

Sermon May 27, 2007

### Titus 3

#### Doing What is Good

1 Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good,  
2 to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men.  
3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.  
4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared,  
5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,  
6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,  
7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.  
8 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.  
9 But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.

Adoption...

The story of Mama in the grocery store...

Adoption...

I am an adopted child...my child is an adopted child

I never met my natural father

My adoptive father never met his natural father

My extended adoptive family has other adopted kids

And miscellaneous complications

One a granddaughter adopted by her grandparents who grew up as her mother's sister

There's a nephew who is not the son of my brother

I could go further to where it gets really interesting ...but Titus 3:9 advises us to... avoid foolish controversies **and genealogies** and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.

I find myself in strong agreement.

I remember as a teen having a sudden interest in doing a genealogy of our family and approaching my mother with the idea which she strongly counseled against...

My idea like my family tree was stumped...axed...cut off at the...you get it I actually never knew until I was in my late twenties that my brother and I were adopted.

No child chooses into what family configuration or situation it is born....  
...the first time  
...but we get a second chance  
...we are a room of second chancers

What we do here on Sunday mornings is verbalize...or as Joyce said last week confess or acknowledge...our relationship with God  
Our paternity...our fraternity

...to confess His lordship ...His fatherhood and our right relationship to Him  
...or to confess our sin...our separation from Him  
...to talk about who He is and to understand better who we are in Him

**1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.**

How long are we talking about here?

Let's do the math

God + man = eternity

The enemy of God wants us to ignore the equation

And not look at the other equation:

Man – God = fertilizer

One of the greatest joys of a life partnered with God is having a reference point...a lighthouse...a beacon...a compass

### **A story of being in the fog...off Ventura**

Where does your confidence and your hope come from...what is your reference point: Job, Health, Husband, Wife, Boat, Child, House, Talent, Intellect, Your good deeds?

Would you give up your Job for God? ...your House?...your Child?...your boat?...your life?

Can you Proverbs 3:5 **Trust** in the **LORD** with **all** your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

The equation is not complicated...but it is definite...God first

What God ask of us...It's not complicated at all...now the loopholes we look for to get around it... that's complicated...from the Pharisees of old to the Pharisees in this room...

Rather than seeking holiness...we're seeking loopholiness

Holiness is being set aside for God's purpose

Loopholiness is spinning doughnuts in the parking lot of life...going nowhere fast with a bunch of friends yelling hoooo-weee.

Sounds like a country song:

I'm spinning doughnuts in the parkin' lot of life

I steal from my boss and I cheat on my wife

I did it my way and I have no regret  
But that's just because they ain't caught me yet

Loopholiness isn't actually funny...I like that it seems funny because we're more likely to think about it than that nasty little three letter word...

We can talk and talk of many things but when uninvited it comes to the table...  
My, my, look at the time...let's move along now

Holiness is moving in a God directed journey...along a narrow path

Loopholiness is when rather than doing what God whispers to our hearts we engage in Titus 3:9 ...foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law...

And we end up Titus 3:3ing and become... foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures

We start to look a lot like Sinners! ...moving along now...

Let's use a gentler term...we encounter an identity crisis

We become so busy that we fail to listen to God's voice and the world and the enemy get very busy telling us what we need and who and how we need to look feel and act . The world and the enemy want us to forget who we are and who our Father and family are. So we forget who we are.

The world says forget 1 John 3:1...forget...How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And...forget that... that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

It's as if the world and the Kingdom are these parallel universes where; when you are fully immersed in one it's hard to comprehend or even see the other.

Man tries to see from here (the head)

The Spirit tries to tell us from here (the heart)

The world and the enemy hate Christ because He has laid claim to us.

The world and the enemy despise the Holy Spirit because He guides and teaches us to reject what others cling to ...to cherish what others discard...

to fervently seek those things in life that others avoid (obedience, peace, consideration, humility,) to trust in what we can't provide for ourselves, to center our attention on what the world cannot provide...eternity

The world hates God's kingdom because the world can't keep up. The world doesn't have an answer to eternity.

So the enemy uses the oldest trick...distort the word, confuse the heart, promote the will of man...fill our eyes...empty our hearts

God + Man = eternity

Man's will + the world = dust

We by our own worldly calculations become confused, disoriented, and even lost

God + Man = eternity

... is a contract in which we inherit everything we need forever...

... so what do we do?... we look for loopholes

God + Man = eternity

Simple

I met Bill Smiles at the marina a few months ago

He was with friends Gene and Aggie who introduced us. Aggie early on pointed out to me that Bill suffers from a form of aphasia ( In his case a loss of ability to produce language normally) through therapy he has recovered some speech

ability but has to work hard to communicate complex thoughts through simple word constructs.

The result of his gift is a simplicity and clarity of expression that often borders on poetry. In the first few minutes of meeting him I heard this and wanted to hear more. So, I did what I often do and brought him home here to Casabuena. SuSu is by now accustomed to my doing this and if she has any problem with it she never mentions it to me. Cool...

Bill is also pretty cool...

God speaks to his heart and little is lost in translation.

Bill never actually uses the word God...he uses the word Papa.

A good example: in conversation someone was mentioned who I described as "not particularly trustworthy"...Bill's comment..."maybe he needum a Papa (finger pointed up)"

Translation...should you need one:

How can you stand here and judge someone when I hand you the keys to The Kingdom and you refuse to share them...trustworthy?

Another: Ya peek-a-boo-ers ain't ya seeres...just yer lookers...Papa makes them (pointing to chest) ya seerer

Translation...should you need one...Open the eyes of my heart Lord

2 Corinthians 4: 6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness,"<sup>[a]</sup> made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Bill suffers from a few health problems...

... but he does not suffer from an identity crisis... maybe because he can't talk himself out of the truth as easily as I can.

...children of God, heirs to the Kingdom...that's who we are.

Know that you are:

Do you know that you are?