to go. It's not a soldier. It doesn't leave if it doesn't want to.

So how do we accomplish this? We should be trained by God's saving grace to deny ungodliness and worldly desires. To deny, oh my, to push away. How do you do that? We fail when we attack it directly.

I've got this habit. It seems like when I get into conversations, I wind up saying things I shouldn't say, releasing information that shouldn't be public. I just can't help myself.

I've got a problem in this area or that area. Things come up and I worry and I try to cast all my cares upon Him. But three and a half minutes later, it's right back there, nipping at my heels, biting my ankles.

I just can't quit worrying. I can't relax. I can't let go and let God.

I know I'm supposed to. And now I've got guilt on top of not being able to escape the worldly desire. This isn't just concupiscence and I want to be drunk and profligate and

promiscuous and stimulated by every cabaret thing that they might have in Las Vegas.

A worldly desire is a desire that is related to our interaction with the world. And some of those desires are good. I would like to see poor people provided for.

I would like to see the homeless sheltered. I'd like to see veterans receive their due. I would like to see oppressed people and those who are victims of warfare.

I would like to see their situation improve. That is a worldly desire. What's the problem with a worldly desire? Some of them seem perfectly legitimate.

I would like to see my family prosperous and healthy and happy and productive. And this person I know that has relationship issues, I would like to see those relationship issues fixed. When we see worldly lusts, we think, oh, these people that have to go sleep around or drink around or addict around in some way.

That's not it. The cosmos is where we live. But we are not to love the world or the things that are in the world.

And you think, well, but people, I'm commanded in other places to love people, and they're in the order, so which is it? Do I love them or love them not? Godly love, sacrificial, beneficial love is an aspect of our relationship with others, the one and others, the neighbors, and those who are outside. All three characterized by love, but it's love that takes different forms. And you can't do one another love to people that are not in the one another category and are incapable of reciprocating.

You can't, because one another means it's got to be flowing in both directions. And that is a very limited and special category. Neighbor love, do unto others, is a lesser and more practical love and can deal with a neighbor who is a rascal.

Those who are outside are those that we don't even have contact with, except on a casual basis or on a basis of principle. We've studied this in depth. But love not the world or the things that are in the world, and by extension, the people that are in the world, what does this mean? Our love is motivated by hope, right? Faith is the means, hope is the motivation, love is the measure of how well we have mastered faith and hope.

And you have hope right here. To deny worldly desires, we can live with self-mastery, self-control, that's what sobriety is. Righteously, this is fairness.

Dikaiois has an element of justice in it. This is why some progressive Christians want to re-translate the New Testament where they see fit and where it says, seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. They want to say, seek ye the kingdom of God and His justice.

And now I've got a verse that justifies my social justice warrior badge. And to be fair,

there is an element. Righteousness is the principle, justice is the application.

If something is right, then justice is the doing of what is right and the results. Righteousness emphasizes the source, justice emphasizes the result, the application. So this is the concept here.

We should live lives of self-mastery is probably the best way to translate soberly. It doesn't just mean not drunk, but in control of ourselves. We are driving, we're not being driven.

Righteously means we are fair, we're balanced and unafraid. And devotion, right? Godliness, Eusebia is always aware of our heavenly connection. We are here because we belong to God.

We are here to live a life that pleases God and that is woven into his plan and purpose. We are compliant. We are clay on the wheel that conforms and allows him to shape who and what we are and our purpose, our function.

Pots are made for various things. Some are cups, some are plates, some are vases, whatever it might be. Some are platters.

You can make any number of things with clay on a wheel. He is the potter, we're the clay. You remember the have thine own way, Lord song? Thou art the potter, I am the clay.

Mold me and make me after thy will while I am waiting, peaceful and still. Godly, in the present age, we're still in the world. We're immersed in the cosmos, but we don't love the cosmos.

We're not trying to rearrange the arrangement. We're not trying to reorder the order. We don't love the cosmos.

We love God and therefore we function in the cosmos out of love for God and love for one another. We are loving people and we are self-controlled. We are fair and we are always thinking about God and are aware of his plan and purpose for us.

In order to do that, we have to deny ungodliness. To be godly, you have to deny ungodliness. To have self-control and accomplish righteousness, implement righteousness, be a righteous person who does righteous and fair things, we have to deny desires that are directly connected to the world.

I want to change that circumstance. I think if I talk, I think if I contribute, I think if I go down and volunteer, I think if I put an emoji in my social media or if I repeat some posts, I think if I wave the flag for a cause, I can help change this circumstance. That is loving the world.

Our desire should not be directly aimed at the world. I want the world to be a better place. Our goal should be, I want Sam to be a better person so that God can use him in whatever way God sees fit to will and to do for his good purpose, which will inevitably be a blessing in circumstances and a blessing in and among the cosmos, but it's what we think and what we do and what we say is not driven by a love for the world.

It is driven by love for God and love for one another. Do you see the difference? It's subtle but critical to see this distinction. You can't just go straight from A to C and skip B. For C to happen, you've got to do B, and B is become.

Become. We have to deny ungodliness. That's a personal trait, a personal choice.

We have to eschew and avoid and purge out worldly desires, desires that are driven, and again, this is so commonly construed to be, well, sinful things, you know, just don't have a sinful desire. No, this is recognizing that in my human capacity, I have a desire to influence the world around me directly, and if I don't stop and think, now, am I changing this because I want it? For example, I was thinking about this a couple of days ago. We have family members.

Some are real close, some are medium distance, others are in the periphery. Let's say you've got 20 relatives. On a daily basis, you tend to pray for the inner circle because we know the most about them.

Oh Lord, I know there's a situation, there's a health issue, there's a provision issue, there's a circumstance issue, there's a job issue, there's a school issue, whatever it may be. We're aware, and ideally, we pray for those around us. It's intercessory prayer.

We're looking out not only for our own interests, but also for the interests of others. But how do we pray effectively? Oh Lord, Ferdinand lost his job. Please get him another one.

You know what that is? That's a worldly lust. That is a cosmos desire. People should have jobs.

He doesn't have a job. Oh Lord, give him a job. Right? Do you see what a worldly lust is? What a worldly desire? This is *epithumia*, and Paul uses it in the positive sense.

He says, I have greatly desired to come and see you all. *Epithumia*. It's just a strong desire, but our strong desires should not be connected directly to the world.

So how can we pray for Ferdinand when he's lost his job? Oh Lord, Ferdinand is a believer. This is a circumstance he is facing. Use this situation to draw him to yourself.

Remind him of the things that he has learned. May the Holy Spirit comfort, encourage, and produce fruit in him in this situation that will redound to your glory, will serve as a testimony to those in his periphery, and prepare him so that when you choose to supply

him with his next means of employment, he will be more effective in shining the light of the glory of Jesus Christ in that situation. Be with him, comfort, encourage, strengthen, direct.

Right? Because the goal is for all of us to become. You can't make somebody become something just by changing a circumstance. This is the liberal leftist fallacy that if we just make society good enough, everybody will become good people.

Just give the poor people money and they'll become productive, motivated, balanced, self-controlled people. You give a lot of people that have deep personal problems money and they are going to use it to exacerbate and exaggerate their problem. Somebody who's trying to overcome addiction and you hand them a bunch of money, well now I've got the means to feed my addiction.

Somebody who's having trouble with motivation and providing for themselves, you hand them a bunch of money. Well, don't have to worry about that. I don't need motivation.

I've got money that I didn't have to work for. When the Bible says, he who does not work does not eat in the fellowship. Look at the context.

It's talking about are you going to provide for this person? This is why the widows that we saw in our last study, 1 Timothy, are to contribute in the church. They're not just to be carried on the dole, even at the church. These ladies who are going to go about and be a material blessing in the church are the ones the church will provide for when they don't have a physical family.

There are principles in the word of God that guide us, but the goal of all of these things, the goal of our instruction is what? Love. The goal isn't social improvement. The goal isn't circumstance or mediation.

The goal is love, and that love is coming from those three essential places. I think it's 116 of 1 Timothy. So, this is why the saving grace of God has appeared.

This may sound like a shocking idea, but God's grace did not appear to prevent people from going to the lake of fire. Did it? If God didn't want people to go to the lake of fire, He could just do the Noah's flood thing and put it out. Nobody would be in the lake of fire, metaphorically speaking.

That's not the purpose of God's saving grace as a ticket out of eternal damnation. What is the purpose of God's saving grace? To deliver us from a sinful nature and a sinful self and a hopeless inability to be connected to God, to become. As many as received Him, what happened? To them gave He a golden ticket where when the angel gets ready to hustle them off to the eternal flames, they have the ticket and they bypass the gateway to hell.

As many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become, to become sons of God. To them gave He power to do good works. To them gave He power to be righteous.

To them gave He power to keep the entire law without spot and blemish. To become sons of God. When you're a son of a thing, you are similar to it.

You represent it. You remind people of it. I walked up to a client the other day.

It's the first time I've tuned her piano, but my dad used to do it. I got out of the truck and was walking around there. She came out her back door and she said, Oh, you remind me of your father, which I take as a great compliment.

I can't help the way I look, but evidently the older I get, the configuration seems to be a reminder. But to be a son of a thing, when it is a good thing, you're not a son of Belial. You're not a son of destruction.

You're not a son of perdition. You're a son of God. We should be a reminder and a reflection of that for which we have become children.

So, when the grace of God, the saving grace of God appears, we should be looking for productive personal change, productive personal growth. You can't just look at a worldly lust and say, get the hints. We've talked about this, but I can become a person for whom that becomes kind of unnatural and a former way of thinking.

All of us can think back when we were young. You know, Paul says, when I was a child, I thought as a child, I spoke as a child, but when I grew up, I put away childish things. Why? The word of God said, thou shalt put away a childish thing.

Is that what happened? Well, I really love riding my tricycle, but the word of God says I can't have that anymore. What happens? When you grow, you grow out of childish things and you're not by nature wanting to go back and ride a tricycle, unless you're an old guy and it's got a motor on it and you're afraid of falling over on a motorcycle. But we grow and we want different things.

When you're a child, you crave toys. When you're an adult, you crave relationships and a productive and satisfying interaction. And hopefully, when we grow spiritually, we simply grow out of worldly lusts and we grow into heavenly lusts.

Heavenly desires. Our nature changes and we don't have to work at offloading what we shouldn't be doing. This is the idea.

The saving grace of God, remember? It's adjectival, the soterios here. It is the saving grace of God that has been manifest and it trains us. It takes the child and matures him.

It takes the youngster and brings them to adulthood. God's grace does that. And the growth naturally moves away the old man with his lusts.

And we put on the new man a characterized by righteousness, by godliness, by self-control. Little kids, a lot of trouble with self-control. We teach them, we train them, and as they grow, they become adults that have plenty of self-control, plenty of self-motivation, plenty of drive and focus.

If things turn out well. In the present age, we get away from the desires of the world that might drive us, but we're still in the present age. But now we're impervious, we're immune.

You can throw the viruses at me, but my immune system has got antibodies for that. I didn't start out with them, but by exposure and by developing good habits of hygiene and risk avoidance, those things are not a problem for me. I have developed into someone for whom that is no longer a problem.

And now look at verse 13. We have been pi-duoed, we have been trained. And by the way, this is such an interesting word, pi-duo.

Let me just, as we go to the break, let me tell you a little bit about this training. This is the word that's used in Acts 7.22 of Moses. Remember Acts 7 is Stephen's speech.

Another one of those chapters you should kind of know by reflex. Acts chapter 7 is Stephen's rehearsal of Israel's history right before he is stoned. And he's talking about Moses in verse 22.

And he says, Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and deeds. You get the idea that the reason he was so mighty in his speaking and in his actions is that he was learned in the wisdom that he acquired in Egypt. That word learned is our word, pi-duo.

He was trained. When you get to Acts 22.3 and Paul is talking about himself. And he says, I'm indeed a Jew born in Tarsus of Cilicia, brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our father's law, zealous toward God, just as you all are today.

Taught according to the strictness of the law of our fathers. Pi-duo'd. Trained.

It also has the idea of chastening, of sort of painful correction as a part of learning to do certain things and learning not to do other things. So we saw this in 1 Timothy 1.20, believe it or not. You remember Hymenaeus and Alexander? Paul says these guys that are rabble rousing and causing trouble of whom this is 1.20 of 1 Timothy, Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn, that they may be pi-duo'd, that they may be trained painfully if necessary, not to blaspheme.

We know they're believers because they can be trained out of this bad behavior they are doing, even if Satan is the one that's going to do it. We'll see in 2 Timothy 2.25, Paul is

talking to Timothy and he says, in humility, correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance. The word correcting is pi-duo'd.

Here's one that will surprise you, Luke 23.16, Pilate talking to the crowd that is yelling, crucify him, crucify him. Three different times Pilate says, I will chastise him and release. They have catch and release at the border or in a fishing boat.

This is chastise and release. The word chastise, pi-duo'd. I will train him painfully.

I will teach him not to do whatever it is you think he's guilty of. I'll whip him. That'll teach him.

Pi-duo'd. He says it again in verse 22 of that same chapter, Luke 23.16 and 22. He said to them the third time, why do you want me to crucify this guy? What evil has he done? I have found no reason for death in him.

I will therefore pi-duo'd him and let go, release. 1 Corinthians 11.32, when we are judged, we are pi-duo'd by the Lord. It says chastened in your New King James.

We are chastened by the Lord in order that we may not be condemned with the world. 2 Corinthians 6.9, we, Paul is talking about his sufferings, we are treated as unknown and yet well-known as dying. And behold, we live as chastened and yet not killed.

As being taught a lesson painfully by our opponents, but not killed. Hebrews 12.6-11. If you want to really understand pi-duo'd, you know this part. Whom the Lord loves, he pi-duo's.

He scourges every son whom he receives. If you endure pi-duo, God deals with you as sons. What son is there whom a father does not pi-duo? Train, in some cases, using pain as a motivator or as an attention-getter.

If you are without pi-duo, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. We have had human fathers who pi-duo'd us, we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days pi-duo'd us, as seems best to them, but he, God the Father in heaven, for our profit, in order that we may be partakers of his holiness, sons of God.

Reflections. No pi-duo seems to be joyful for the present, but painful. Nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been pi-duo'd by it.

Not everybody learns. Not everybody responds. So interesting.

This is what the saving grace of God has appeared to do, has been manifested to do, to pi-duo us out of the negatives and into the positives. We will pick up here at verse 13 when we come back from the break.

