

Sermon Series: Book of Titus
Sermon title: Putting Good Works into Order
Scripture reading: Titus 2:11-3:2
Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church
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If you are visiting with us today, we are in the book of Titus. Titus is a letter that is written from the Apostle Paul to a man named Titus, who is living on the island of Crete. Titus was left there by Paul to "Put what remained into order and appoint Elders in every town".

We've been discussing some of those things that he means to be 'put into order'.

The main thing in chapter 1 is establishing Elders in all of these churches, men who are called by the Holy Spirit to shepherd these churches and teach them the word of God. And we saw that the reason these Elders need to be in place is to protect the churches from false teachers BY teaching sound doctrine.

We mentioned that sound doctrine is a forcefield against false teaching.

Last week we saw that sound doctrine also propels us forward in godliness. If we really want to live in obedience to Jesus Christ, then we need to know his word. Jesus is training us in godliness and what he uses to do that is his word.

Well, today I want you to see that sound doctrine does a third thing.

Sound doctrine equips us for good works.

Let's pray.

Turn to Titus chapter 2 and I will read starting in verse 11 and I'll read down into chapter 3.

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, **12** training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, **13** waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, **14** who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

15 Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

3 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, **2** to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

Now, I want us to see just how often 'good works' shows up in this little letter to Titus and then I want to ask some questions of the text....about Good Works.

1:16- Titus says that these false teachers **profess to know God but they deny him by their works. They are unfit for any good work.**

So, in order to refute what their teaching....Titus and the Elders are to teach sound doctrine.

But how are they to refute the way that these guys are living? By living the opposite way.

Titus 2:7

Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an

opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

Titus is to be a model of good works....in all respects.

No pressure, Titus!

Likewise the Elders are told something similar in 1:8.

They are to be 'lovers of good'.

So, the false teachers are unfit for any good work.

Titus is to be a model of good works.

Now, in our text today it says this. Look in chapter **2:14**.

Jesus gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession, who are **zealous for good works**.

This phrase 'a people for his own possession' means that Jesus died to have a people who belong to him.

A people who belong to him and these people (Christians) are to be 'zealous for good works'.

What does this mean...zealous for good works?

Zealous originally comes from the word for *boiling*.

It means hot or fervent. In normal usage, it came to mean 'enthusiastic'.

So, the churches...the people who belong to Jesus Christ in these churches around Crete are to be red-hot for good works.

What would that look like?

What might that look like for us?

We will try to answer that in a bit.

Titus, be a model of good works.

People, be red-hot enthusiastic for good works.

Look down in **3:1**

3 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be **ready for every good work,**

This word means to 'be prepared' for good works.

Look at **3:8**

8 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.

And again we have this same phrase 'devote themselves to good works' in chapter **3:14**

13 Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. 14 And let our people learn **to devote themselves to good works**, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful.

Interestingly enough, this word 'devote' here means "to lead or to take the lead in".

So, I think that God is trying to say something here to the churches in Crete and to us, don't you?

Titus is to be a model of good works.

The people who belong to Jesus Christ.....are to be prepared and devoted to enthusiastically doing good works in the society they live in.

Now, as protestants we have fought so hard to make sure that we are not saved by our works but by faith that in some ways we have neglected to say anything or maybe even are afraid to mention 'good works'.

But **Ephesians 2:8-10** makes it clear for us.

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are

his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works**, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

So, there are a couple of questions that have come to my mind as I have studied this text, maybe you are thinking some things.

I. What are good works?

Is everything that I do that seems good, a good work?

I mean is washing the dog a good work?

Witnessing? Prayer? Giving money? Helping someone?

Well, specifically in the letter to Titus....we don't have to guess really. What he mentioned in Titus 2:1-10 are ways that we 'adorn the doctrine of God our Savior'.

Ways that we 'put on' or ways that we 'flesh out' the teachings of scripture...he mentions in 1-10.

Here is my definition of good works. I hope this is accurate.

Good works- doing what God has commanded in his word for his glory.

Now why do I say...for his glory...because Jesus says in **Matthew 5:16** that we are to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven.

And again in **Matthew 6** he says that if we give money, pray or fast and we do it to be seen by others...then we have no reward for it.

Good works are doing what God has commanded in his word for his glory....not ours.

Therefore, what are some things that we can do that would be good works?

Where in your spheres of influence...your family, your church, your neighbors, co-workers and friendships could you do good works?

VBS- the scripture says in **Luke 18:16**, "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."

Missions- "As you are going, make disciples of all nations." **Matthew 28**

So, if you served this past week in VBS you have done a good work.

Parenting- Deuteronomy 6, "You shall teach them (these words) diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in our house"

What about this one...

"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"

"Love your neighbor as you love yourself."

Husbands- "Husbands love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."

There are a million things that we can do today that would be a good work.

But what makes it good is that it is tied to something that God, *who alone is good*...has commanded us to do in his word.

We adorn the scriptures when we do the good works that God has commanded us to do.

Sound doctrine equips us for good works in that way.

What are good works?

Good works are doing what God has commanded us to do in his word for his glory.

II. What's the key to unlocking good works?

Or maybe another way to say it is....**how do I get there?**

How can I be, like we see in Titus.... a person who is

- Zealous...red-hot enthusiastic for good works
- Prepared and ready for good works
- Devoted and leading in good works?

1. Have to adorn the doctrine! And this is really the main point. We won't be equipped to do good works if we aren't being changed by the Holy Spirit of God through the transforming power of his word.

2. Another key to unlocking a life of good works is one another! **Hebrews 10:24** says, "Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works." We are actually supposed to be agitating one another on to do good works...to do the commandments of God.

3. Lastly, a way to unlock a life that is zealous for good works is.....to give. It seems that good works involves giving of some sort. As my pastor used to say, "*We are never more like Christ than when we give.*"

Good works involves selflessness, losing, humility.....not selfishness, gaining and pride.

Good works give time, give energy, give effort, give money, give up lifestyle, give away something, give up on dreams for others, gives up UK living and devotes oneself to Burma, gives up a career to love kids, gives up a dream job to care for an elderly mom or dad.

Good works gives up a place in line, gives up being number one and takes second on purpose.

Now, in closing....how do I know that giving is a key to unlocking a life of good works?

Question: What is the greatest work ever accomplished?

Titus 2:14...our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

We are to follow in our Lord's footsteps and give and give and give ourselves in obedience to God's commandments....as people who belong to him....for good works.....red-hot ready devotion to good works.