

# Abounding Grace Christian Church

## The Epistle of Paul to Titus – Part 7

### I. Exposition of Chapter Three (Continued).

A. Verse 5 (continued) – “But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,”

1. “...but according to His mercy He saved us,...” – The word “mercy” means; “a concern for the afflicted that prompts giving help”<sup>1</sup> Lawrence Richards adds:

“The NT continues to affirm that mercy has been provided for the believer: God, ‘who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions’ (Eph 2:4–5). ‘In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope’” (1 Pe 1:3).<sup>2</sup>

2. “...through washing of regeneration...” – Dr. Bob Utley breaks down the word “regeneration”: “The term ‘regeneration’ (*palingenesia*) is also a rare term, found only in Matt. 19:28 and here. It is a compound from ‘again’ (*palin*) and ‘birth’ (*genesis*). Therefore, it refers to the new birth brought about by the finished work of Christ and the wooing of the Spirit.”<sup>3</sup> The word “washing” simply means; a bathing, bath<sup>4</sup>. This word comes from the Greek word translated “washed” in Revelation 1:5, which reads in part; “To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.” We were saved by His mercy when we were washed by His Blood and born again.

3. “...and renewing of the Holy Spirit.” – The word “renewing” means; “to cause something to become new and different, with the implication of becoming superior”<sup>5</sup> When we were saved, the Holy Spirit did a supernatural work on the inside of us making us totally new and different on the inside (spiritually). (cf. II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:20-24).

“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”

Titus 3:5 – New Living Translation

B. Verse 6 – “...whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,” – Referring back to the Holy Spirit mentioned in verse 5, Paul states that He was “...poured out on us abundantly...”. The words “poured out” are the same Greek word found in Acts 2:17-18; 2:33; 10:45 when referring to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during the feast of Pentecost and beyond. From these Scriptures, and others, we see that subsequent to being made new by the Holy Spirit, there is available to every believer a “pouring out” of the Holy Spirit. The words “poured out” mean; “to bestow or distribute largely.”<sup>6</sup> Regarding the phrase, “...through Jesus Christ our Savior”, there are two things necessary to be pointed out. First, Jesus is the “Baptizer in the Holy Spirit” according to Matthew 3:11 and secondly, In verse 4, Paul refers to “...God our Savior” and here he refers to “...Jesus Christ our Savior” showing that Jesus is God!

C. Verse 7 – “...that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

1. “...having been justified by His grace...” – The word “justified” comes from the same word translated “righteousness” (verse 5). “Justified” means; “to cause someone to be in a proper or right relation with someone else—‘to put right with, to cause to be in a right relationship with’”<sup>7</sup> As we saw when we studied verse 5, we’re not placed in right relationship with God through our good works, but we’re placed in right relationship with God by God’s grace. Remember in Part 5, we defined “grace” as; “a favorable attitude toward someone or something—‘favor, good will.’”<sup>8</sup> Other definitions include the word “kindness.”

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence O. Richards, *New International Encyclopedia of Bible Words: Based on the NIV and the NASB*, Zondervan’s Understand the Bible Reference Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 440.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 440.

<sup>3</sup> Robert James Utley, *Paul’s Fourth Missionary Journey: I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy*, vol. Volume 9, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 125.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (New York: Harper & Brothers., 1889), 382.

<sup>5</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 593.

<sup>6</sup> Thayer, 201.

<sup>7</sup> Louw and Nida, 451.

<sup>8</sup> Louw and Nida, 298.

2. "...we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life." - The word "heirs" means; "one who receives something as a gift—'one who receives, one who comes into possession of, receiver, heir.'"<sup>9</sup> Dr. Bob Utley asserts; "This is the ultimate application of the family metaphors used to describe believers (cf. Rom. 4:13; 8:14–17; Gal. 3:29; 4:7; Heb. 6:7; James 2:5)."<sup>10</sup> Thomas Lea writes: "The soteriological and eschatological aspects of Christians' being 'heirs' is readily apparent in this final phrase. Paul asserted that 'he saved us' (v. 5) 'so that...we might become heirs' (v. 7). Christian salvation results in adoption into God's family, which in turn makes believers 'heirs.' This is the soteriological aspect. The eschatological aspect of Christians' being 'heirs' is understood in the fact that all believers still await their final *future* redemption and the full realization of eternal life. What has been promised by God in Christ to his heirs has not yet been experienced in the fullest measure (Rom 8:23-25). In becoming 'heirs' (through salvation), Christians become possessors of a guaranteed future referred to as 'the hope of eternal life'"<sup>11</sup>

D. Verse 8 – "This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men."

1. "This is a faithful saying..." – Paul used this phrase several times in his letters to Timothy (I Timothy 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; II Timothy 2:11). This means what he's saying can be trusted, it is a true saying. It was possibly used in order to get people's attention as to what was about to be said. Most scholars seem to agree that this is referring to the doctrinal truths of **verses 4-7**. Dr. Thomas Constable writes:

"The trustworthy statement (1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11) that Paul referred to in this verse is probably what he had just written in verses 4 through 7. The first reference to 'these things' in this verse are to the things that he had just described in those verses. Titus was to speak about these great truths confidently (cf. 2:15)."<sup>12</sup>

2. "...and these things I want you to affirm constantly..." – The words "affirm constantly" mean; "to state something with confidence and certainty"<sup>13</sup> Other translations use the word "insist" regarding these sayings.

3. "that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men." This is understood to mean that as the believers are reminded of, and hold to the doctrinal truths of **verses 4-7**, then they will be good representatives of Christ as they carefully maintain good works. Dr. Utley writes:

"Believers must constantly think about and take the lead in living godly lives for the sake of the gospel. Paul affirms again that people are right with God apart from personal good works, but also that the goal of God for every believer is personal good works (cf. Eph. 2:8–10 and James 2:14–23). The motivation is gratitude for the undeserved, unmerited grace of God; the effect is Christlikeness; the goal is evangelism."<sup>14</sup>

E. Verse 9 – "But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless."

1. "...avoid foolish disputes..." – The word "disputes" means; "argument, debate, controversy"<sup>15</sup>

2. "...avoid...genealogies..." – "a list of direct descendants or ascendants"<sup>16</sup> Gary Leggett adds; "Genealogies refers to Old Testament genealogical lists. Jewish false teachers would insert stories and myths between the names, attributing fictitious exploits to people in the lists."<sup>17</sup>

3. "...avoid...contentions..." – "to express differences of opinion, with at least some measure of antagonism or hostility"<sup>18</sup>

4. "...avoid...strivings about the law..." – The word "strivings" means; "serious conflict, either physical or non-physical, but clearly intensive and bitter"<sup>19</sup> Apparently having to do with conflict over the Mosaic

<sup>9</sup> Louw and Nida, 572.

<sup>10</sup> Utley, 127.

<sup>11</sup> *The New American Commentary*, 1, 2 Timothy, Titus, Vol. 34, Thomas D. Lea & Hayne P. Griffin Jr. (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 1992)

<sup>12</sup> Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Titus* (<http://www.soniclight.com>: Sonic Light Publication, 2024), 41.

<sup>13</sup> Louw and Nida, 424.

<sup>14</sup> Utley, 128.

<sup>15</sup> James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

<sup>16</sup> Louw and Nida, 114.

<sup>17</sup> *The Complete Biblical Library: Acts – Revelation, Volume 2*, (Empowered Life, Tulsa, OK, 2016.), 945.

<sup>18</sup> Louw and Nida, 437.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 494.

law.

5. “...for they are unprofitable and useless.” – The word “unprofitable” means; “pertaining to not offering any special benefit—‘without advantage, of no special benefit’<sup>20</sup> The word “useless” means; “vain, empty, idle, trifling, frivolous,”<sup>21</sup>

**“Do not get involved in foolish discussions about spiritual pedigrees or in quarrels and fights about obedience to Jewish laws. These things are useless and a waste of time.”**

**Titus 3:9 – New Living Translation**

**F. Verses 10-11 – “Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.”**

1. “Reject a divisive man...” – “Reject” means; “to not pay attention to—‘to refuse to pay attention to, to avoid, to pay no attention to.’<sup>22</sup> Concerning the word, “divisive”, Utley states:

**“This is the Greek term *hairesikos* (which occurs only here in the NT), from which we get the English term ‘heretic.’ This term originally meant ‘to take sides’ or ‘to choose for oneself.’ It is used in the NT (1) of ‘sects’ in Acts 5:17; 24:14; (2) of ‘factions’ in 1 Cor. 11:19; Gal. 5:20 and (3) of ‘teachings’ in 2 Pet. 2:1.”<sup>23</sup>**

2. “...after the first and second admonition...” – The word “admonition” means; “warn, advise on the consequences of a wrong action”<sup>24</sup> A. Duane Litfin writes: “Paul’s instructions to Titus were direct and specific. He was to give such a person two warnings. If that did not work, he was to have nothing to do with him.”<sup>25</sup>

3. “...knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.”

a. “warped” – “be corrupt, (most versions) be perverted”<sup>26</sup>

b. “sinning” – “to act or intend contrary to the will and law of God”<sup>27</sup>

c. “self-condemned.” – Their own actions condemn them.

**G. Verses 12-13 – “When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey with haste, that they may lack nothing.”** Nothing is known of Artemas. Tychicus is mentioned in several other places; **Acts 20:4; Ephesians 6:21-22; Colossians 4:7-8; II Timothy 4:12.** He was a co-worker with Paul and traveled with him on occasion. It’s probable that one or both of these men were going to take over the work in Crete so Titus could go to Nicopolis (a city on the west coast of Greece)<sup>28</sup>. Titus was told by Paul to bring two men with him.

“Zenas the lawyer” would have been an expert in Jewish law if he was Jewish, or if he was a Gentile, he would have been a Roman lawyer (his nationality isn’t determined.) “Apollos” was known as a very eloquent preacher from Alexandria who was helped by Priscilla and Aquila (**cf. Acts 18:24, 28; 19:1; I Corinthians 1:12; 3:5, 6, 22; 4:6; 16:12**). These two men were possibly the ones who took Paul’s letter to Titus.

**H. Verses 14-15 – “And let our *people* also learn to maintain good works, to *meet* urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful. All who *are* with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace *be* with you all. Amen.”** Paul closes the letter by encouraging Titus to continue in good works which were mentioned several times in this letter and sends his greeting.

<sup>20</sup> Louw and Nida, 625.

<sup>21</sup> H.G. Liddell, *A Lexicon: Abridged from Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996), 489.

<sup>22</sup> Louw and Nida, 333.

<sup>23</sup> Utley, 128.

<sup>24</sup> Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*

<sup>25</sup> A. Duane Litfin, “Titus,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 767.

<sup>26</sup> Swanson, 1997).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Louw and Nida, 838.