

Remember...



REMEMBER

By Rev. Will Nelken

Presented at Trinity Community Church, San Rafael, CA, on Sunday, April 5, 2020

Today, I'm going to take you on a brief journey through Paul's letter to Titus.

Titus was a convert of Paul's ministry—one of his "sons in the faith." He also became one of Paul's fellow workers, serving in Corinth and Galatia, and now, in Crete.

LEFT WITH A PURPOSE, A COMMISSION...

Titus 1:5 (NLT2)

⁵ I left you on the island of Crete so you could complete our work there and appoint elders in each town as I instructed you.

NECESSARY CHARACTER OF A SERVANT OF GOD...

Titus 1:6-9 (NLT2)

⁶ An elder must live a blameless life. He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who don't have a reputation for being wild or rebellious.

⁷ For an elder must live a blameless life. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered; he must not be a heavy drinker, violent, or dishonest with money.

⁸ Rather, he must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must love what is good. He must live wisely and be just. He must live a devout and disciplined life.

⁹ He must have a strong belief in the trustworthy message he was taught; then he will be able to encourage others with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong.

INEVITABLE CHALLENGE OF A SERVANT OF GOD... (the circumstance)

Titus 1:10-11 (NLT2)

¹⁰ For there are many rebellious people who engage in useless talk and deceive others. This is especially true of those who insist on circumcision for salvation.

¹¹ They must be silenced, because they are turning whole families away from the truth by their false teaching. And they do it only for money.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE...

Chapter 2 shows how everyone—men and women, young and old, slave and free—may participate in making Christ known to others.

Titus 2:11-14 (NLT2)

¹¹ *For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people.*

¹² *And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion to God,*

¹³ *while we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed.*

¹⁴ *He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds.*

Things to Remember

REMEMBER WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE IN US...

Titus 3:1-7 (NLT2)

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 declared us righteous and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.”*

Missionary Tanya Aderman (Cambodia):

“A friend said many believers are encouraging each other by saying that we will get through this. As she spoke those words, the Lord whispered to my heart, ‘It is not just about getting through this—but what are you going to do in the midst of it?’

“Regardless where the virus originated—a fallen world, the enemy, or from the hand of the Lord Himself—the opportunity is the same. What are we going to do in the midst of it?”

Superintendent Bret Allen:

“It’s not time to hunker down. It’s time to take the precautions that wisdom would dictate, and then pivot to serving and ministering in the name of the Lord.”

We are God’s people—His representatives on the earth. We have been left here with a purpose, a Great Commission. We dare not miss this season of opportunity.

This is certainly the greatest season of opportunity extended to us in our lifetimes.

People have questions for which there are no easy answers.

We are faced with threats over which we have little to no control.

There is widespread confusion over what to do.

Fear of economic collapse looms on the horizon.

The “panic button” is close at hand.

But God...

Jesus Christ is the answer to this pandemic. He is the Wisdom of God.

He is our Comforter, our Savior, our Prince of Peace, our Provider, and our Healer.

When cognitive answers elude us, Jesus Christ—the Answer to every person’s heart—is here to help us.

When you don’t have a real answer to offer, offer prayer. Invite people into the presence of God through prayer. Introduce them to the God who is “with us.”

The things of this world can make your heart race with fear. Don’t yield yourself to the panic of the masses of unbelievers. Remember the One who calms the waves and stills the winds. Our Comforter.

When we cannot erase the things that threaten us, we can look to the Mighty Conqueror who orders our steps and leads our way. If anyone can get us through this test safely, it is Jesus. Remember the One who holds your soul in His hand—for now and eternity—and will never let you go. Our Savior.

Our best minds cannot resolve every issue. Leaders disagree on priorities and methods. Wisdom and peace are available to those who pray and give the Lord their anxious thoughts. Remember the One who carries our sorrows and soothes our fears. Our Prince of Peace.

Many before us have endured great deprivation, when the world around them collapsed to a new normal. If they made it, so can we, if we focus on the things that “cannot be shaken”—family and the church. Remember the One who sees your real needs and supplies them. Our Provider.

Pray for those who are ill, with diseases of any sort. You need not know physiology or be a diagnostician; you know your God. Prescribe His help. Proclaim His victory. Remember the One who was wounded for our transgressions. Our Healer.

REMEMBER WHAT THE LORD HAS TOLD US TO DO...

Titus 3:8 (NLT2)

⁸ This is a trustworthy saying, and I want you to insist on these teachings so that all who trust in God will devote themselves to doing good. These teachings are good and beneficial for everyone.

We have recently considered how we are to devote ourselves to God as a Spirit-empowered church—to studying the Scriptures, to praying, to building relationships with each other, to worshiping the Lord. Now, let’s add this:

Titus 3:14 (NLT2)

¹⁴ Our people must learn to do good by meeting the urgent needs of others; then they will not be unproductive.

God’s definition of “good” may not be the same as mine or yours. This is not an issue of comparison. It is a matter of priority.

I think many of our efforts to “do good” are wasted on non-urgent things. We do things that are “not bad,” but not necessarily “good” (by God’s definition).

God has called us to do good “by meeting the urgent needs of others.”

Surely, we must take care of ourselves, but this does not suggest that we take care of ourselves exclusively, or until we have everything we want, and then look to others.

We care for ourselves best when we rely on the One who is the Answer to our deepest needs. Through Him we may learn to be contented in every circumstance. Every. Circumstance.

And out of that contentment—even in the midst of trouble—we search for the opportunities to meet the “urgent needs of others.” This is what we must learn during this pandemic.

We must not be unproductive.

Do you know Jesus Christ as the Savior of YOUR soul?

Will you devote yourself to DOING GOOD by meeting the urgent needs of others?