

# Titus: 1st Century Wisdom for 21st Century Leaders

## Session 3: Getting to the “Why”

Edited Transcript

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Well, good morning, gentlemen. It's great to see you here. We're in our Titus study right now. If you have a Bible turn, turn to Titus chapter three. We're talking about we're in this series on first century wisdom for 21st century leaders. Before we do that, let's do a shout out to a group of guys in Satanta, Kansas led by Will Hatcher. These are guys who are men gathered to fellowship and learn how to be better family men through God's direction. Let's welcome these guys from Kansas that are joining us this morning. All right. One, two, three. All right. Great to see you guys. This morning, we're in this third session. Titus has three chapters and so we're doing three sessions in Titus. We're in the third session. We're talking today about getting to the “WHY”. Now, when we did chapter one, we talked about the fact that actions speak louder than words. When we did chapter two, we talked about the secret sauce of leadership. If you have not watched either of those videos, I'd encourage you to go back and watch those online at [MIMBibleStudy.com](http://MIMBibleStudy.com). You can see those two Bible studies.

Today, we're going to talk about getting to the why. Now, why do we have that topic? Why is that the title? There's a very famous TED Talk that came out a few years ago called Start With the Why or “Start With Why”. It's by a gentleman named Simon Sinek, S-I-N-E-K. I'm not really sure how to pronounce it. It's then become a book. Now, other people are writing about it too. What Simon talked about in this getting to the why is the fact that to really motivate somebody effectively, you have to get down below sort of the behavior stuff is on the surface. What really matters, if you're really going to motivate somebody, if you're really going to inspire somebody, if even you in your own life are going to live a life of meaning and purpose, you're going to have to get down to the why. You're going to have to figure out what's underneath the surface, what's underneath why you should do this or do that. You have to get down to the why you should do this or do that.

We're going to talk about this and Paul talks about in Titus three, he talks about a why we are to behave in certain ways. Then, he uses an example. In Titus three, he used the example of citizenship basically, of how we are to behave in the world. Let's do this. Turn to Titus three and let's read. I'll read Titus three for us. I'm going to read it all the way through to the end. Now, the end has sort of some final instructions and greetings that you would expect at the end of the letter. I'll read that, but we're not going to really talk about it too much. We're going to really focus our attention on the first 11 verses. Titus three, "Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But ..."

It's probably the most important word in the passage. "But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful. All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all." What a great closing to this letter. What a great closing sort of argument that Paul's making or instructions that Paul's giving to Titus. Let's pray that God would illuminate our minds and hearts as we consider this passage this morning. Father, we are honored and excited to be gathered as men to study your word together, to inspire each other, to spur one another on to good works, to bear each other's burdens, to encourage one another, to love one another. Lord, would you use this morning to deepen our understanding of your word, to deepen our understanding of your way for us, Lord, that we would grow in our own righteousness, Lord, not according to our own strength, but by the renewal and the regeneration of the Holy Spirit as this passage teaches us? Lord, we put ourselves in your hands this morning. Teach us, Lord, we pray, in Jesus's name. Amen.

We're talking about getting to the why. Every week that we've done this, instead of using a big idea, we've used a leadership lesson. I'm going to just start with the leadership lesson. This is what we're going to really bounce off of today. That is this: Meaning, purpose, and identity are the inspirational leader's best motivational tools. If you want to motivate someone, if you want to inspire someone to greatness, if you want to inspire someone, as Paul says here, to be ready for every good work, then helping them understand their meaning and their purpose and their identity are the best tools. That means that things that we would maybe sometimes use like, I don't know, guilt and obligation, those are not inspirational or motivational. Those are browbeating. Paul gives Titus this instruction. We'll see how this passage uses this. He's really saying help them understand their meaning. Help them understand their purpose. Help them understand, most of all, their identity. You will inspire people. You will motivate people in a godly way. Our outline goes like this. First of all, we're going to talk about good citizenship. This is the example that Paul uses to sort of make this point. Then, we're going to talk about the fact that motive matters. Then, we'll talk about gospel living.

## **GOOD CITIZENSHIP**

Let's start with good citizenship. If you look at the very beginning of the chapter, Paul says, "Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show courtesy toward all people." Most commentators, most scholars agree that this is Paul's instruction to Titus to tell the Cretans, the people that live on Crete, this is how you should live your life, subject to authority, subject to the government that you are under. Just like the people who live on Crete are to be responsible to that government, then that applies to us as well. We are to be subject to our government. This is an argument that some

people make. We're Christians. We live in God's kingdom, not in the world's kingdom. We're going to follow the Bible and not the laws of the land. Honestly, Jesus didn't teach that and Paul didn't teach that.

He said that you are to be subject to the laws of the land. You can see this consistently. Paul's pointing out that if the gospel's really in your heart, then you're going to have to live in such a way that you're subject to this authority. This is not the only place he says this. Flip over to Romans chapter 13. He says it to the Romans, "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God." If you drop down to verse five, he says, "Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed."

Paul is saying that, as a Christian, this is the way that we should live in the world, subject to the authorities that God has instituted over us. Paul's not the only one. You might say, "Well, that as just Paul." Well, no. Peter said the same thing. You remember, Peter's the guy that liked to stand up to people, stand up to the authorities. If you turn over to 1 Peter chapter two verse 13 and following, he says this, "Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God." Then, listen to this verse 17, "Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor." Peter, Paul, Jesus says some of the same things. We are to live lives that honor and are in submission to authority, recognizing that God put that authority in place.

Paul doesn't just sort of leave Titus with a sort of, "Tell the people to do this because we tell them to do this." He gives them the why. He helps them see that motive matters.

## **MOTIVE MATTERS**

Look, then, starting at verse four. Look at what Paul says, "But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Now, how many of you go to church and they say a creed at least once in a while? Maybe the Nicene Creed or the Apostles' Creed. Have you heard of these creeds? Why do we say these creeds in church? What do the creeds do for us? Remind us of what we believe and why we believe. Well, guess what. This passage is a creed. Most scholars think that Paul is not just writing a letter sort of freehand and listing these things out, that this little statement here was a creed that people would repeat.

I thought maybe we should do that this morning. We can repeat this creed ourselves. Here's what I've got. This is the New Living Translation. I like the wording of this. We're going to stand up together. Everybody stand up together. We're going to repeat this creed together because Paul says to be ready for every good work, tells Titus to tell the Cretans to be ready for every good work, but here's why we need to be ready for every good work. Let's read this together. Ready? "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. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life." Great job. Have a seat.

Creeds, I'm going to tell you, creeds are really helpful. You might say, "I don't go for those empty words." Maybe you grew up Catholic and every time you did something wrong, you had to go repeat a prayer over and over again, do an Our Father or do a ... I was going to say a Hail Mary. You know what I mean? The idea of repeating stuff maybe feels a little stale or it doesn't really have meaning, but creeds can be very helpful tools because they remind us of the essentials. They remind us of those things that are the most important. They bring us back. In a world that's constantly trying to confuse us, a creed brings us back to the core foundational values and truths that we believe in and reminds us of the why we do what we do. If you look at this, what do you see? You see that we follow Christ. As Christians, we follow Christ. Why? Look at what this creed says that he did for us. He revealed his love. He saved us. He washed away our sins. He gave us a new life. He poured out his Spirit on us. He made us heirs.

When it says we have confidence that we will inherit eternal life, who inherits something? You got to be in the family to inherit something. This is such an important part of being a Christian is that when you become a Christian, you're adopted into the family of God. You become a son. You know, there's a lot of guys walking around with father wounds, a lot of guys walking around with dads that maybe were unavailable or absent. I'm so blessed. I had a great dad. I still have a great dad. I get what it means to be a son, to be a loved son. For some guys, that's difficult to understand. I'm telling you guys that God adopts us into his family. Therefore, because we're part of the family, because Jesus came to earth for us, because God saves us, because he washes away our sins, because we have a new life, well, of course we want to be ready for every good work. Of course we want to bring glory to a God that has done that for us. Remembering our meaning and our purpose and our identity, these are the tools. If we're going to motivate other people, these are the tools that we need to have to remind people of this.

## **GOSPEL LIVING**

Paul uses this example of good citizenship. He talks about how motive matters. Then, finally, now he's going to talk about what does it look like to live in the gospel. In other words, you're in the family so how does the family live. This is what he says, "I want you to insist on these things," verse eight, "so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people." He says, "I want you to be devoted to good works." As I was reading this passage, I was thinking, "What am I devoted to?" You know, we throw words like that around. Well, let's do our devotions this morning. What are we really devoted to? How can you tell what you're devoted to? Well, what you spend time on. The things that you will prioritize over the things that you will put aside for those priorities, those are the things that you're devoted to. A lot of times, our behavior betrays our beliefs. We say that we believe in something, we say that we're followers of Christ, we say that our family's our top priority, we say that we want to be great husbands and great dads, but we're not really devoted to those things, because when you look around, we're not prioritizing those things. We're not putting those things first.

What Paul says here to Titus is make sure the people are devoted to good works. I got to be honest with you. Good works are very inconvenient. I mean, I got stuff to do. I got places to go. I got activities. I got hobbies. I got a job. Paul's very clear. Christians are devoted to good works. That's something that I think we need to take to heart. Then you look at the flip side of this. What do we need to avoid? We need to avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, quarrels about the law. Why? Because these things

are unprofitable and worthless. He even says, look, if you got a person in the church or in your midst who is devoted to quarreling, who is devoted to division, tell them once or twice to knock it off. Then, if they won't stop doing it, just don't be around them. I don't know about you, but every once in a while, I go through the Facebook purge. I mean, I get it. There's a lot of stuff to complain about in the world, but when I realize that there are certain people that that's all I ever hear about, just all it takes is a click and they're out of my life. Seriously, they live in Kansas anyway. Like, "Oh, I don't want them to know." Really? That's an easy one.

There are people in our lives that sometimes we need to just put them aside because they're not stirring us up to good works. They're not helping us to be devoted to good works. Paul says that's an important thing. If people around you are stirring up dissension, remove yourself from them. Why? Because you have better things to do. What do you have to do? You have to be devoted to good works. Why are we devoted to good works? Because of all that Jesus did for us, because of the love that we've experienced, because of the sin that's been washed away, because of the new life that we have in Christ. These are the things that God wants us to be devoted to.

All right. Let me wrap us up so you guys can take some time to pray. I want to point out one thing from this letter of Titus. You know, when an author says things over and over again, when there's themes that are repeated, it's a good thing to pay attention them. I think one of the themes of Titus is this idea of being ready for good works. At the end of chapter one, he's talking actually in the negative sense of people who are not qualified to be elders, who are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work. Then, in chapter two, he says to Titus to be ready for every good work. In verse seven, "Show yourselves in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech." In verse 14 of chapter two, he says that God is building a people, purifying for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. They're looking for good works. Then, chapter three, he says, verse one, "Be ready for every good work." Down to verse eight, he says, "The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works."

Doing good in the world is what we are called to do. I want to make it clear, like I would always make it clear, we don't do good in the world so that God will approve of us. We do good in the world because God has already approved of us. He has already washed away our sin. He has already given us a new life. He has already loved us. Like John says, we love not to earn God's love, but we love because what? Because he first loved us. Our good works, our devotion to good works is not to bring glory to ourselves. It's to bring glory to a God who loved us, who came to earth for us, who died for us, who defeated sin and death on our behalf, and who gives us his very own righteousness so that when the Father looks at you, he sees his most favorite Son. Of course we're going to go out and do the best we can for our loving Father. Let's pray. Father, thank you so much for these guys. Bless their weekends and their weeks as they come ahead, Lord. Would you bond us together, Lord, as your church? Would you bond us together as brothers? Would you help us, Lord, to be zealous for good works? In Jesus's name, amen.