

COMMUNITY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

[Cedar Fields– A Bible Fellowship Church]

August 12, 2007

Titus – Part 10: Grace Teaches Us to “Just Say No” to Ungodliness – 4

Review

Goal – to become a Gospel-conquered group of believers.

God’s readiness to give and forgive is now public. Salvation’s available for everyone! We’re being shown how to turn our backs on a godless, indulgent life, and how to take on a God-filled, God-honoring life. This new life is starting right now, and is whetting our appetites for the glorious day when our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, appears. He offered himself as a sacrifice to free us from a dark, rebellious life into this good, pure life, making us a people he can be proud of, energetic in goodness.

Titus 2:11-14 from *The Message*

You think you are making free, autonomous, independent, liberated decisions all by yourself. What kind of decisions?

- ⌘ not do housework
- ⌘ not go to a prayer meeting – ever
- ⌘ don’t regularly attend church
- ⌘ you will be in sports on Sunday
- ⌘ you will be in many things
- ⌘ watch sex-joke-filled shows on TV
- ⌘ spend money on yourself
- ⌘ play video games
- ⌘ don’t help parents with your chores
- ⌘ talk back
- ⌘ don’t listen in conversations
- ⌘ watch TV
- ⌘ don’t read your Bible or pray
- ⌘ constantly work
- ⌘ watch a lot of TV
- ⌘ don’t befriend a neighbor
- ⌘ won’t start conversation with newcomer
- ⌘ take an interest in anyone or anything outside of those people or things that positively effect you!
- ⌘ correct others a lot
- ⌘ don’t return phone calls
- ⌘ don’t write thank you notes
- ⌘ go shopping
- ⌘ look for sexy pictures on the internet
- ⌘ can’t compliment others
- ⌘ work all the time
- ⌘ can’t really sacrificially live for others because your life - as you define it - means too much to you.

Tell them all this. Build up their courage, and discipline them if they get out of line. You’re in charge. Don’t let anyone put you down.

Titus 2:15 from *The Message*

CORE THOUGHTS:

You THINK you are making free-will choices when in fact you are slaves, addicted your idols. You cannot help but do these things.

It feels like you are making a choice, but in fact, you cannot (well, you **can** if you are a Christian with the Spirit of Christ in you) but you **will not** choose otherwise because your idols and pride and unbelief won’t let you do anything else.

Illustration: praying – don’t come to pray meeting. Why? Don’t want to pray aloud. Why? Because I don’t want to sound stupid. Why? Because not looking stupid is very important to you for your

sense of self-worth. Why? Because the Gospel of God's Grace, Jesus' righteousness given to you, is not good enough.

That's not me.

Why don't you go? Well, I would not say anything if I'd go. So why don't you pray with us? Don't want to sit there and not say anything. Why? I don't want others to think that I was mad or not praying or weird. So...what others think of you defines your soul more than what God thinks of you. Hence, you don't pray as the Scriptures command.

That's not me.

Who's you? I don't go because if I went I would be hypocritical because I don't hardly even pray in private. And a lot of others that go aren't any better than me. So, you have a righteousness beyond the perfect righteousness of Christ – that is, the "I'm not a hypocrite" righteousness. So you're just like the Pharisee of old who happily dismissed the commands of God for the rules of men – your rules.

That's not me. Oh, who are you?

You're trying to lay the law on me and a guilt trip to go with it. I'm under grace.

That's a gross misunderstanding of Christian grace. Grace does not mean you get out of doing the law; grace means you are compelled by the love of Christ through the Spirit of Christ to die doing the law.

Grace infinitely obligates you to a rapturous, rigorous, and rapacious response of law-like love.

Marshall: If we are joined to Christ, our hearts will be no longer left under the power of sinful inclinations, or in a mere indifference of inclination to good or evil; but they will be **powerfully endowed with a power, bent and propensity** to the practice of holiness,. By the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us, and inclining us to mind spiritual things and to lust (be passionate) against the flesh...

POWERFUL: Jeremiah 2:11-14, 17-22, 25.

Do not run until your feet are bare and your throat is dry. But you said, 'It's no use! I love foreign gods, and I must go after them.'

Jeremiah 2:25

"Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs."

Jonah 2:8

You are not freely choosing anything of this list. You are addicted to them because grace has not freed you.

Grace has not taught you to say "no" to your self-centered, self-protective, self-absorbedness. You cannot read your Bible and pray because you are so much more obsessed or passionate or addicted to YOUR CHOICE of entertainment, pleasure, comfort, non-challenging life-style.

You are in control.

Your pride is driving you – you are in charge.

Your unbelief in the Gospel of God's grace is the flip-side of your pride.

Illustration: flip sides of coins: pride & unbelief

Illustration: icebergs

Dallas Williard: "Is it then hard to do the things with which Jesus illustrates the kingdom heart of love? . . . It is very hard indeed if you have not been substantially transformed in the depths of your being, in the intricacies of your thoughts, feelings, assurances, and dispositions, in such a way that you are permeated with love."

Illustration:

A cheerful girl with bouncy golden curls was almost five. Waiting with her mother at the checkout stand, she saw them: a circle of glistening white pearls in a pink foil box. "Oh please, Mommy. Can I have them? Please, Mommy, please!"

Quickly the mother checked the back of the little foil box and then looked back into the pleading blue eyes of her little girl's upturned face. "A dollar ninety-five. That's almost \$2.00. If you really want them, I'll think of some extra chores for you and in no time you can save enough money to buy them for yourself. Your birthday's only a week away and you might get another crisp dollar bill from Grandma." As soon as Jenny got home, she emptied her penny bank and counted out 17 pennies. After dinner, she did more than her share of chores and she went to the neighbor and asked Mrs. McJames if she could pick dandelions for ten cents. On her birthday, Grandma did give her another new dollar bill and at last she had enough money to buy the necklace. Jenny loved her pearls. They made her feel dressed up and grown up.

She wore them everywhere--Sunday school, kindergarten, even to bed. The only time she took them off was when she went swimming or had a bubble bath. Mother said if they got wet, they might turn her neck green. Jenny had a very loving daddy and every night when she was ready for bed, he would stop whatever he was doing and come upstairs to read her a story. One night when he finished the story, he asked Jenny, "Do you love me?" "Oh yes, Daddy. You know that I love you." "Then give me your pearls." "Oh, Daddy, not my pearls. But you can have Princess--the white horse from my collection. The one with the pink tail. Remember, Daddy? The one you gave me. She's my favorite." "That's okay, Honey. Daddy loves you. Good night." And he brushed her cheek with a kiss.

About a week later, after the story time, Jenny's daddy asked again, "Do you love me?" "Daddy, you know I love you." "Then give me your pearls." "Oh Daddy, not my pearls. But you can have my babydoll. The brand new one I got for my birthday. She is so beautiful and you can have the yellow blanket that matches her sleeper." "That's okay. Sleep well. God bless you, little one. Daddy loves you." And as always, he brushed her cheek with a gentle kiss.

A few nights later when her daddy came in, Jenny was sitting on her bed with her legs crossed Indian-style. As he came close, he noticed her chin was trembling and one silent tear rolled down her cheek. "What is it, Jenny? What's the matter?" Jenny didn't say anything but lifted her little hand up to her daddy. And when she opened it, there was her little pearl necklace. With a little quiver, she finally said, "Here, Daddy. It's for you." With tears gathering in his own eyes, Jenny's kind daddy reached out with one hand to take the dime-store necklace, and with the other hand he reached into his pocket and pulled out a blue velvet case with a strand of genuine pearls and gave them to Jenny.

He had them all the time. He was just waiting for her to give up the dime-store stuff so he could give her genuine treasure. So like our heavenly Father.

For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.

- 2 Peter 2:19 ESV

—for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.

- 2 Peter 2:19 NIV