

Why Live “Sound Doctrine”

Intro: In our Sunday evening lessons we’ve been considering the “sound doctrine” Paul instructed Titus to teach to the church at Crete. We’ve considered the instructions to old and young, male and female, and to the bond-slaves. Through living out this sound doctrine we “adorn the doctrine of our God and Savior” and we “prevent the word of God from being dishonored” and “put to silence the adversary so that he can have nothing bad to say about us.”

But Paul completes these instructions by reminding us of why it is possible for to live the way we should!

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. (Titus 2:11-14)

Paul packs this long sentence with a powerful answer to the question, “Why is it possible for us to live the way we should?”

We have a sufficient foundation.

That sufficient foundation is the grace of God!

Grace is the unmerited favor of God toward sinful people. That grace Paul says has “appeared” or been made a manifest!

It is interesting that Paul should find the accomplishment of a holy life in God’s grace rather than in man’s efforts to be perfect. The grace of God is the foundation of the Christian’s distinctive life! To base our lives on anything other than the grace of God (whether it be human effort or religious ritual) is to build on shifting sand.

It brings salvation to all men

It makes possible deliverance from sin

It makes deliverance possible for all people

However, it could only bring salvation to men if they receive the provisions of God’s grace.

We have a sufficient sacrifice.

The grace of God provides a sufficient sacrifice for the problem of sin—the sacrifice of “Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us”.

That sacrifice redeems from every lawless deed

That sacrifice purifies us

What if that sacrifice was not available to us every day? What if we had no means of forgiveness for sins? Then we like Paul, no matter how much we desire to live a sinless life would end up in the same places as he crying,

“Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24)

We have a sufficient guide.

That sufficient guide is the gospel

“the grace of God teaches us....” Paul uses the Greek word for the “training” that father gives His child! Our Father God loves us and has given His word to train us how to live for Him.

“And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. (Acts 20:32)

The gospel revealed by the apostles of Christ reveals not only a means of forgiveness but also a new way to live. It teaches us to:

Deny ungodliness and worldly lusts

That is to “say no!”

Ungodliness is “lack of piety toward God”

Worldly lusts are the desires that characterize people who live for this world rather than God’s reward

Live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age

Sensibly—soberly, moderately, with self-control

Righteously—justly or uprightly

Godly—devoted to God

We can live the way we should because God has given us a sufficient guide to show the way.

We have a sufficient identity.

We can be the people of God!

Through God’s grace we can become God’s people. That is what the church is—God’s people.

We can be a “peculiar” people. The idea is not that we are strange or weird. The idea is that we specially God’s own.

There is no greater sense of belonging than this—than to say we are God’s children. It is why we can live the life we should because we know in doing so we will be identified among the people of God.

We have a sufficient purpose.

Notice Paul said we are to be a people “zealous for good deeds”

We are to live with passion! The word “zealous” means “on fire, boiling”.

We are to live with principle! We are not driven by emotions, but spiritual intelligence enlightened by the truth of God.

This is why we can live as we should--because we have a reason to live!

We have a sufficient goal.

Our goal is the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of Jesus.

Paul uses a word meaning to “expect” or “welcome” or “wait for”.

We eagerly await the “appearing of the glory of Jesus. He will return not as the humble man of Galilee but as the glorious God, King of Kings and Lord or Lords. John gives us a glimpse of the glory of the resurrected and ascended Lord. It is an awesome picture. I can’t wait to see Him! Can you?

Here is why we can live the life based on sound teaching. We want to have “eternal life with God”.

Conclusion: So then, Christians can and will practice “sound doctrine” when we see our lives in the bigger picture of God’s plan. He has given us everything we need to succeed!