

Titus 24-08-11b

We are ready to resume our study here. We are looking at the conclusion of the letter to Titus and in these letters Paul includes five faithful sayings. The first was in 1 Timothy 1.15 reminding us that the issue is not how circumstances turn out, the issue is our problem of sin and our rescue, our deliverance, our salvation in Jesus Christ.

And if we are aware of sin in the world, we should immediately remind ourselves as Paul does that it's our personal sin that we can do the most about. That is faithful saying number one. The second one is, and you may remember this from the 1 Timothy study, it's 1 Timothy 3.1 but this really ought to be verse 16 of chapter 2 because the faithful saying is above not below.

It's not a faithful saying that if somebody desires to be a bishop he desires a good work. That's really not helpful. It is the preceding which is that section about women recognizing which direction to look.

This is verses 9-15, this is the faithful saying, women should adorn themselves in modest apparel, propriety, moderation, not with braided hair, gold, pearls, costly clothing. It doesn't mean you can't wear those things, it means that should not be the source or basis of your beauty and your attractiveness. To adorn themselves, your adornment should be that which is proper for women professing godliness, eusebia.

If you are actually a woman of faith, then your good works are your adornment. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. Do not permit a woman to teach, have authority over a man, but to be in silence because Adam was formed first, then Eve.

Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived fell into transgression. Nevertheless, she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness with self-control. The central idea in this second faithful saying, and remember, the woman is the subject here, this is the example, but all of us who find ourselves in a position where we are under authority and in a position to exert authority.

The woman is under authority of her husband, she is exerting authority over children. So, rather than trying to point influence in the wrong direction, women trying to teach men, trying to, and we have this all over the place, there are any number of ladies who are famously presiding over mixed congregations and so on, and it isn't that they are bad teachers, but they are bad students of the Word of God because the Word of God says don't do that. It's a model.

It is an example. And just because you can do it doesn't mean that you should. This is something all of us learn as we get older.

Just because you can do a thing doesn't mean you should. And the Word of God says

there is an example in the first pages of the Law, Genesis, the first three chapters. Adam was formed first, then Eve.

This is God's model. It's not about just Adam and Eve, is it? It's about men and women. They are the archetypes, the prototypes, the originators of the human race.

And God made Adam first. He could have made Eve first, and she could have given birth to Adam. Man-child comes out of the mother, who is a woman.

That's going to be the way the Lord Jesus comes into the world. But it's not the way men come into the world. The first man, that is, Adam, was formed first, and the woman was taken out of the man.

Ever after, men are taken out of the woman. But the very first one is different. And Paul points this out, and Adam was not deceived.

Things would have turned out differently if he had been the decision-maker about the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. So Paul says the deliverance is not in women trying to influence and teach and exert authority over men, but in teaching and influencing and exerting authority over children, and doing so in faith, love, and holiness with self-control. This is true for all of us.

Apply and manage whatever authority we have in whatever sphere, all of us, with these characteristics—continuous faith, continuous love, continuous righteousness, holiness, sanctification, and continuous self-control. Not sporadic, not intermittent, continuous. Continue in these things.

She will be delivered. Look at the position of the woman. If she's trying to look up and manage men in general, and her husband in particular, that's going to fail.

She will be delivered if she operates in her assigned sphere. And would that people in general, and we in particular, could do this in our own lives. Aim our efforts in the right direction.

That is faithful saying number two. The third faithful saying is mentioned in 1 Timothy 4, 8. Bodily exercise profits little. Godliness is profitable for all things, because it has promise for the life that now is and that which is to come.

Godliness is profitable now and at His appearing in His kingdom when He judges. Godliness is profitable. He just mentioned godliness in the previous saying.

Women should be professing godliness and manifesting their adornment in good works in chapter two, verse nine. Godliness is the goal. It's profitable for all things.

Verse nine says, this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that which just preceded. That's number three. Number four is 2 Timothy 2, 11 through 13.

This is a faithful saying. If we died with Him, we shall live with Him. Our position is that we have died to sin.

We live to God, just as the Lord Jesus did, and we look forward to living with Him. We died with Him in the past. We will live with Him in the future.

We are in that intermediate moment where we are saved, but we are not yet in glory. If we endure, we will reign with Him. It's conditional.

You're not saved if you have not died with Him. To enter into and have applied to our account the death to sin and life to God, we have to have made a conscious salvation decision to take the Lord Jesus as our Savior and to enter into relationship with God the Father through Him. That is to die to the old man and to become a new creation.

Old things are passed away. All things are become new. If we endure, we will reign.

Most believers do not endure and will not reign. And of course, you have far fewer rulers than you have subjects. And in God's kingdom, in the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, there will be a minority of those who rule with Him.

The majority are not qualified to rule. And there is nothing wrong with having the hope, the desire, the goal of ruling with Him, to be of service, to be of use, because you will inevitably be closer to the Lord Jesus. And more interwoven into the plans and purposes of the Father through Christ.

Do you want to just be a random Jew in AD 27, where you see the Lord Jesus coming and preaching? Or do you want to be one of the disciples? If you're going to wish for something, do you want to be next to Him and get Bible class every day? Or do you want to just hear Him once or twice during that three and a half year ministry? Well, it's the same in ruling with Christ in the future. Do you want to have close proximity and hear Him and be with Him and understand what's going on every day, all the time, throughout the millennial kingdom and into the kingdom of the Father? Or are you content to just be hoi polloi and hear the policies announced and see the rulers from afar? Do you want to see the glorious New Jerusalem as a glow on the horizon? Or do you want to be a citizen? We make up our minds and we make the determination of where we are going to be right now. So if we endure, if we look at our hardships and our testing, our disappointments, our challenges as opportunities for endurance, because this endurance is buying me a seat in the government of the future kingdom.

I am earning for myself. I am demonstrating my qualification that I am worthy to serve in that capacity. I am worthy to help implement the plans and policies and purposes of the Lord Jesus Himself.

What an opportunity. Who doesn't want that? If we endure, we will reign with Him. If we deny Him, He will deny us.

And this isn't just a formal denial when questioned. Are you a believer in Jesus Christ? Do you think He's the Son of God? This is daily denial. We live like the world.

People look at us, they can't tell we've got a Savior. It doesn't make a palpable difference in our relationships or those with whom we spend time or how we spend our time or how we think and how we act. If we look like the world, we are denying the Lord Jesus.

And when it comes time to present believers before the throne of the Father, we won't be in that group. We don't care enough to represent Him, to think about Him, to be concerned about the judgment at His appearing and His kingdom. If it doesn't matter to us, why would we matter to Him enough to be presented before the throne? I want to be in that group.

I may be at the outside edge. I may be one of the last to come in and the last to have my name called. But I want to be in that group and you want to be in that group.

That's why we endure and we do not deny the Lord Jesus. We claim Him. We represent Him.

We are zealous for good works because we know that we are a particular people given to Him as a gift by the Father. Do you want, would anybody want an apathetic and indifferent spouse? The church is pictured as the bride of Christ. Do you want somebody that's just there for the money or the status or to be arm candy or something? Or do you want there to be a genuine, passionate, close, intimate relationship? If you're not interested in the Lord Jesus, you're going to live a life of denial and will be denied even though we're saved.

There is woeful amounts of judgment. Brian and I were talking about this a few days ago. It's called the judgment seat for a reason.

It's not the rewards banquet. It's not the awards banquet. It's a judgment seat for believers.

And some of that judgment is going to be harsh. People saved yet so as by fire. If you've ever seen these pictures of somebody whose neighborhood burns down, these wildfires go through, their house is incinerated.

And they're standing there and they say, every single thing we have is gone. All of our mementos, our pictures, our possessions. All I've got is the clothes on my back.

Do you really want to go into the eternal kingdoms looking like that? You're going to have to wait for somebody to come by with the healing leaves from the tree of life inside the city and wait for the shipment and the delivery to come to your far off location. That's tragic. There's no excuse.

There's no reason. Do not deny the Lord Jesus. Think of him all the time.

Be motivated by his return and his appearing in his kingdom and do those things that qualify us for position and purpose and service. Why would you not? We can't take any of this stuff with us, but we can certainly reserve for ourselves a house fully furnished with wonderful utilities and amenities and a great job, a great place to serve and to be fulfilled and to be joyously involved in God's work. Let's do that.

That's exhortation. We deny him, he will deny us. If we are faithless, he remains faithful.

If we are apostilla, he remains pistilla. He cannot deny himself. Notice it says if we deny him, he will deny us.

That's in one sphere, but there's another sphere in which if we are faithless, he remains faithful and he cannot deny himself. We are members of the body regardless. This is what's known as eternal security.

Our faithlessness does not lose our salvation. We will be denied reward and opportunity and potential for service in the future, but we will still be there. Even if we're faithless, he will not deny us.

But who wants to be on the bottom rung at a distance? That is the third faithful saying. Actually, it's the fourth, 2 Timothy 2, 11 through 13. The final one is ours in Titus chapter three, verses four through eight.

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age. Pay attention to who we are and why we're here in the present, looking for the blessed hope, glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for himself a special people with a zeal for good works. Knowing that in order to perform and perpetrate those good works, we have to concentrate on becoming people who can do them, who can originate them, who understand them, who know what they are.

So speak these things, exhort, rebuke with all authority, let no one despise you. Don't let anybody talk back on this point and say there's some other objective, there's some other purpose. It's evangelism, it's social justice, it's go along to get along, it's inclusiveness, it's just kind of a blithe indifference to sin and gladness on a false basis.

Remind them, now we have rulers and authorities, be ready for every good work, speak evil of no one, verse 2 of chapter 3, be gentle, show humility to all men. We ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another, but we have been delivered from that. Why fall back into it? The gate has been opened, the doorway to escape it and leave it behind is open in Christ.

Paul says, the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation. Christ Jesus came to save sinners of whom I am chief. I want to be saved practically, not just positionally.

I want to be saved experientially, not just potentially. The kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done. That's at the other end.

Authority starts with God the Father through Jesus Christ, down to the man, then to the woman, then to the children. The grace of God appeared, works of righteousness are children, that's fruit, that's output, that's offspring. The other end is God, God starts it.

It's not works of righteousness which we have done, you're pushing a rope, you're starting at the wrong, you just entirely got the wrong end of the stick. Not by works of righteousness we have done, it's God's mercy through which he saves us, the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. Notice you've got the entire Trinity implicated in salvation here.

The love of God our Savior toward man appeared. This is John 3.16. It was made manifest, it epiphanied. So you have the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ.

There are people who think, well, God the Father is God and the Holy Spirit is God, but Jesus isn't. There are actually people who don't believe in the Trinity, they don't think that Jesus Christ is absolute deity as well as true humanity in one person. I would ask such a person this question, is God the Father going to impart God the Spirit through a non-God intermediary? There is an order here just like the Adam and Eve and child order, the husband and wife and child order, and it is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

God has manifested his love through Jesus Christ through whom the Holy Spirit comes. God hasn't put a human being in charge of the Holy Spirit or a dispenser of the Spirit of God. Jesus Christ is also God.

So, regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. The power of God comes into the life of the believer through the Word of God and the Spirit of God. Jesus Christ is the Word, John 1.1. The Holy Spirit is the means by which we are renewed and regenerated, enlivened.

So, got a problem? Got a challenge? Having difficulty? All of these concepts sound great, but when I leave church and fold up my notes and close my Bible and I'm immersed back in circumstances, I have a real problem maintaining this view. How do I do it? It is not by works of righteousness which we have done that we were saved, and it is not by works of righteousness that we do that we are vindicated, justified, or propelled through life doing the will of God. Those are an aftermath.

They are a result of the power of God. So, if I'm having difficulty keeping a good attitude,

if I'm impatient, if I'm worrying, if I am challenged in some way with my mental attitude, if I'm having difficulty remembering that everything I do counts on eternity and I should do it heartily in the name of the Lord, if I'm just struggling with that, I know it's true, I know I need to, I know everything I do should be an investment in His appearing and His kingdom. It's just not happening.

You don't try to make it happen. You don't start angling for a good work here and there. How do we make it happen? We don't make it happen.

We resort to the power of God. So, I cultivate the presence of the Holy Spirit. How do I ensure the Holy Spirit has free reign to influence me, to guide me, to motivate me, to encourage me? The paraclete, the encourager, the one who comes alongside, puts an arm around our shoulder, helps us up, helps us on.

How do I do that? How do I cultivate the presence of the Holy Spirit? Well, I purge sin, I confess my sin, that's one part, but I've got to walk in the light so that I have fellowship. How do I walk in the light? What do the Psalms say? What's Psalm 119, 105? Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. If I'm going to walk in the light, I need the word.

Preach the word. Teach the word. Rebuke.

Exhort with all authority. That's not just for the pastor, that's for the shepherd in my own soul. My intellect, my mentality needs to dominate and subject my emotions to the realities that are defined in the word of God.

I need to bring the word of God into my mind and subject myself to those promises and principles and doctrines. I do that for myself. I dredge up, I bring up, I remember, I review, I read first thing in the morning, I pray evening and morning and at noon, and rehearse the principles of the word of God.

I hand those truths to the Holy Spirit who uses them to speak to me, to guide me, to enable and empower me to do things I can't do. Remember, stand up, stand up for Jesus. The arm of flesh will fail you.

You dare not trust your own. You put on the gospel armor, you got the shield of faith, you got the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. The sword of the Spirit is the word of God.

It's the word of God that divides us under soul and spirit, joints and marrow, critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart. We can't make it happen. We can't will it.

We can't just choose it and have it happen. We have to go to where God's power resides, and that's the Spirit and the word. We should be spiritual people, be filled with the Spirit, walk by means of the Spirit, be united by the Spirit, produce the fruit of the Spirit.

And we do that by consciously choosing to think the thoughts of God, and that's the word. So this is our faithful saying, the washing of regeneration, renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Not a little bit, not a concept, not just an abstraction.

There is an abundant presence of the Holy Spirit. There is as much Holy Spirit as you choose to have present. There is as much Holy Spirit as your bucket is big.

The bigger you make your bucket, the more Holy Spirit's going to be there. No such thing as too much. He's there in abundance.

So that, having been justified by His grace, we should do what? We should perform works of goodness? We should become. We become. This is another one of those Bs.

Be subject, be ready, be peaceable, be gentle, be humble. We become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Now we are those, if you know that you have an inheritance, I don't know how many of us qualify, probably not many, but people who are the children of very rich people, think of somebody rich, think of their last name and think of their kids, they stand to inherit a great amount.

And that conditions a lot of what they do and a lot of their plans and purposes, they do so with the knowledge that I am going to inherit a chunk of a fortune. I have it in prospect. I don't have it yet, but I'm going to have it at some point.

And it affects the way you plan and it affects the way you live. Well, we have the inheritance, we are heirs according to the hope of eternal life, and we should live in that light. We should remember that we are heirs of our Father through the Lord Jesus.

And that makes us different. Our objectives are different. Our priorities are different.

Our goals are different. Our opportunities should be conditioned. I'm an heir of eternal life.

I don't want to sell it for a mess of pottage. I don't want to try to grab what little bit I have now and spend it on wasteful living and wind up at a pig trough. I'm an heir.

This is a faithful saying. These things should be affirmed constantly so that what? Why do we keep rehearsing these faithful sayings? So that those who have believed in God will be careful to maintain good works. You can't maintain good works if you're not a person who knows what they are and how to produce them in God's power, by God's grace, for God's purposes.

These things are good and profitable to men. So those are the five faithful sayings. How does this letter conclude? Avoid, verse 9, disputes, genealogies, contentions, strivings about the law.

They are unprofitable and useless. Arguments about politics are unprofitable and useless. Doesn't mean you can't have opinions.

Doesn't mean that you can't say what you think. But don't argue. Don't dispute.

Don't wrangle. Don't endlessly debate. Don't make that what you're known for.

Oh, he's a Bidenomics guy, or he's a Trump evangelical, or she's this, or he's that, identified by some political stance. Is that what you want to be known for? Is that the badge you want to have on your shirt when you walk up to the judgment seat of Christ? Well, I didn't do much else, but I was sure advocate and agitator for my political party or my political opinions. Avoid strivings, even about the law.

The law is construed as a spiritual issue. Don't strive about it. Tell people, go be warned, be fed.

If you don't understand the Bible the way I do, let's all pray and hope we come to a common understanding. Avoid disputes. The disputes are going to be there like road hazards, like chuck holes or potholes, depending on what state you're from.

They're either potholes or chuck holes. They're there. You've got to avoid them.

Steer around them. Don't hit them. Don't have your wheel taken off by one of them.

Genealogies, this is some basis of merit other than the blood of Christ. You have been bought with a price. The precious blood of Christ, that's what makes us worthwhile.

Not who we're descended from or not what kind of work we have, not what affiliations we have, not who we support. People, there's this thing I saw somebody talking about, what were they saying? Something about borrowed honor or claiming a military career that you didn't really have. I forget the term now that's being applied to one of the vice presidents.

It's appropriated virtue or misdirected honor or some such thing. Claiming to be something because of being a veteran or having military experience, puffing up what you did in the past, how many times did you get shot at or whatever. That's not a valid basis for honor or virtue.

Genealogies are this borrowed virtue, this misappropriated value. Our value is in Jesus Christ. We were not purchased with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.

The purchase price is what makes us valuable. By the way, back to Marx and Das Kapital, if you are familiar with the content of his screeds about the economy and so on, his philosophy of economy, he says that things have value of different kinds. There's exchange value.

There is intrinsic value based on how many human hours were put into it. And so something that took a long time for people to produce has a kind of value that's different than its exchange value. But he's all wet because look at a baseball card.

The human effort involved in a Babe Ruth baseball card is minimal, but those things go for thousands of dollars because they are considered valuable. So what do you consider valuable? That's where value lies. So it's unprofitable and useless to wrangle and argue and debate and have these strident strivings about non-essential issues, especially where our value comes from.

The Bible is clear on what makes us valuable. Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition. This word for divisive is interesting because it is the word from which we get heretic.

It's the word we get heretic from. It's only used here. It's a hot box.

But there's a related word. And whenever you see in the Gospels talking about someone who belongs to the sect of the Pharisees, sectarian issues, it means someone who splits off in a group, divides away, and says, I'm an expert. I'm good.

I have a valuable or persuasive opinion because I belong to this group. Divisive. Hereticos, so to speak.

It's really heretical. A heretic splits off from normative truth, normative doctrine. You're a heretic because you divide away.

It's similar to apostasy, standing away. But this has the idea of dividing over things. So people who divide over denominational creeds, people who divide over doctrinal persuasions, if someone is more interested in their sect or their sectarianism or their belief, and they'll divide over that, reject them after the first and second admonition.

There is an admonishment. You know, you shouldn't divide over this. You shouldn't make this an issue and split people up over it.

And you tell them once, tell them twice, then they're rejected. Knowing such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned. The word warped is also a hotbox in this context.

And it's, you know, we have a word, obstreperous. This is sort of extreperous, and it means changed for the worse. It's like something went bad.

It's spoiled. And it's literally turned inside out. Strepho is to turn, and ek is out.

So turned out, turned inside out, warped, reversed, and sinning, and is self-condemned. Finally, to close, you have these personal notes. When I send Artemis to you or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.

Paul is evidently in Philippi, which is northwest of Nicopolis. You can look up Nicopolis on a map. It's kind of in the middle of that part of Greece.

And Titus, of course, is in Crete, which is southwest. So Titus is going to travel northwest, and Paul is going to travel southwest about an equal distance to meet in Nicopolis for the winter. But the significance here, you say, how can there possibly be any profitable doctrine-reproved correction or instruction here? Look at this verse.

What is Paul doing? I will either send Artemis to you or Tychicus. These men are mentioned in at least one other place where Paul has sent them in other directions to Ephesus or to other churches. These are men who are troubleshooters.

They go to a group at Paul's behest to help, and he doesn't know yet which one of them he's going to send. If you look at 2 Timothy, toward the end, he mentions in the closing of that, that Erastus stated, Corinth, Trophimus, I've left in my lead a sick. Do your utmost to come before winter.

Eubulus greets you as well as Pudens and so on. In verse 12 of chapter 4, Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. And because these letters are fairly close together, they surmise that maybe Artemis is the one that was sent to Crete, and Tychicus went to Ephesus.

But notice, Titus is not to leave until a replacement pastor arrives. The Cretans are not capable of self-governance. This would be like leaving your kids at home with no babysitter.

This would be like having a headless congregation that has no pastor. And the elders are not sufficiently far along in Crete that Titus can leave and have a homegrown elder in charge. So Titus is to stay until either Artemis or Tychicus arrives to supervise and to maintain good order in the church.

Then he can come and spend the winter with Paul in Nicopolis. Now, Zenos in verse 13 is a law expert. Remember, there are disputes and strivings about the law in verse 9. Paul says, don't get involved in that.

I'm going to send Zenos. Now this could be Greek law, but that kind of makes no sense. But if he is an expert in the law of Moses, and you say, well, but he's got a Greek name.

It doesn't matter. Apollos had a Greek name. Paul had a Greek name.

There are plenty of men who are steeped in the law of Moses who ended up with a Greek or Roman name. Most of these names were probably longer. These are shorthand.

This guy was probably a Zenodorus, which means gift of Zenos. Artemis is probably Artemidora, gift of Artemis, but they're converts. They are Christians.

And so Zenos and Apollos are coming. They probably carried this letter. And so Paul

says, when they arrive with this letter, refresh them, renew them, restore them, and send them on their way, send them on their journey with haste so that they may lack nothing.

You're an intermediate stop. They are going somewhere else. They may have more letters of Paul for other churches, but this is an opportunity for hospitality, an opportunity to look outside the problems of the Cretan church to the larger world.

These guys are on a mission to other churches, and they are to be blessed with hospitality and provision and encouragement. Let our people learn to maintain good works, meet urgent needs that they may not be unfruitful. And in the context, those people in the church, introduce them to these men who are coming.

Let them know about Artemis. Let them know about Tychicus. Let them know about Zenos.

Let them know about Apollos. And if they have any needs that can be met, if they need some leather goods fixed, if you've got a leather guy there in Crete, bring him in and he can do that repair of their harness or their sandals or their belts or whatever they have, their bags, their luggage. Somebody in the church can do it and do it as unto the Lord.

Not just a practical need meeting, but good works, meeting urgent needs so that they are not unfruitful, spiritual fruit in looking outside themselves and meeting the needs of these traveling men. Finally, in verse 15, all who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith.

You don't just greet any old body. Here we're back to the one another circle. There are special greetings for those of common faith, common love, common hope.

All the ones with me greet you. Paul is in a group of faithful people, probably Philippi. Greet those who love us in the faith.

Grace be with you all. Amen. May grace be with us all.

Amen. Father, thank you for the truth of your Word. Thank you for its preservation, for its clarity, for the access we have to the tools to understand it even more fully in this day of challenge and the nearness of the return of the Lord Jesus.

We pray that we can be ready for His appearing and His kingdom, that your Holy Spirit will remind us of what we've learned, show us where we can apply it, give us the joy and peace in believing that is our heritage as heirs of the hope of eternal life. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

That was great. Man, that was good. I really enjoyed that whole letter.

I hope it came across half as useful for everybody else as it did for me.

