"Our Inheritance"

Titus 3

based on the sermon preached on 5-5-24,
available at https://lwac.org.au/sermons or on the podcast

CONTEXT AND KEY IDEAS

1. Once again, Paul provides a list of some good behaviors and actions we are to embrace, and then another list describing what our life was like outside of and before Christ.
2. The reason and motivation for our doing good is to represent the gospel well, so that non-believers may be attracted to the gospel and we will not bring reproach upon Christ.
3. As the motivation for doing good, Paul gives a profound description of salvation.

CONNECT

- Paul returns several times in Titus 3 to his main theme of doing good so that our actions and behaviour will promote the gospel. On a scale of 1-10 (1 being low, 10 being high) rate the church (either local or universal or both) on how effective our actions and behaviour overall have been towards the goal of not disparaging the gospel but promoting it. Would you rate the church differently in the past? Say 100 years ago? 500 or 1,000 years ago?

STUDY

Read Titus 3:1-3

- Why do you think Paul tells Titus in v. 1 to "remind" the people about doing good? As Christians, doesn't doing good happen automatically? Having to be reminded sounds like we have to work at it. Reflect on your life: has doing good been automatic or required effort?

- In addition to the behaviours Paul mentions, what are some other good things we need to be reminded to do, things that don't always come easy or naturally? Making it personal (and without shaming yourself), is there any specific good thing you need to be reminded to do?

- Paul says refusing to be subject to rulers and authorities brings reproach upon Christ? Why? Why is it difficult to balance submission to Christ with submission to rulers and authorities?

- Paul's charges in v. 2 - to not slander, be peaceable, and be considerate- all resonate with his further charge to show humility to all. What is it about humility especially which connects us with Christ and Christianity? On the flip side, what is it about arrogance and pride which reflects poorly on our Christian faith?

- From v. 3, what are some ways people who don't know Christ are or act foolish? What are some deceptions non-Christians buy into or get caught up in? What are some passions and pleasures which enslave them? Try to think of some specific examples.

- Why are the lives of non-Christians so often filled with hate, fear and anger? Does this description fit anyone you know? In what ways does it describe you before you knew Christ?

Read Titus 3:4-8

- From v. 4, what was it which drew us out of that miserable life Paul just described in v. 3?

- What are some of these "righteous things we had done" which are <u>not</u> responsible for our salvation? Is this a reference to observing the OT law? Doing good works? Living morally? Was there ever a time you counted on such things for God's approval? Share as you are able.

- Consider Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in John 3 about being born again. How might this help us understand v. 5 about being saved "through the washing of rebirth"?

- If the Holy Spirit is the one who renews us (v. 5) and is poured out on us generously through Christ (v. 6), when, does Paul imply, do we receive the Holy Spirit? At conversion or at some subsequent time? Is the reception of the Holy Spirit a one-time event or ongoing?

- To be justified by grace is to be declared righteous and acquitted, even though we are, in fact, guilty and sinful. First God forgives us in Christ, then he cleans us up through the power of the Holy Spirit. We often think, and some other religions teach, that first we clean ourselves up and then God forgives us. Explain in your own words the difference between these two.

- Many people are heirs of earthly estates. To be an heir of an earthly estate you often must be a blood relative, one of the family. According to John 1:12-13, how do we become a child of God, part of God's family, and thus qualify to be God's heir?

- Why is having the hope of eternal life such an incredible inheritance? What is this eternal life which Paul tells us is our inheritance? Look up some additional verses which address eternal life, then summarise them in your own words. (See Matt 19:16, 29, Math 25:46, John 3:16, John 5:24, John 17:3, Romans 6:22-23, Galatians 6:8, I John 1:2.)

- Paul concludes these theological truths about salvation (v. 8) by declaring that they are trustworthy and that they should motivate us to do what is good. How can and should believing that God saves us through Christ lead us to do good?

Read Titus 3:9-11

- Paul identifies several activities in v. 9 he considers "unprofitable and useless." Notice he doesn't say they are wrong, just that they don't matter, they are not important, they miss the larger point. What are some examples of unprofitable and useless controversies, arguments and quarrels which Christians sometimes get caught up in today?

- By warning a divisive person twice, what is this making room for?

- Have you ever had to warn someone who was caught up in something dangerous or useless or controversial or likely to lead to an argument? If so, how did they respond?

- Why does Paul state that we should warn only two times? If they won't listen and change after the second warning, of what can we be fairly certain?

Read Titus 3:8, 14

- In both of these verses Paul returns to his main theme of doing good. Both references mention "devoting" ourselves to doing good. V. 14 even mentions "learning" to devote ourselves to doing good. How and why do we learn to devote ourselves to doing good?

APPLY

- What are some things you do or have done or now feel you should do to "learn to devote yourself to doing good"? It could be a class or a study, or a spiritual discipline you have developed.

- Which other aspect of this study has struck you the most and why? What are you going to do as a result ?

- Identify one or more truths from this study which speak to and can be applied in your life.

1.
2.

PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH AND FOR ONE ANOTHER

- According to need.