

A Practical Study of Titus

Growth Toward Godliness

“Beginning to Look More Like Jesus”

Study Number Six – The Path of Godliness – Titus 3:1-7

In these first five episodes of this study, what does the godly life look like and how does it get started? We’ve already learned that the process is from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, food from the truth in the Word of God to the godly life.

Well why begin to respond to truth? Our life begins to change

The picture of it was in 15 life-size CHARACTERISTICS in study number 2.

The PERVERSION of it—the ugly lies as we saw in study number 3.

The lives that were that way because they had turned away their ears from the truth. These people who lived on the island of Crete had disregarded the Word of God. They confessed to know God but their lives would not bear up under close scrutiny.

By the way, there’s another spot too that we’re going to stop on that trip as on the island of Crete where these folks lived to whom this letter is addressed.

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In episode number 4 we saw godliness in RELATIONSHIP—how you're supposed to act toward me and how I'm supposed to act toward you.

We saw the older, the younger. We saw also the employer-employee relationship.

Last week, I hope I really got across to you the burden of my heart and that is that it is beautiful to know that God never gives up on us in this training process of godliness. And it is not a training process that requires a certain legalistic standard for me to live by.

He's training you through chastening, through response to the Word. He trains me in all the circumstances of life.

And Philippians 1:6 just stuck with me at the end of this study:

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in me will continue to perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Now that brings us to chapter 3 on this whole subject of godliness. And what I'd like to do is to state my principle first so that you can think about it through the whole study. So

you'll know where we're going and then I'm going to illustrate it through the verses.

You know a lot of times I'll give you the principle part way through or toward the end. I'm going to give it to you at the start so you can wrestle with it in your mind because we're going to embellish it with a lot of thoughts from the verses that come under consideration.

Here's the principle:

True godliness is the result of learning to live with divine authority.

If you want a verse to go with that, I'd put Hebrews 5:8 right out beside that principle.

Hebrews 5:8

Thou he were a son, [the Lord Jesus] yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered.

The people on the island of Crete were individuals who were a law unto themselves. They are mostly farmers and seafaring folks.

And when you're an island people, you're always an exception. You live by your own rules and regulations. And you get hassled about those rules and regulations of the Roman

empire. They can run their empire, but you're going to be a law unto yourselves.

They had a problem with authority. And as we come to this study, one of the biggest problems and hang-ups with regard to really becoming a godly person is learning how to live comfortably with another authority in your life.

You know some women spend all their lives struggling with the concept of learning to live with the authority of a husband in their lives. Much less, the authority of a Master, the Lord Jesus, who wants to be Lord in their lives. So, as we look at these verses, that's the basic principle. That's the direction we're going to go.

In the first two verses of the study, we're going to see **SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS** of the person's relationship to authority.

And granted it's mostly on the **HORIZONTAL**. But I'm saying that it also has overtones that relate to the **VERTICAL**. Because when you have got the authority related on the vertical, it sure works out a lot easier on the horizontal. And when you've got real problems on horizontal authority, it can also tell me that you've got some real problems on the vertical. They're so intertwined and go so much together.

Pick up with me at verse 1 and you'll see what I mean.

v. 1 Be reminding them to put themselves in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,

“Be reminding them”—WHO? That’s the seven groups back in chapter 2. That’s the older, the younger, that’s the employer-employee relationship.

“Be reminding them to put themselves in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,”

Alright, we’re going to talk about relationship to AUTHORITY.

Those old words of:

SERVANT,

SUBMISSION, [and]

SACRIFICE aren’t very comfortable, are they?

And we don’t hear much of that in our day.

We don’t like those words.

You know I almost have a subtle feeling inside about what’s going on in our country, is we have got people who are trying desperately to destroy our confidence in our leaders.

All of these smear campaigns are going on, and not just because it's a political year. But we're stooping to an ethic, which is certainly not Christian.

Now what are we trying to do? We're trying to destroy everybody's confidence in the leadership so we can provide an excuse for rebellion and anarchy.

"I mean if we can't trust our leaders, then let's just do our own thing!" And we're going to end up just like the book of Judges—"everybody did that which was right in their own eyes." (Judges 21:25)

We're going to be a law unto ourselves and to heck with everybody else.

You see, the Christian ought to be the finest example of a law abiding citizen. One who has learned to live comfortably with authority and he manifests that by his horizontal law-abiding life. You'll see it unfold.

Number one of the seven things mentioned in those first two verses:

1. put yourselves "in subjection to rulers"

Now let me give you three other passages that talk about that.

1 Timothy 2:1-3

I'm exhorting, therefore, first of all, that petitions, and prayers, and intercessions, giving of thanks be made on behalf of all men; on behalf of kings and all those who are in places of prominence, in order that we may live a peaceful and quiet life in all piety and reverence.

How about:

Romans 13:1-7

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities. There is no authority except that which God has established; the authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted; and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves...

And so on.

1 Peter 2:13-17

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men; whether to the king as the supreme authority; Or to governors who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong or to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good we should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men...

You see, the Word is filled with reference toward our responsibility as Christians to be law-abiding citizens to know how to live with, in fact, the civil authority.

It's because we've already learned how to live with the divine authority, being born into His family.

He is where the buck stops. He is the sovereign. He calls the plays in our lives.

Watchman Nee has written a very penetrating and piercing book called *Spiritual Authority*. In that book he makes a very incisive statement:

God can forbear the murmurings of the children of Israel in the wilderness ten times, and He could not allow them to resist His authority. Man's sins can be borne and forborne, but rebellion He cannot stand, because rebellion is the principle of death, the principle of Satan himself. Hence, the sin of rebellion is more serious than any other sin. Whenever man resists authority, God immediately judges. How solemn this is. (paraphrased, page unknown)

Now notice secondly the next phrase:

2. "to authorities be obedient"

You know how sometimes you are reading a book and it sneaks up on your blind side and teaches you something you weren't expected to be taught? You know, when you're

thinking about—everybody asks the question—how can you know God’s will and do it? You know, that’s a question that you get probably in a class more anywhere else.

And all of a sudden he just kind of creeps up on the blindside and hits you with an illustration of knowing God’s will and doing it, but it also relates to authority.

Listen to J. Grant Howard I quote:

(Knowing God’s Will and Doing It by J. Grant Howard)

You are driving along the freeway late one evening in a hurry to get home. There is very little traffic and it hasn’t rained in days. There are no patrol cars in sight. Your car is in good shape and your tires are brand new. The sign says “Speed Limit 55 MPH.” You process all that data through your mind and then you decide whether you will stay at 55 MPH or go 65 MPH and get home sooner. What is the will of God in this matter? Well it is clearly revealed in the scriptures that every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities and the one who resists this authority has opposed the ordinance of God. In this case the authorities have determined that 55 MPH is the speed limit. If you are programmed with that Biblical truth, you will head for home in the will of God at 55 MPH. But let us say you decide to go faster and take your chances on getting caught. Or you are not paying attention to your speed and it creeps up to 65. In either case, you are out of the will of God. The will of God is that you obey the speed limit set by the civil authorities. A lot of Christians know the

facts of the scriptures, but their minds haven't really been renewed by these truths and their lives haven't really been transformed by them. They obey when it is convenient rather than on the basis of firm conviction.
(paraphrased, page unknown)

That's what I'm saying.

True godliness is learning to live with divine authority. And when divine authority says you live by the civil law, then you submit to that authority.

Just like you submit to His authority to have the right to be Lord in your life, so you submit to the horizontal authority as well.

3. "to be ready for every good deed"

Now that means that you're positive about it.

"Oh gosh, I'm going to..."

You know, gritting your teeth and digging in your heels all the way. That's not where it is.

You're excited about it! In fact, you're supportive to that authority.

You're submissive, you're obedient, and you're positive. Those are the three words that I see in verse 1.

Now I want to take those three words for just a second and turn it to the VERTICAL RELATIONSHIP.

If I'd really gotten ahold of this 20 years ago, I think it would have made a fantastic difference in the progress I could have made in my Christian life.

First:

1. I am SUBMISSIVE to His will.

That's number one.

2. I'm OBEDIENT to His Word.
3. I'm AVAILABLE for His work—in and through me.
1. I'm SUBMISSIVE to His will. I'm letting Him be Lord and direct my life as He pleases. I'm endeavoring to discover His will for my life. I'm submissive to it.
2. I'm OBEDIENT to His Word. Whenever I read it and study it and I see principles and concepts, I'm eager to be an obedient heart to that Word.

And third:

3. I'm POSITIVE. I am available saying "Lord, sic'em! Do whatever You need to in my life to hasten Your

good work and make me more godly.” In other words, I’m positively affirming by my attitude that I want God to be busy about making me into the kind of person that He wants me to be.

Now verse 2 just goes right on with it—four, five, six and seven are in verse two.

v. 2 to be speaking evil of no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.

“to be speaking evil of no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.”

Number four is:

4. “to be speaking evil of no one”

Now when you find somebody who is constantly “speaking evil” of authority, what’s that tell you? That tells you they’re not wanting to submit to it and they have an excuse for not submitting to it.

So when they criticize the authority over them, they’re only doing that to give themselves an internal, self-justification for rebelling and not submitting to it because they’re criticizing it. So they use their tongues to run it down and speak evil of it.

And James 1:19 says:

James 1:19

Let everybody be quick to hear, and slow to speak and slow to anger.

It was Pascal who said:

“I hold it to be a fact that if all the persons knew what each said of the other, there wouldn’t be four friends left in the world.”

(source unknown)

I think that’s true!

It was also Paxton Hood who said:

“When we advance a little into life, we find that the tongue of man creates nearly all the mischief of the world.”

(source unknown)

And there is a Japanese proverb which says:

“The tongue, even though it’s only three inches long, can kill a man six feet high.”

(source unknown)

You know, that’s true. The horrible power of an unleashed tongue.

The women have already been talked about in that regard

back in chapter 2—“you’re not to be malicious gossips”—chapter 2 and verse 3.

Now the fifth thing he says is:

5. “to be uncontentious”

Do you know what a contentious person is? It’s one that always argues, always quarrels, always fussing, always got to have his own way.

I would say a contentious person is described in James chapter 3. James says:

James 3:14-16

There is the wisdom which is from beneath. It is an earthly wisdom. If you have bitter jealous and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but it’s earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

And then sixth he says to be:

6. “gentle”

In being a person relating to authority, I’m gentle in that relationship.

For instant, Matthew chapter 12 gives a great illustration of this guy who has about a \$12 million debt and he goes and pleads with his master and says “please forgive me my debt.” And the guy says sure and he releases him of his debt.

As soon as that guy’s released from his debt, what does he do? He goes out and finds one of his guys who owes him 20 bucks and he says “he seizes him and he squeezes him.” Grabs him by the throat and says “you pay right now or I’m going to throw you in prison!” The guy says “I don’t have 20 bucks but I’ll get it as soon as I can.” The guy says “It’s too late and shoves him into prison.”

So what does the other master do? He discovers the attitude of the forgiven one. Well he restores his debt and allows him to have the privilege of having the same treatment that he just meted out on the other individual.

Why you need to be gentle in your relationships with others is because you need to realize that you should have the same attitude toward those that the Lord has had toward you with regard to your own shortcomings. So we can afford to be gentle.

And seventh he says:

7. “showing every consideration for all men.”

I think that’s large-hearted consideration for the mistakes of

those who are in authority over us, realizing that it is not our responsibility. It is God's and they hold that responsibility with that authority over us. So we are large-hearted with our mercy and love and understanding and grace toward those who in fact exercise authority over us.

Now let me summarize those seven things:

1. submissive,
2. obedient,
3. available (or positive) for every good deed,
4. they shouldn't be "speaking evil,"
5. I shouldn't fight it,
6. I should be "gentle," and
7. I should display a Christlike attitude in "showing consideration for all men."

Now how is it with you and authority? Do you find yourself resisting it? Do you find yourself talking a real good game in your relationship to the Lord? Or do you really know what it is to be a servant? Do you really know what it is to be submissive to the Lord and let Him lead and direct your life? And you've got evidence of the fact that He's been there? And that you've sacrificed in that relationship?

In one of his Chuck Swindoll's newsletters he made a very interesting observation that related to authority and it was very painful.

He quotes a verse and he says:

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”
That's Philippians 4:13.

And then 2 Corinthians 12:9:

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

And 2 Timothy 1:7:

“God hath not given us a spirit of fear but of power and of love, and a sound mind.”

And then Ephesians 4:14:

“I'm strengthened with all might in the inner man.”

And then he makes the following observation. He says:

Christians have an inner resource or power for victory. Well oftentimes, he says it comes down to the use of two little words and these two little words uncover the rebellious heart. He says those two words are “can't” and “won't.”

He says:

We prefer to use the word “can’t.” And we use it to cover up the “won’ts,” is what I’m trying to say.

For instance:

“I just *can’t* get along with my wife.”

“My husband and I *can’t* communicate.”

“I *can’t* discipline the kids.”

“I *can’t* give up the affair I’m having.”

“I *can’t* stop overeating.”

“I *can’t* find time to pray.”

“I *can’t* quit gossiping.”

(paraphrased from Chuck Swindoll “Think It Over” newsletter, date unknown)

Now when you read those passages that becomes terribly convicting.

Meier and Minirth in their book, *Happiness is a Choice*—and by the way, I highly recommend the book. They also pointed out:

(Happiness Is a Choice: The Symptoms, Causes, and Cures by Frank Minirth and Paul Meier)

As psychiatrists we cringe when (Christian) patients use the word can't...Any good psychiatrist knows that "I can't" and "I've tried" are merely lame excuses. We insist that our patients be honest with themselves and use language that expresses the reality of the situation. So we have our patients change their *can'ts* to *won'ts*...If an individual changes all of his *can'ts* to *won'ts*, he stops avoiding the truth and quits deceiving himself, and starts living in reality...

(page unknown, taken from Chuck Swindoll "Think It Over" newsletter, date unknown)

Now listen to it:

"I just *won't* get along with my wife."

"My husband and I *won't* communicate."

"I *won't* discipline the kids like I should."

"I just *won't* give up the affair I'm having."

"I *won't* stop overeating."

"I *won't* find time to pray."

“I *won't* quit gossiping.”

(paraphrased from Chuck Swindoll “Think It Over” newsletter, date unknown)

Now boy that really brings you to a correct orientation! But you see how deceptive our inner-self is!

We’re always saying “Oh, I can’t do that” or “I don’t have time for this.”

He’s saying “No, it’s I *won't* do that.”

And I think it uncovers what I’m talking about.

Godliness is learning how to live comfortably with divine authority in our lives.

Now look at verse 3.

Verse 3, tells us what we were: “Now Titus, if you get all upset and discouraged about the condition on the island of Crete, remember we were once like this.”

How?

v. 3 For we were at one time also foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

Now let's look at that just a little bit closer. There are SIX THINGS about our past life. We're:

1. "FOOLISH."

Psalm 14:1

The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God."

1 Corinthians 2:14

The man without the Spirit of God does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, they're foolishness to him. And neither can He know them because they are spiritually discerned.

Secondly, they're:

2. "DISOBEDIENT."

That's a manifestation of living in rebellion under a wrong authority.

Third, we are:

3. "DECEIVED."

How?

Well pride says "I can handle it."

Or intellectualism says “I don’t have any need. I can take care of it. I can explain it away. I’m a master of my own fate and the captain of my salvation.”

1 John 1:8 says:

if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

Fourth, we were:

4. “enslaved to various lusts, desires and pleasures.”

We lived on that kind of a level. We were in bondage to that old nature.

Fifth, we:

5. “spend our life in malice and envy.”

Why?

Because ego and pride is at the center of all of it. We live in an anti-social fashion. Everybody’s a competitor to be beaten.

And sixth, we are:

6. “hateful,” or we’re “hating one another.”

Now let's put that aside because the next verse is a contrast.

Isn't that beautiful?

“But”—now let's look at the other side of it. What happened?

What and who made the difference?

v. 4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,

There are two big words right there:

1. “kindness” and
2. “love.”

“Kindness” refers to His ACTION toward you and me.

Even in our rebellion, even in our sin, He showed “kindness.”

And “love” is His ATTITUDE.

Now I say “His love” is unchanging and it's unconditional. He doesn't love you more than He does me. He doesn't love me more than He does you. It is unconditional and it is in fact unchanging.

It's those two attributes that form the basis for the salvation that becomes ours.

And verse 5 is the KEY VERSE on SALVATION.

v. 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

Now you'll notice there's a NEGATIVE and a POSITIVE there and I want to land on that for just a minute.

Some of you are going to have a real struggle with this. And I understand that, because you've come out of a performance orientation.

You know, do as many good deeds as you can or live as good a life as possible. Give your money, do-do-do, in order to gain salvation. And that does not agree with the biblical concept of salvation.

You today, this very moment, can know in your heart that you are bound for an eternal destiny through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And it's not based on your works.

Christianity is a salvation which is done! It has already been finished. When he cried "Tetelestai! It is finished!" upon the cross.

"He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness..."

Boy, that is as clear as the page that it's written on.

Ephesians 2: 8, 9

By grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves. It is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

There is nowhere in Scripture that says that salvation is something you can earn or that you can work for.

Romans 4:3-5

What does the scripture say? Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. Now when man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited to him for righteousness.

So I just reach out and take it and I say “Father, thank You for providing this! I acknowledge my need of Christ and I receive Him right now as Savior.”

You'll notice he changes it to a POSITIVE in the last part of verse 5. And this has become a theological battleground and volumes have been written on these next two phrases.

“...by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy

Spirit.”

Now invariably when people find that there is water in a passage, they want to put baptism there.

The only problem is, when you see water and you put baptism, you also put human works there.

You see, if in fact I must be baptized to be a Christian, then I have also said that a man has to do that. So somebody else is involved.

My problem with that is:

1. a man is involved then and
2. it is strange that the Lord hasn't made it clear with regard to which form is saving.

Whether you sprinkle, dunk or pour—which one is it? If in fact that is the case.

The Lord left us two beautiful ordinances to express our love for Him.

He left, first of all, the ordinance of the LORD'S SUPPER. We break the bread, we drink the cup with tears in our eyes as we are reminded of the horrible cost that He paid because He loved us and purchased our salvation. And He left us the ordinance of BAPTISM so we could testify to the world what

happened when Christ came in.

Whether we are sprinkled so that it is an evidence of the coming of the Spirit, or as those who prefer to be poured, or those who prefer to be immersed.

Speaking of Romans chapter 6, that “I’ve been buried with Him in baptism and raised to newness of life.” That is an expression but it has no salvation merit in it. It is an ordinance.

Now what is “the washing of regeneration”?

The Word of God is called the WATER in many, many places. And this is the washing of the new birth as a result of my exposure to the Word.

Ephesians chapter 5 says: “With the washing of the water of the Word.” (Eph. 5:26)

Psalm 119 says:

Psalm 119:9

Wherewith all shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.

1 Peter 1:23

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of

incorruptible by the word of God, which lives and abides forever.

As the Word of God is presented, I respond to it and I am washed in a bath of regeneration.

Just like Jesus said in John 13: “You are all clean by the words which I have spoken to you and you need only to have your feet washed. But you’re not all clean.” (John 13:10)

Because He was referring to the fact that Judas Iscariot was still sitting there in His presence.

So what he is saying here is that “When I became a Christian, independent of works, when in faith I received the Lord Jesus Christ. I got a spiritual bath.”

Isaiah 1:18

Come now, let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet, they’ll be as white as snow. Whether they be red like crimson, they’ll be as wool.

You get a brand new, white slate and it’s all brand new in God’s sight! Totally cleansed and forgiven.

Now what is the “renewing of the Holy Spirit”?

The Holy Spirit is the most active member of the Godhead in salvation.

If you're not a Christian right now, the Holy Spirit is doing a little bit of stinging work. He's pricking your heart right now about "Hey, is this the night? Is this the time?"

Or are you going to say with Agrippa "Almost you persuade me to become a Christian." And you're going to put it off again, and again, and again.

Rejecting the Spirit of God as He convicts you keeps you from coming to salvation. But when you respond, the Holy Spirit comes into your life and He begins a renewing work. He energizes the new divine nature so you begin to live in a righteous fashion.

And He renews the inward man day by day. He is the master teacher. He guides you into truth. He is in fact, the one who seals you for your eternal destiny. So the Spirit is in fact a very active agent in salvation.

And you'll notice verse 6, the word "whom" refers to the Holy Spirit.

v. 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

And then our last verse today is verse 7 and that's the PURPOSE for salvation. I love this last verse.

v. 7 in order that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

“in order that, having been justified by His grace,”

You say now what does that mean?

“...justified by His grace.”

Justification refers to the act of God whereby He makes a sinner righteous. Just as if I'd never sinned.

When you become a Christian God NEGATIVELY in justification forgives your sins, but POSITIVELY He also adds His righteousness.

And at the moment of your salvation, you have a perfect righteous standard before God that'll never change. Now that's your passport to glory friend. And when you get there the basis for your salvation is not your human righteousness or your human works, it is the righteousness of Jesus Christ that you stand at the gate and they'll swing wide open because that's the secret.

It is the shed blood of Jesus Christ who has cleansed your sins on a NEGATIVE side, and on the POSITIVE has been added the righteousness of God that makes you totally accepted in the presence of the heavenly Father.

That's justification. And that's all by grace, you already have learned what grace meant, didn't you, from last week? God's undeserved or unmerited favor.

He didn't have to do that, but He did it because He loves you and me. And as a result of that:

“we become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

You know what an heir is, don't you? An heir is someone who's going to receive something. You have an inheritance.

You know what your inheritance is? It's the same as that of the Lord Jesus.

Romans 8:16 and 17 says:

Romans 8:16, 17

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are heirs and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

But Christ has to look forward in eternity, so do we!

Where His name occurs, so does ours!

We are heirs with Him because we are now sons in the Father's family as a result of the new birth.

Let me just instruct you with three other passages along that

line very briefly.

First, John 1:12. Now listen carefully to this:

John 1:12

But as many as received Him, [WHO?—the Lord Jesus] to them gave He the power to become [WHAT?] the sons of God.

You can put the “daughters of God” for you ladies. He gave you power, when you received Christ, to become sons of God.

How about:

Romans 8:15

For you did not receive a spirit that made you a slave again to fear; but you received the Spirit of sonship, and by Him we cry, Abba, Father.

And Galatians 4:4.

Galatians 4:6-7

Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and since you are a son, God made you also an heir.

Ok, let's go back and pick up the lessons that come out of it. I've got four or five lessons that I want to give you that relate to this whole subject that we've looked at in these seven verses.

We started out with the subject of authority and we saw what we were, we saw what God has done in these last verses to provide salvation. So we have covered the waterfront in these verses.

Lesson #1: The godly lifestyle manifests itself through submission, obedience and availability to authority.

And if you want to put the word "divine authority" you could.

In that little trilogy I gave you:

SUBMISSIVE to His will,

OBEDIENT to His Word, and

AVAILABLE for His Work in and through you.

Lesson #2: The godly lifestyle is manifested by a large-hearted consideration when you disagree.

He says "give wide birth" to those who are in authority over you. Show consideration.

The godly lifestyle is manifested by a large-hearted

consideration when you are in disagreement.

[Lesson] #3: It helps us appreciate the present by looking at the past.

I think that's why Paul inserted that third verse. This is what we were before we became Christians. We were rebellious. We were living under a wrong authority. And he describes what we were before we became Christians.

Lesson #4: Salvation is a complete act of God's work and grace.

Now get ahold of that. We can get so hung up on never having assurance of salvation because we're so works-oriented and we get back on that performance kick so quick and then we get into a guilt-syndrome and we think "boy we're not saved." And then we come back and we do a few good things and say "Oh yay, I am." And then "Oh no, I'm not."

We're on a kind of a roller coaster and works has nothing to do with it. It is a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. And you either have said "I do" and received Christ in your life or you haven't.

You either have the Son and have life or you don't have the Son and you don't have life.

It is a complete act of God's work and grace.

Lesson #5: The ultimate purpose for salvation is that you and I might be sons and heirs.

The Olympic games gave birth to one of the most unusual stories in sports. It concerns an 800 meter runner from British Ghana. He had trained for years for the privilege of representing his country in the zenith of athletic competition. His day arrived for the preliminaries in the 800 meters. The finest two-lap runner in British Ghana waited patiently. All the months of training and the miles that he had run daily were soon to be put to the great test. The first two preliminary races were run. Then came his turn to attempt to move into the finals at Rome and into the hearts of his countrymen.

“Attention, attention! Will the 800 meter runner from British Ghana please report to the check-in official,” echoed the voice through the stadium. He was not here. Athletes, coaches and officials began frantically looking for this young athlete, but he could not be found. The race went on without him. The stadium buzzed. Where was he? What had kept him from running in the biggest race of his life? They found him asleep, saving his strength for an all-out effort in the race.

He had dozed off just before the starting gun was fired and missed the greatest opportunity of his athletic career. All his sacrifice and work had been for nothing. The biggest tragedy comes when a person sleeps while God is calling him to start in the race of life. God by His grace provides every person with an opportunity to this new start, a new lease on life. The moment we enter into a personal relationship with Jesus

Christ by faith, the starter pulls the trigger that launches us into the great Olympiad of the universe. What a needless tragedy it is to sleep through the race and miss the eternal victory in Christ.
(source unknown)

Second Corinthians 6:1 says:

2 Corinthians 6:1

Behold, now is the acceptable time. Behold, now is the day of salvation.

You know we're six weeks deep in this thing. And I really become concerned with heightened concern as the study comes to a close. I really wonder, you know, when in fact that the Lord came tonight that this room would be empty. John and I were kind of joking about that at the beginning.

I said "Hey, it looks like the rapture took place here. There isn't a person here but you and me."

The first thing John said was "I sure hope it would be like this if in fact it took place while we're here. That we'd all go."

You see only you know. Maybe you're sitting there just like King Agrippa.

"Oh Anderson, that was great. But almost you persuaded me to become a Christian. But not now. Don't bother me right

now. I've got some places to go and people to see and things to do. I can't be bothered with it."

I talk to a lot of guys each week just like that. They're not going to get serious right now. Did you ever stop to think that maybe soon it might be just too late? And that you might be as close right now as you're going to get for a long time in dealing with this thing?

Now I told you I wasn't going to hassle you and I wasn't going to embarrass you, but I sure stand available. I'll come to your house, sit down with you, talk with you, do anything I need to to help you to that relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

You know, God is so precious. It's genuine in all of these different cities, we're finding people who've come to know the Lord in response to His Word. That's beautiful and sweet encouragement. And I would really pray that if God is speaking to you about that tonight, that you'd really respond.

And as a Christian, how comfortable are you with divine authority? Have you changed all your "can'ts" to "won'ts" tonight? And has God's Spirit unmasked that kind of rebellious nature within that's keeping you from really making progress in a godly life?

You see, you're the only one who can really answer that question.

Lord, it becomes terribly convicting when we start changing

“can’t” to “won’t” because we realize that it uncovers a nature that we’ve been born with. Lord we have such lame excuses for being where we are. And Lord, the longer we live the more we see that we’ve failed a lot to appropriate promises so we’re far from what we should be. We ask that You might encourage us by not looking back or not looking in comparing ourselves with people beside us, that we might look to you. As the writer to the book of Hebrews said, “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.” And looking to Him, we become highly motivated individuals with proper priorities, living comfortably under divine authority, letting You guide and direct our lives. Submissive to Your will, obedient to You Word, and available for Your work in and through us. Oh Lord, may Your Holy Spirit really impress upon us a desperate need that You have to become Lord in our lives so that You can exercise that authority that will in fact, produce the godly life. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

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**A Practical Study of TITUS:
Growth Toward Godliness**

“Beginning to Look More Like Jesus”

STUDY NUMBER SIX – THE PATH OF GODLINESS – TITUS 3:1-7

NOTES

v. 1 Be reminding them to put themselves in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,
v. 2 to be speaking evil of no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.
v. 3 For we were at one time also foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.
v. 4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,
v. 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,
v. 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,
v. 7 in order that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Titus 3:1-7 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What is the godly man’s attitude toward authority, according to verse 1?

3. Outline the seven-fold responsibility of the godly man in verses 1 & 2.

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4. How does he characterize the sinful past, according to verse 3?

5. What is the basis of salvation, according to verse 5?

6. What is the meaning of “washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit”?

7. What person of the Trinity is involved in this two-fold action of “regeneration and renewing?”

8. What is the purpose for being “justified,” according to verse 7?

9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: The godly lifestyle manifests itself in submission, obedience, and availability to the authority that is over them.

LESSON #2: The godly lifestyle is manifested by a large-hearted consideration when in disagreement.

LESSON #3: It helps us appreciate the present by looking at the past.

LESSON #4: Salvation is a complete act of Gods' work and grace.

LESSON #5: The ultimate purpose for God's plan of salvation is so that we might become heirs with Jesus Christ of all that God has in store for us in eternity.

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