

# Keep Focussed

7 December 2014 pm – Titus 3:8-11 – Tit 14 – Scott Childs

- 2) The word “heretic” refers to one who is divisive. He causes divisions and forms factions. The heretic tries to divide the congregation and get people to side with his abnormal view.
- ✧ *Throughout history, unbiblical religions often called true Christians heretics because they tried to lead people away from their religion to true faith in Christ alone. That kind of heretic is good, but that is not what Paul had in mind in this verse.*
- 3) After the local church has confronted a heretic one or two times about his divisive ways, if he does not stop, they are to reject him (shun, stay away from). Divisive people are dangerous.

📖 *If you know someone who is divisive, stay away from him (or her). If he continues to come around you, bluntly tell him that you do not agree with him and that you cannot fellowship with him anymore. Though that may seem harsh, God has commanded it for your spiritual good.*

- 4) Such heretics have three problems:
  - a) They are **subverted** or have been turned to the worse. Something has turned them from the truth. Many good Christians have been turned around doctrinally by listening to false preaching, by reading unsound commentaries or articles, or by listening to unbiblical friends.
  - b) They are **sinning** against God.
  - c) They are **being self-condemned**. God will judge them.

**Conclusion:** If we are going to become all God wants us to be, we must stay focussed. We must keep our eyes on the goal – the hope of eternal life.

Are you living for eternity or for this present world? Are you taking special care to maintain good works in every area of your life? Are you avoiding all distractions, both harmful conversations and harmful people? Taking a stand against error is not easy nor is it pleasant, but we must do it.

**Song:** Sound the Battle Cry! **413**

**Introduction:** When running a race, children often make the mistake of watching the other runners to see how they rate with them. It could run much faster if they kept their eyes focused on the goal and avoided all distractions.

That same principle is true in the Christian life. We must keep our eyes focussed on the flourishing Christian life of walking in the light, abiding in Christ, and walking in the Spirit and avoid all distracting ideas of false teachers. Preachers must keep their eyes focussed on the goal of shepherding their flock and avoid the distractions of debates with dissenters.

**Transition:** In our section this evening, the Lord highlights these two important reminders.

## 1. Keep Your Eyes on the Goal

### a. The first goal he mentions is the hope of eternal life

- 1) *This is a faithful saying.* In other words, the statement he just made in the previous verses is trustworthy. That statement was about “Salvation’s Renovations” – where we came from, who changed us, and how it took place (v.3-6).
- 2) *And these things I will that thou affirm constantly.* To keep our eyes on the hope of eternal life, we must constantly remind ourselves of what we were, who saved us, and how it took place. As a preacher, Titus was to affirm these truths constantly (declare them confidently). God is telling us here that it is very important that we not forget the miracle that God did in us at salvation.

✧ *This world is not my home I'm just a passing through  
My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue  
The angels beckon me from heaven's open door  
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.* Jim Reeves

- 3) *That they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.* The word “that” has the idea of “in order that”. So the purpose of remembering salvations’

renovations is in order that believers might be careful, or make it a priority, to maintain good works.

a) Peter wrote that good works are God-honouring activities that even those who are against us can see in our lives.

✚ (1 Peter 2:12) "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

b) These good works include our words, conduct, appearance, dress, morals, attitudes, friendliness, honesty, faithfulness, hard work, reputation, witness, service for Christ, helpfulness, choice of friends, etc.

c) Remember, we are not saved **by** doing good works, BUT we are saved **to** do good works.

✚ (Ephesians 2:10) "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

d) If we are living for eternity (keeping our eyes on eternity), we will be careful to maintain our good works. This is not to earn an upgrade in heaven, but to please the Lord who purchased everlasting life for us.

✧ *After all He's done for me, After all He's done for me How can I do less than give Him my best, And live for Him completely, After all He's done for me*

## b. The second goal he mentions is living for Christ

1) These things are good and profitable unto men. This second "these things" speaks of the good works we are to do.

2) God says that "good works" not only honour the Lord but they are good and profitable unto men. They benefit others. They point the lost to the Saviour. They show Christ to others.

## 2. Avoid All Distractions

### a. Avoid harmful conversations

1) We are to avoid harmful conversations. The word "avoid"

means, "to turn yourself around and go the other way".

This is a command not a suggestion.

a) Avoid **foolish questions** – avoid unwise questions about disagreements. These questions stir up arguments. We are to turn from these rather than trying to answer them.

b) Avoid **genealogies** – avoid studying lists of ancestors to see who has a better heritage

c) Avoid **contentions** – avoid debates and quarrels. We are to contend for the faith, but defeating a person in a debate will seldom bring them to saving faith in Christ.

d) Avoid **strivings about the law** – avoid fights and disputes about the law

✚ *Did you notice that all of these argumentative conversations have one thing in common? They are all motivated by personal pride. They also are trying to persuade you to turn from biblical truth to "their" opinion.*

2) Such conversations are unprofitable and vain. They do not benefit anyone and they are useless.

✚ *These instructions to Preacher Titus are important in a church context, but the principle is the same for our homes. Quarrelling and fighting to defend our personal ideas never leads to peace. Consider these words from the Proverbs:*

✚ (Proverbs 15:18) "A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife."

✚ (Proverbs 18:6) "A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes."

✚ (Proverbs 26:17) "He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears."

✚ (Proverbs 28:25) "He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat."

### b. Avoid harmful people

1) A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; (v.10)