

Day 183, Titus 2

by David Servant

We should make it our goal to live a holy life that reflects our profession of faith in Christ and makes a positive impact on the world.

Scripture: Titus 2:3-14

Topics: "Christian Living", "Holiness"

Description

David Servant emphasizes the importance of living a life that reflects our faith in Jesus Christ, as the world is watching to see if there is any difference between believers and non-believers. Hypocritical behavior not only hinders the gospel but also justifies the sin of those looking for flaws in Christians. Paul's instructions in Titus focus on the need for believers to engage in good deeds, reflecting holiness and purity. He highlights the unique temptations faced by different groups and stresses the importance of living in a way that shames Christ-rejectors by our actions, not just words.

Transcript

The world is watching to see if there is any difference between us and them. They are watching for two reasons. Some observe us because they are sincerely searching for some meaning to life, and they wonder if we have something that they don't. Their hearts are open. If they observe hypocritical behavior, however, it convinces them that we are no different than anyone else in the world. And their conclusion is accurate.

Others watch us in hopes of discovering hypocrisy so that they can justify their own sin and continue in it. They think to themselves, "I'm better than Christians, because at least I'm not a hypocrite." When professing Christians do what is right, however, it condemns those who watch. So they revel when they discover flaws in professing believers. Our sins are a salve for their guilt. Worse, our sins strengthen them in their sin.

How important it is that we live lives that mirror our profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! The greatest hindrance to the gospel in the earth today is the church, the hypocritical church that is. Paul's instructions regarding the behavior of professing believers is motivated, at least in part, by his concern "that the word of God not be dishonored" (2:5), and so that "the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us" (2:8).

For this reason, we should make it our goal to shame Christ-rejectors by our deeds. Twice in today's chapter, and three times in the next chapter (2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14), Paul stresses how important it is that we be engaged in "good deeds." In fact, Paul declares that the reason Jesus gave Himself for us was to "redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds" (2:14). God's intention in the gospel was not just to forgive us, but to make us holy.

Holiness is indeed the major theme in today's reading, and Paul hones in on specific behavior that is expected of older men, older women, young women, young men, Titus himself, and bondslaves (2:1-10). It is not that God has different standards for each of these groups, but that these groups each tend to face unique temptations because of their cultural roles. It is older women with time on their hands, for example, who are most likely to fall into the sin of gossip (2:3). Paul admonishes them to make use of their time by discipling younger women who can learn from their experience and wisdom.

How some women bristle when they read Paul's words in 2:4, where he encourages younger women to "love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands." Such women have been brainwashed (or better said, "brain-dirtied") by the world into thinking that being a devoted wife and mother is ignoble. It is, however, a very honorable career, requiring the greatest virtue, servanthood. Keep in mind that in Paul's day, there were no day-care centers at which mothers could drop off their children while they hurried off to earn a paycheck. The result was that mothers exerted great influence over their young children by virtue of their time together, and their children did not experience the negative socialization that comes from spending their days with groups of miniature cannibals!

Remember, "A scripture a day keeps Calvinism at bay," and Paul does not disappoint us today. He wrote, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men" (2:11). God's offer of saving mercy is offered to all, not just a selected few. Paul was not a Calvinist.

And is the grace that God is offering to all a grace that gives them license to sin? Is it so they can continue on their self-willed path while hiding behind the blood of Christ? No, Paul wrote that God's grace instructs us "to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age" (2:12). That may not be the grace being proffered from many churches, but it is the only grace being offered from heaven!

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