

15. Learning to Help People Live Godly Lives

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to develop an eternal focus. We saw that an eternal focus looks backward to be reminded of what Christ did for us in the past, looks at the present as we see how Christ gives us the strength to live a godly life and looks to the future when Christ will come to take us to be with Him for all eternity. As we help our children learn to help others develop a similar focus, we also want to show our children how to help others learn to live godly lives.

Titus 3:1-2 says, “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.” Here, we see several areas where we want to show our children by example how to live godly lives. As they see our example, they learn how to become an example to others. We see that these verses start out by talking about our relationship to those in authority. The word “remind” means *to cause people to recall or remember something that they have been taught in the past*. Titus was to remind the Christians in Crete of some of the key things that Paul had taught them in the past.

First, he was to remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities. “To be subject” means *to place ourselves under someone else and to place our full potential at their disposal*. Romans 13:1 explains why we are to be subject to rulers and authorities when that verse says, “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.” God has placed rulers and authorities over us so that we can have an orderly life. The word translated “rulers” speaks of those who are leaders. The word translated “authorities” speaks of the power of rule or government. Here, we see that Titus was to remind the Christians to obey the rulers and the government that God had placed over them.

Second, Titus was to remind the Christians to be ready for every good work. Galatians 6:10 says, “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” Here, we see that Titus was to help Christians look for opportunities to do good to others. We want to be an example to our children and to all Christians to show them the importance of doing things that are good to all people including both other Christians and those who are not yet Christians. Third, Titus was to remind Christians to speak evil of (blaspheme) no one. 2 Timothy 2:24-25 says, “And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth.” Here, we see that we are to speak with humility so that the Lord can use our words to draw others to Himself.

Fourth, Titus was to remind the Christians to be peaceable. The word that is translated “to be peaceable” means *to avoid fighting*. We want to be an example to our children by avoiding both physical and word battles. Ephesians 4:15 says, “But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ.” We want to be known for our love both in our actions and in our words. Fifth, Titus was to remind the Christians to be gentle. James 3:17 says, “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” Here, we see why it is important to

help all Christian seek godly wisdom. Godly wisdom is peaceable and gentle and such wisdom will help our children learn to help others learn to apply godly wisdom to their daily lives.

Sixth, Titus was to remind the Christians to show all humility to all people. We saw two paragraphs earlier that we are to correct those in opposition in humility. Galatians 6:1 says, “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.” Here, we see that we are also to show our children how to restore others in a spirit of humility or gentleness. We teach others to do this by our example.

Paul also reminded Titus of what all of our lives were like before we placed our faith in Christ. Titus 3:3 says, “For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.” As we look at this list, we are reminded of the fact that this is the way that people who are not Christians live. We can expect them to live this way because they are controlled by a sin nature. Instead of focusing on their sins, we need to focus on the one sin that keeps non-Christians out of heaven. In John 16:8-9, Christ spoke of the ministry of the Holy Spirit and said, ““And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me.”” We need to show our children how to work with the Holy Spirit by learning to share verses about the sin of unbelief that keeps people separated from God.

Titus 3:4-7 goes on to say, “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, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Paul reminded Titus of the way that we were saved and how those who are not yet Christians can be saved and receive the gift of eternal life. Ephesians 2:4-6 says, “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus.” We see that Christ had to show His kindness and love to us because there was nothing we could do to be saved.

There are no righteous works that any person can do to earn their salvation. Instead, every person has to realize that God saves us because of His mercy. We see that Christ saved us by the washing of regeneration. The word translated “regeneration” means *a new birth or a recreation*. All people have had a physical birth but all without Christ still need a spiritual birth. Christ told Nicodemus in John 3:5-7, “Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, “You must be born again.”’” Then 2 Corinthians 5:17 adds, “Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” Christ gave us spiritual birth, recreated us in His image and gave us a new nature.

The word that is translated “renewing” means *a renewal or a complete change for the better*. The only other place this word is used is in Romans 12:2 where we read, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” The Holy Spirit came into our human spirit at the moment of salvation. That gave us spiritual life as Ephesians 2:1 says, “And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” With that spiritual life we are now able to have our lives transformed by the renewing of our minds. 1 Corinthians 2:12-13 says, “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” The Holy Spirit renews us as we grow spiritually and we begin to think with godly wisdom.

Christ also gave us additional blessings by giving us the Holy Spirit at the moment of our salvation. It is now possible for us to learn to act in the power of the Holy Spirit instead of our own strength. The last recorded words of Christ before He returned to heaven are recorded in Acts 1:8 where we read, ““But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”” Acts 4:31 tells us what happens as we learn to depend on the power of the Holy Spirit instead of our own strength. That verse says, “And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.” Here, we see the Holy Spirit gives us power to speak the Word of God with boldness. When we speak in our own strength, we are often afraid to share the Word of God with others. When we are speaking in the strength that the Holy Spirit gives, He also guides us so that we know what to share with others from the Word of God.

Christ also justified us and made us joint heirs with Him. Romans 8:14-17 says, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—-heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.” Because of the fact that we are joint heirs with Christ, we can be thankful for that relationship with Him.

We have the hope of eternal life. Titus 2:13 says, “Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” When the word “hope” is used in the New Testament, it speaks of the confident assurance that we have in Christ because we know that we will be with Him for all eternity. This makes it possible for us to help our physical and spiritual children look forward to the day when we will be glorified together with Him. May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children how to help others learn to live godly lives.