**Counter-Culture –** **Titus pt6 – Remember When**

**The rocky beautiful island of Crete just off Greece. Once an island of culture and wealth, became an island of freebooters, drifters, and dishonorable opportunists – with a bad reputation.**

**Titus was left behind by Paul to be a pastor to pastors and lead new believers (many of them former pirates) in how to be disciples.**

**Titus is commissioned to disciple new followers with a bad reputation and bad habits; as a result, most of this letter deals w/ reflecting Jesus.**

**Broken into 3 parts – Paul instructs Titus on:**

* **Ch 1 – Character & conduct of the Christian leaders in church**
* **Ch 2 – Character & conduct of Christians in church**
* **Ch 3 – Character & conduct of Christians w/ those outside church**

**This week – we pick up where we left off - Titus 3:1 Remind the people…**

7 Reminders To Give To The People

**Titus 3:1 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 always to be gentle toward everyone.**

1. **Remember who God is and that He is always in control**

**Sovereignty of God = Lordship of all creation. And he exercises his rule**

**1:1 - Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, (submit to the govt) to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good…**

**\* God has all governing authority under control**

**Does not sound easy in the world we live in today – especially wasn’t for them. Roman (Violent / evil) Crete, crooked leaders.**

**1 Peter 2:13 Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, 14 or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.**

**To protect the rights of the innocent and against injustice.**

**Romans 13:1 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which is from God. The authorities that exist have been appointed by God.**

**We can do this because – God is in control**

**Issues of Civil disobedience = when it contradicts God’s law.**

**\* God has every circumstance under control**

**3:1-2 - Remind the people to… slander no one… be peaceful, considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.**

**Leaders / neighbors / friends / strangers – everyone.**

**But they did… but they said… You don’t know the whole story…**

**Stil - “Don’t slander, peaceful, considerate, and gentle…”**

**We are to have a gentleness and humility – with everyone**

**It’s not easy when we are being attacked or don’t like something - hold your tongue. Turn down the drama. God is in control.**

**Matt 5:44 - I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.**

**Luke 6:28 - Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.**

**1 Peter 3:9 - Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.**

**Christianity is not a faith of retribution, but of restoration & peace because we know who is always in charge and working all things…**

**Titus 3:3 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.**

1. **Remember who you were before Christ**

**Think back, what was your vice? What was your life like? Take a walk down the road again - remember how foolish you were**

**Your attitude? Actions? What rat hole were you rescued from?**

**Don’t forget you were - foolish, rebellious, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of pleasures. Living in spite and envy – and selfishness.**

**When we remember what we were like - we can have grace with others – because we know what it’s like to be lost and in need.**

**(leads to the next) Titus 3:4 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.**

1. **Remember what Christ has done for you**

**When we look to our life and look even further back - to the cross of Christ, our gratitude and worship of God increases!**

**Saved not because we deserve it - none of us deserve it. It is by his will and his favor. Pulled out of the mud – dead in sin and guilty as sin – deserving judgement - instead Jesus generously poured out his blood!**

**A few dynamic Christian words are in this passage – let’s take a look**

**Titus 3:4 But - when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ((drawn by the love & kindness of Jesus) 5 he saved us,**

**\* Saved (rescued from our sin, self, and sentence) Are you saved?**

**5b …not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.**

**\* Mercy (compassionate pardon) We don’t get what we deserve!**

**We deserve hell, but Jesus offers heaven. Do you know his mercy?**

**5c… He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal**

**\* Reborn (new life, born-again, rebirth, fresh start!) Dead in spirit come to life (2 Cor 5:17 - if anyone be in Christ…) Are you born again?**

**\* Renewed (make right) God takes what is broken & makes it right. I know the healer of the heart and soul. Are you broken?**

**5d …by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously (richly) through Jesus Christ our Savior,**

**\* The Holy Spirit (God takes up residence). When we are born -again, the HS moves in. Working in and thru us – poured out and poured in, to lead, guide, instruct, make new. Are you filled w/ HS?**

**7 so that, having been justified by his grace, (two great words!!!)**

**\* Justified (declared not guilty) – “just as if you never sinned”**

**\* Grace (underserved favor) – can’t earn or deserve but you get it!**

 **God’s amazing grace, that saved one like me!**

**Do you carry the burden of your sin and past?**

**7b … that we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.**

\* **Heirs - We inherit the riches of God = eternity. Again, not because we deserve it – but out of his loving kindness! (eternal life)**

**What are you inheriting after his life is over?**

**Are you a child of the king? Or a son of Satan?**

**If you are a Christian - Remember what Christ has done for you! He saved us from the pit and despair of our own sin.**

**Here’s the next reminder – Titus 3:8 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.**

1. **Remember that others need to know this**

**We live careful honorable lives because others need to see Jesus!**

**We need to talk about these things and tell others about these things. We need to live it out and talk about our story – our new life – the cross and the grace of God!**

**So many are lost and confused – searching – wandering thru life - invite others to know the hope of God!**

**That is our mission – go and tell – compel them to come!**

**Here’s the next reminder – Titus 3:9 But avoid foolish (lit. stupid) controversies (disputes) and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, (Jewish Rabbis spent their time focusing on opinion - arguing about who was more important in the OT) because these are unprofitable (divisive) and useless.**

1. **Remember your attitude can negatively affect others**

**Big point – don’t be divisive. Some people just like to argue and look for things to argue about – Paul reminds us - Don’t!**

**How we treat others - talk to others – act with others – what we pick to focus on. Some attitudes can be useless and hurtful for others to find Jesus. When the world sees us throwing rocks at each other…**

**Rock - Open handed and close-fisted issues - Keep the main thing the main thing. (we are to hold tight – sound doctrine)**

**However, remember… - Titus 3:10 Warn a divisive person once, and then warn them a second time. After that, have nothing to do with them. 11 You may be sure that such people are warped and sinful; they are self-condemned.**

1. **Remember some things are worth fighting for**

**Paul is teaching us in Titus 1-2 – Fight for the truth!**

**Paul is teaching us in Titus 3 – Fight for unity!**

**There comes a time when some have to be called out!**

**It’s not easy – but necessary. Unity and confrontation are a delicate dance. Confrontation is to keep unity.**

**While some things we can discuss and debate and not divide - there are some clear things that we must stand on without compromise.**

**\*\* Stand strong in love and truth.**

**Apostle Paul’s losing comments – Titus 3:12 As soon as I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, (to relieve you) do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, because I have decided to winter there. 13 Do everything you can to help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way and see that they have everything they need. (coming to visit – help them and provide for them while they are with you)**

**14 Our people (the people of God) must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order to provide for urgent needs and not live unproductive lives. (Remind them to be good caring hosts)**

**15 Everyone with me (our friends with me) sends you greetings. Greet those who love us in the faith. (our friends with you) Grace be with you all. (mentions four friends by name – and speaks of others with him and those on Crete)**

**I love how Paul is investing in his current friends and looking out for his old friends. Even if he can’t be with them. Paul is a real person w/ real friends - who he hung out with and cared for.**

1. **Remember healthy friendships need nurturing**

**People may come and go, but true friends work to keep in touch.**

**Sometimes you really see the depth of friendships at a distance.**

**Three ingredients of a friendship:**

**Proximity – affinity (the world only) – spiritually (in Christ alone)**

**Friendships are hard to maintain and important – they need to be cherished and nurtured – care for –and worked on.**

**Jesus in his humanity, had friends. He laughed, loved, and even cried with and for his friends.**

**It was to his friends, when speaking of the cross - Jesus said – John 15:13 There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.**

**Paul echoes Jesus to Titus: Church is people - not a building.**

**It is friendships and family living their best to lift up and reflect Jesus in our lifestyle, actions, words, & deeds.**

**So that - YOU - might see Jesus in us and know His salvation.**