

## LESSON TEXT: Titus 1:1—2:15

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

### INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

In November, 1978, U.S. Representative Leo J. Ryan of California visited the *People's Temple* (a California-based cult) in Guyana. His group went to investigate reports that some of the people there were being held against their will. The congressman and his party were ambushed and killed. A few days later, at Jonestown, Guyana, soldiers were horrified to find hundreds of bodies of cult members who had been shot or committed suicide by drinking cyanide-based Kool Aid. Rev. Jones, 47, lay near the altar with a bullet wound in his head. **The death count was 780.** A brief report of what happened follows:

“As Jones talked over the loudspeaker on the beauty of death and the certainty that everyone would meet again, several hundred cult members gathered around the pavilion. They were surrounded by armed guards, and a vat of Kool Aid mixed with cyanide was brought out. Most cult members drank it willingly--others were forced to drink it. They started with the babies. At least 80 infants and children were fed the deadly potion, and then the adults took it. Everything was calm for a few minutes, and then, as the cyanide-induced convulsions began, it got all out of order. Children were screaming and there was mass confusion. Shortly afterward, everyone was dead.”

This was a great tragedy. BUT AN EVEN GREATER TRAGEDY is the millions of eternal souls who have gone, or are headed, to **eternal torments** because of **false teaching**. Paul's letter to Titus, brief as it is, gives us the divine solution. *Teach, teach, teach--* renounce impiety and worldly lusts--and do goodness. Did you know that Paul advises Titus to “teach” (with synonyms) 21 times in the 31 verses of chapters 1 & 2? He doesn't say worship or prayer or “programs” is the solution--BUT TEACHING! It is so simple many Christians and churches miss it! And what is Titus to teach?-- primarily, the appearance of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, sound doctrine, love, self-control and sanctified behavior.

### QUESTIONS:

1. Does truth lead to godliness or does godliness lead to truth? 1:1
2. Why did Paul require that a man be the husband of one wife and have believing children in order to be appointed as an “elder”? 1:6
3. What is an elder's responsibility in the matter of “sound doctrine”? 1:9-14 Are elders the only ones responsible for “sound doctrine?”
4. Are the “pure” so naive as to believe that “all things are pure?” 1:15-16
5. Why are “older women” to **train** “younger women” in godliness? 2:3-5 Is Paul contradicting himself here? (1 Tim. 2:12; 1 Cor. 14:34-36).
6. Why is so much emphasis placed on self-control and submissiveness? 1:8; 2:2; 2:6; 1:6,10,16; 2:5,9 (see also Acts 24:25; 1 Cor. 9:25; Gal. 5:23; & 2 Pet. 1:6).
7. How does the appearance of the grace of God **train** us to be godly? 2:11-14
8. Why would Paul say that no one was to disregard (RSV) what Titus taught? 2:15. Does that authority reside in 21<sup>st</sup> century evangelists?

“There are only two ways: one is right and the other is wrong. ‘About’ is always wrong. Don't tell me it's ‘about right.’ If it's only ‘about right,’ then it's wrong. If you come to a stream five feet wide and jump four and a half feet, you fall in and get drowned. You might just as well have tumbled in from the other side and saved yourself the exercise of the jump.”  
—George Washington Carver

I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no one comes to the Father but by Me. ---Jesus Christ

## LESSON TEXT: Titus 3:1-15

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

### INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

When the learned and wealthy John Selden was dying he said to Archbishop Usher, "I have surveyed most of the learning that is among the sons of men, and my study is filled with books and manuscripts (he had 8000 volumes in his library) on various subjects. But at present I cannot recollect any passage out of all my books and papers whereon I can rest my soul, *save this from the sacred Scriptures*: 'The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ: who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.'" Titus 2:14. Paul essentially repeats that statement in Titus 3:4-8.

During his last hours, John Knox (1505-1572) woke from a slumber and told his friends that he had just been tempted to believe that he had "merited Heaven and eternal blessedness, by the faithful discharge of my ministry. But blessed be God who has enabled me to beat down and quench the fiery dart, by suggesting to me such passages of Scripture as these: 'What hast thou that thou didst not receive?' 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' 'Not I, but the grace or God which was with me.'"

Walter "Jack" Spratt once asked me what I wanted to do first when I get to heaven. I replied, "I want to look Jesus in the face and tell Him how humbly grateful I am for his amazing grace toward me." **OF ALL THE THINGS MOST CERTAINLY REVEALED IN THE SCRIPTURES IT IS THAT ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE **SAVED BY THE GRACE OF GOD THROUGH THE VICARIOUS ATONEMENT OF JESUS CHRIST!** Just like any gift Christ's grace must be received and claimed by the stipulations of the Giver.** Christ's "stipulations" are belief in Him, confession of his name, repentance of one's sins, and immersion (baptism) in water for the remission of sins and covenant relationship (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27; etc.).

### QUESTIONS:

1. In *context*, what is every good (honest RSV) work for which the Christian must be ready (or prepared)? 3:1
2. Do Christians really have to be courteous toward **all** people--- even those who are impertinent, insulting, rude and uncivil toward them? 3:2
3. Does Titus 3:3 describe *every* non-Christian---even Paul? 3:3
4. Just what does it mean that salvation is by the goodness and loving kindness of God? 3:4-7
5. If we're saved by grace, why does Paul want Titus to insist (RSV) that the people of Crete apply themselves to do good deeds? 3:8
6. What are the stupid controversies (RSV) that are to be avoided? 3:9
7. What is a factious person? 3:10. What are Christians to do about such people?
8. Are cases of urgent need (RSV) or daily necessities (NIV) all with which a Christian should be concerned? 3:14 (Remember Matt. 6:25-34; 1 Tim. 6:6-10; 1 Thess. 4:9-12, Prov. 30:7-9, etc.).

Lines from three old hymns we should sing more often than we do!

"Nothing can for sin atone, Nothing but the blood of Jesus;  
Naught of good that I have done, Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
Oh! Precious is the flow That makes me white as snow;  
No other fount I know, Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

"Just as I am, without one plea, But that thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bids't me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come! I come!  
Just as I am, Thou wilt receive, Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,  
Because Thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come! I come!"

"Lord Jesus, look down from thy throne in the skies,  
And help me to make a complete sacrifice;  
I give up myself and whatever I know:  
Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.  
Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow;  
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."