



hope is the goal we strive for, and the light at the end of a narrow tunnel. While the Christian's hope should never be underestimated, we must never forget that it is only through the grace of God that we can hold to such a hope!

will reign with Christ as fellow heirs (cf. Romans 8:17). However, notice that we are **"heirs according to the hope of eternal life."**

Hope is the Christian's motivation for godly living. You may recall that Paul gave the same motivation to Timothy. **"It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God"** (1 Timothy 4:9-10). Our future hope is one of our most valuable assets, and it rests on the sure foundation of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:11-13). Our

CONCLUSION

Following these profound few verses the Holy Spirit reveals, **"this is a trustworthy statement"** (Titus 3:8a). We once acted foolishly as the world acts, only seeking to appease our own fleshly desires. However, thanks to the intervention of an all-powerful God, we have been saved and now have a new way of life. Thanks be to God for his grace and mercy, for now we have the hope of eternal life.

Yet, Paul continues, **"concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men"** (Titus 3:8b). It is expected that Titus will boldly proclaim the things that Paul has mentioned in the previous verses. Why? Because these things will motivate believers to live like Christians. If we truly understand the hope we've been given by God's intervention in our lives, that is, if we understand how we got from point A to point B, we will never fail to live as a Christian should. Do you understand what God did for you? If so, are you motivated to live your life as he expects?



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ISSUE

15.40

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

October 6,
2013



Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Steve Dixon
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Andrew Dow

A Trustworthy Statement (Titus 3:3-8)

By Andrew Dow

For the last several weeks we have been examining some of the things Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus. On five occasions Paul notes that he is giving **"a trustworthy statement"** (1 Timothy 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Timothy 2:11; Titus 3:8). The addition of this tag, either before or after each text, shows the importance of the statement with which it is connected. This in no way makes these verses superior to others (cf. 2 Timothy 3:16-17), but it draws special attention to them. Paul wants us to pay attention and have confidence in the truth of these statements!

The final of Paul's trustworthy statements is declared in Titus 3:8, there are however some questions about what constitutes his trustworthy statement. You may notice that certain translations lend themselves to a certain interpretation of this. Some people suggest that Paul makes the statement of verses 4-7, then emphatically declares, **"this is a trustworthy statement."** Other Bible students conclude that Paul begins a new thought by saying, **"this is a trustworthy statement,"** then proceeds to make such a statement in verse eight. Ultimately, we must understand what precedes and follows Paul's declaration to be in the same context and equally valid and important to the same discussion. The question is, which, if either, is he drawing more attention to? In my judgment the evidence leads us to understand Paul to be saying what preceded was trustworthy. Perhaps a discussion on the verses will shed light on why this is the case.

Of the five “trustworthy statements” cited above, only one of them is given to Titus. Paul wrote to Titus, **“For we also once were foolish... But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us... so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy statement...”** (Titus 3:3-8a, NASU). Interestingly enough, while the only trustworthy statement given to Titus, this one passage seems to summarize all of Paul’s trustworthy statements to Timothy. While it



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cannot be proved that it was Paul’s intentions to give Titus one, comprehensive trustworthy statement, it should not surprise us to see the same themes running throughout. This should only bolster our faith in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in revealing truth to us. In this article we will examine the trustworthy statement as follows: (1) we were once foolish, (2) He saved us, and (3) now we have hope.

“WE WERE ONCE FOOLISH”

Although not quoted above, the words of the inspired apostle are not without a context. Paul begins by telling Titus to **“remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men”** (Titus 3:1-2). In short, Paul tells Titus to remind the brethren at Crete to live the life of a Christian. This list is reminiscent of the list Paul provided Timothy in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. You may recall, there Timothy is told, **“it is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do”** (vs. 1). Paul then proceeds to demonstrate the life of an overseer, which, in reality, is the life of a Christian! We must constantly be reminded to live the life of a Christian.

Paul does not stop with the need to remind the brethren, but he continues with the reason for this need. **“For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another”** (Titus 3:3). We need to always be reminded to live the life of a Christian because **“we also were once foolish.”** Paul then describes foolishness by the list of worldly attributes. Paul wrote elsewhere that **“the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God”** (1 Corinthians 3:19a). The world finds it wise to satisfy our fleshly desires by practicing things like this, but **“God sees not as man sees”** (1 Samuel 16:7). Paul certainly understood both sides of this coin. Recall his encouraging words to Timothy when he wrote, **“It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all”** (1 Timothy 1:15).

Paul felt that he had been so steeped in the foolishness of the world, he was well qualified to write about it.

In the first three verses an incredible contrast is described. We once squandered our lives in the foolishness of this world, but now we are being reminded to live the holy life of a Christian. These two lifestyles are diametrically opposed to one another. How could it possibly be that we find ourselves crossing over into the life of a Christian?

“HE SAVED US”

I have heard it said, and I believe rightfully so, that two of the most powerful words in Scripture are **“but God.”** The notion that a holy, all powerful being would care enough about us to intervene in our lives is almost incomprehensible. However, Scriptures show that this is just what happens time and time again (Genesis 7:24-8:1; 50:20; 1 Samuel 23:14; etc.). Paul writes, **“we were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. BUT GOD, being rich in mercy... made us alive together with Christ”** (Ephesians 2:3-7, emphasis mine). In another place he says, **“for the wages of sin is death, BUT the free gift of GOD is eternal life”** (Romans 6:23, emphasis mine). As we turn back to Titus, notice the turning point, **“for we also once were foolish ourselves... But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us”** (Titus 3:3-5). How do we get from point A (living for our flesh) to point B (living for Christ)? God intervenes!

God’s love and kindness stepped in, filling a void that nothing else could. What makes this intervention entirely overwhelming is that the love of God appeared in the form of a crucified Christ (John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:3-10). When Christ appeared, showing the love and kindness of God, it was **“to seek and to save that which was lost”** (Luke 19:10). Paul wrote, **“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men”** (Titus 2:11)

The Spirit makes it very clear, however, that this salvation is **“not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior”** (Titus 3:5-6). Understand this: we deserve death. It is only by the mercy of God that we have been offered this salvation. What a joy to know that, because of God’s mercy, we can avoid the most terrible punishment conceivable.

NOW WE HAVE HOPE

“Being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:7). As was often Paul’s emphasis, here we find that the end result is hope. Because God inserted his love into the equation, we can now live in a way unknown to those in the world. First, we are now capable of living as heirs of God. Remember, Paul wrote, **“it is a trustworthy statement... if we endure, we will also reign with Him”** (2 Timothy 2:11-12). Here Paul shows that if we endure, we