

- 2) We were led astray by our **sinful hearts**, by **the devil** and by **evil friends**. This does not excuse our sinful actions, but it does let us know why we went that direction.

d. We served lusts and pleasures.

- 1) A lust is a desire of any sort. Before we trusted Christ and He gave us a new heart, we **served divers lusts** (i.e., all sorts of lusts) and **pleasures**. We were slaves to those cravings. We were addicted to lusts and pleasures that pleased our selfish cravings and gratified our sinful flesh. For many, this includes alcohol, drugs, immodest dress to get attention, sex outside of marriage, wild parties, filthy music, gambling, gaming and the like.
- 2) Like the Prodigal Son, we sought the pleasures of sin that only last for a season.

e. We may have lived in malice and envy

- 1) **Malice** refers to ill will or a desire to injure. It also refers to wickedness in general.
- 2) **Envy** includes spite, or wishing to harm someone who has something you desire.
- 3) Both of these attitudes are ill feelings against those whom we do not like for one reason or another.

f. We may have been hateful and hating others.

- 1) The words **hateful** and **hating** translate different words. **Hateful** may describe a bitter or detestable heart and **hating** may describe the despising actions toward those hated.
- 2) Such feelings and actions are not uncommon among those who have not yet experienced the love and forgiveness of the Lord Jesus.

Conclusion: We, who have trusted Christ as our Saviour from judgment to come, have **no right** to live foolishly and selfishly as we used to live. Rather, in gratitude to Christ, we ought to submit ourselves obediently to civil leaders, guarding your lips, and peacefully showing gentleness and meekness to all.

Before you will truly submit to civil authorities, you must submit your heart to the King of kings, Jesus Christ. Ask Him to save you!

Song: I Surrender All - **394**

Our Civil Duties

11 October 2020 AM – Titus 3:1-3 – Tit20 – Scott Childs

Introduction: Though we may disagree with a civil leader's conduct and policies, we must not be insubordinate. A Christian, who speaks evil of a civil leader, speaks evil of God who gave him that leader.

Transition: **Titus 3:1-3.** Here, God gives us two reminders about our civil duties that ought to challenge us to do right in this area.

1. He Reminds Us of What we Are to Do

a. We are to subject willingly to civil leadership

- 1) The grammar of the word translated **be subject** indicates that we are to subject ourselves willingly. We are to arrange ourselves willingly under those in leadership.
- 2) We are to subject to **principalities**. Though this word usually applies to angelic beings, here the Holy Spirit applied it to the person who is first in command of a nation, i.e., the ruler.
- 3) We are to subject to **powers**. This word speaks of those holding positions of civil authority. When the Apostle Paul penned these words, the evil Emperor Nero was over the Roman Empire.
- 4) We are to **obey magistrates**. This simply means that we are to be obedient citizens. Whether our civil leaders are of our persuasion or not, we are to be law-abiding, peaceful, submissive people.
- 5) Christians ought to seek to obey the speed limits laws, pay their taxes and be the best citizens of a country.
- 6) One exception may be if the government should pass a law that directly prohibit what God has commanded. The first apostles gave us an example of this. (Acts 4:19-20) *"But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."*

b. We are to be ready to every good work.

- 1) God wants us to be ready or prepared to do every good work. This may refer to participating cheerfully in the

duties set before us, e.g., respecting authority, paying taxes, obeying laws, etc. (Romans 13:7-8) "*Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*"

- 2) Our consistency in doing what is right for the Lord's honour ought to be sense by those around us at home, at work and in our community. **Joseph** and **Daniel** are good examples of this.
 - a) **Joseph** did right as a slave and was promoted. He did right morally even though he was falsely accused and sent to prison. He did right in prison and was given privileges. Eventually, he did right in eyes of Pharaoh as he saved the nation from famine.
 - b) **Daniel**, though made a slave as a young man, honoured the Lord by his convictions, in his conduct, and in his prayer life.

c. We are to speak evil of no person.

- 1) To *speaking evil* is to speaking reproachfully, rail at, revile, or to blaspheme.
- 2) In the context, it may first apply to a Christian's words about governmental leaders. We may not like a leader's character or agree with the leader's policies and decisions, but we have no right to speak reproachfully about that leader. We must not call that leader names or degrade his or her person.
- 3) Since the verses says speak evil of no man, it includes anyone about whom we may be tempted to speak evil. This includes the way you talk about your spouse, your parents, your neighbour, the careless driver that cut you off, and even the neighbourhood kids that spray graffiti on walls. We must stand up against wrong without blaspheming the wrongdoer. (1 Peter 3:10) "*For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.*"

d. We are not to be brawlers

- 1) A *brawler* is one who is contentious or a fighter.

- 2) Christians are not to be arguing and fighting people. There is a difference between self-defence and stirring up fights. I do not believe God was saying that we must be pacifists, but we ought not to be aggressive activists.
- 3) The Lord qualifies this command by telling us what we OUGHT to be.
 - a) We ought to be *gentle* i.e., fair, or mild.
 - b) We ought to show all *meekness*.
 - c) KJ Bible Commentary states, "**Gentle** usually refers to our outward conduct while **meekness** to inward attitude." Underline Added
 - d) We ought to show these qualities toward all men.
- 4) Do family, friends and neighbours know you to be meek on the inside and gentle on the outside, or do they know you to be a contentious fighter?

2. He Reminds Us of What we Used to Be

As motivation to submit, God reminds Christians of what many of them used to be like before they trusted Christ. Though you may not have done all of these sins, the list is typical of unbelievers.

a. We were foolish

- 1) A foolish person is one who lacks God's wisdom.
- 2) We were without understanding.
- 3) If we did not fulfil our civil duties, it was because we were sinners lacking God's wisdom. We cannot use that excuse now.

b. We were disobedient.

- 1) To be disobedient is to be unwilling to be persuaded or not compliant.
- 2) We were disobedient to law, to parents, to civil authority, and to God.
- 3) God tells us that disobedience will increase in the last days. (2 Timothy 3:2) "*For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,*"

c. We were deceived.

- 1) We were led astray. Thus, we wandered and roamed about in life without direction.