

*1 Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good. 2 They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone. 3 Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. 4 But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, 5 he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. 6 He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. 7 Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. Titus 3:1-7*

Today we again looking at Titus 3. Our reading begins with some general instruction for believers. Paul writes, *submit to the government and its officers*. Christians are to be law abiding. In Romans 13:1 Paul writes that believers are to *be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God.*

*1 Every person is to be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. 3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; 4 for it is a servant of God to you for good. Roman 13:14*

Here is the general truth, all authority comes from God, the great law giver. The reasoning here is that you don't have to be afraid if you do right, *rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior*. This is not always the case because through history Christians have been persecuted when their religious beliefs are contrary to the laws of the land. An example of this was Protestant Christians in a Catholic or Anglican France, Spain or England. Still the rule is, *Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a servant of God to you for good*. We all have had experiences where our behavior was outside the law and we experienced guilt and the fear associated with our lawlessness. This could have been from stealing something from a store, driving too fast on a highway or cheating on a test. The Word teaches if we do what is right we *will have praise from the same* instead of shame we will have praise, approval, a clear conscience. Even when the governments or those who have authority over us are evil, Jesus says, it's in our best interest to do good to them.

*27 But to those of you who will listen, I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. Luke 6:27-29*

We are not to slander or quarrel, these are fleshly ways of dealing with those we are in conflict with but Christians are born into newness of life, we are to be *gentle and show true humility to everyone*. This is hard for the natural man because naturally, when we are injured or mistreated, we want revenge, compensation for the injustice. So Titus needs to instruct these young Christians in the born again reality. *They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone.* (Titus 3:2) Paul reminds Titus, *Christian's aren't perfect, just forgiven*. Paul writes Titus, *Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other*. Some Christians forget

where we come from and somehow think the Church is for a special people. If we do this we begin thinking like Pharisees.

Jesus illustrated legalistic spirit in Luke 18, when a Pharisee and a tax collector went into the temple to pray. *The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: 'I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners, adulterers. I'm certainly not like that tax collector!' The tax collector beat his chest in sorrow, saying, 'O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.'* Jesus looked at the tax collector's gentleness and humility and granted the man grace. *I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."* Luke 18 God knows the condition of men's hearts, All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Is 53:6

*3 Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. Titus 3:3*

But God. To the Ephesians Paul wrote, *But God, being rich in mercy.* God understood our natural fallen state in Adam and showed us His mercy, unmerited forgiveness *when we were dead in sins.* (Sins, trespasses *paráptōma*, to fall away after being close-beside, i.e. a lapse (deviation) from the truth; an error, "slip up"; wrong doing. Here is the Ephesians passage.

*4But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5when we were dead in our wrongdoings, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph 2:4-6*

*When we were dead in our wrongdoings* or as Paul states here in Titus *when our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other.* At that point *when we were dead in sin, God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us.* The idea of sin is that we miss the mark, we were *full of evil and envy, and we hated each other.* At that point we all were linked with fallen mankind and as Paul declares *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23).* At that point, *while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Rom 5:6* This is the good news and Paul's desire is for Titus to declare God's eternal truth, *But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. Titus 3:4,5* Paul declares this message of God's redemptive grace a little more fully in Romans 3. We are going to look at this passage in the Amplified Version as it expands this passage.

*21But now the righteousness of God has been clearly revealed [independently and completely] apart from the Law, though it is [actually] confirmed by the Law and the [words and writings of the] Prophets. 22This righteousness of God comes through faith in Jesus Christ for all those [Jew or Gentile] who believe [and trust in Him and acknowledge Him as God's Son]. There is no distinction, 23since all have sinned and continually fall short of the glory of God, 24and are being justified [declared free of the guilt of sin, made acceptable to God, and granted eternal life] as a gift by His [precious, undeserved] [c] grace, through the redemption [the payment for our sin] which is [provided] in Christ Jesus, 25whom God displayed publicly [before the eyes of the world] as a [life-giving] [d]sacrifice of atonement and reconciliation (propitiation) by His blood [to be received] through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness [which demands punishment for sin], because in His forbearance [His deliberate restraint] He passed over the sins previously committed [before Jesus' crucifixion]. 26It was to demonstrate His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the One who justifies those who have faith in Jesus [and rely confidently on Him as Savior].*

*27Then what becomes of [our] boasting? It is excluded [entirely ruled out, banished]. On what principle? On [the principle of good] works? No, but on the principle of faith. 28For we maintain that an individual is justified by faith distinctly apart from works of the Law [the observance of which has nothing to do with justification, that is, being declared free of the guilt of sin and made acceptable to God]. Roman 3:21-28*

Let us no return to our Titus passage.

*4 But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, 5 he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. 6 He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. 7Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. Titus 3:3-7*

God saved us not because of our works, efforts to be righteous but because of *his mercy*, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. When we trust in God's provision for our justification, and sanctification, His provision to make us accepted in the beloved, the Church, the body of Christ. Paul declares this in Ephesians 1, *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*

*He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. 6 He generously poured out the Spirit.* In this process God of being made right with God, He washes our sins, every foolish and disobedient deed we ever did or would ever plan to do is washed away. Then He gives us a new life, we are born again, *God has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son (Col 1:13) We have a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.* As believers we have God's Spirit, *He generously poured out the Spirit.* The Spirit will assist us to not to do evil, *walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.* Jesus promised that He would send a Helper *I will send him unto you. John 16*"7 The Spirit is with every believer. *For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."* 6So we may boldly say: *"The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"* Heb 13:5,6

*16So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. 17The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. Gal 5:16,17 NLT*

*6 He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. 7Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. Titus 3:1-7*

God has *poured out the Spirit* through Christ. He has made us holy, cleansed, justified, *right in his sight* and along with all of this *eternal life*.

*And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. Heb 9:15*