



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Special Study:

THE BELIEVER'S RESPONSIBILITY IN HIS COMMUNITY AND COUNTRY

Titus 3:1-3

The precious chapter deals with the believer's life and relationship within the church. This chapter deals with our character and conduct in our community, society and country. What is the proper attitude of the believer to lawful authority? How is the believer to act and behave as a citizen in the kingdom of the world since he is also a citizen of Christ's kingdom? It was a matter of great concern in the early Church. The Christians were to have supreme allegiance to Christ as Saviour, Lord and King. They accepted Him as their Sovereign and Judge. What kind of allegiance could they render to earthly magistrates, principalities and powers without making them rivals of Christ? Those earthly kingdoms had been established by conquest, oppression and blood; the rulers were blood-stained warriors whose lives were corrupt in the private and oppressive in the public. Their laws were made and enacted by pagans. How far could Christians go in acknowledging the laws of those kingdoms and the authority of such monarchs? Many of the Christians and their believing relatives had suffered or were still suffering intense persecution in the hands of those heartless rulers. Should the Christians give any recognition or respect to those civil institutions? The extent of the believer's submission to human governments was an enquiry of deep interest and Titus was to teach and remind believers of God's word, will and wisdom on the matter.

SEVERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHRISTIANS IN EACH COUNTRY

Titus 3:1; Romans 13:1-7; Proverbs 24:21-22; Ecclesiastes 8:2-5; Matthew 17:24-27; 22:15-22; 1 Peter 2:13-17; Acts 4:18-20; 5:27-29; 1 Timothy 4:6.

"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates." Christian ministers are to teach believers to be law-abiding, not lawless; they should yield to the authority of governments over them. As citizens in our country, we are to obey in all things that are not contrary to the law of God. The institution of human government is appointed and established by God. We honour God by honouring the arrangement which He has instituted for the government of mankind. By God's permission or appointment; by the arrangement of His providence, those in office obtain their power (Psalm 75:7; Daniel 2:21; 4:17,25; Romans 13:1,2). Believers are not to seek to overturn or overthrow established authorities and governments. In living our normal lives and seeking to earn a living, we obey the laws of the land and we do not lend any support to law-breakers or anyone provoking the society, wanting to make it ungovernable or labouring to cause anarchy in the society.

THE SPEECH OF THE RIGHTEOUS IN THE COMMUNITY

Titus 3:2; Psalm 15:1-3; 101:5-8; Matthew 12:33-37; Ephesians 4:29-32; James 1:19-26; 3:5-18; 1 Peter 3:8-12; Galatians 5:22-26.

"Speak evil of no man." This is one of the most neglected and most disobeyed commands in the Bible. Many people dig their graves with their tongues and drive themselves into

damnation with their mouth. Evil-speaking is speaking evil of an absent person, relating something evil, slandering a neighbour in his absence. Evil-speaking has various forms – backbiting, tale-bearing, whispering, slander, defamation, calumny, etc. The true believer lives by the golden rule, doing unto others as he desires others to do to him and not doing unto others what he hates, fears or detests; what he does not want others to do to him. As he would not enjoy others speaking evil of him, he himself should speak of no one. We are not to say anything of anyone which will cause him emotional pain or physical injury. We are never to utter anything which we know to be false about our brother, sister or neighbour or ever give such a colouring to his word or conduct as to create a wrong impression about him in any way.

It may be necessary, when we are called to state what we know about someone's character to say things which are not at all in favour, things which he has done that were wrong but we should do it with pure motives to uphold righteousness, never to take pleasure in hurting anyone. We should **"be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men."** When others speak evil of us or hurt us in any way, we should bear, portray and serve them the rich, ripe fruit of the Spirit.

THE SAINT'S RENUNCIATION OF THE OLD CHARACTER

Titus 3:3; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Ephesians 2:12-13; 5:8-18; Colossians 3:7-10; 1 Peter 2:10-12,25; Romans 6:20-22; 7:5-6; 1 Peter 4:1-4; Ephesians 4:17-28; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8.

"For we ourselves also were..." The use of the past tense **"were"** indicates that we are no more **"foolish, disobedient, deceived"**. It strongly emphasizes that we no more serve **"divers lusts and pleasures"**, we are no longer **"living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another."** There has been a transition, a translation and a transformation. The New Testament declares and affirms this by repeatedly using the words, **"but now."** A few examples will make this clear beyond any shadow of doubt. **"Ye were without Christ, BUT NOW in Christ are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."** **"In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. BUT NOW ye also put off all these."** **"Which in time past were not a people, BUT are NOW the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, BUT NOW have obtained mercy."** **"For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness... BUT NOW being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."**

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