

A Practical Study of Titus
Growth Toward Godliness
“Beginning to Look More Like Jesus”

**Study Number Eight – The Partners of Godliness –
Titus 3:12-15**

At the top of your study guide we’ve called it “Growth Toward Godliness.” And it is in fact that.

The Christian life is not an instantaneous decision whereby you all of a sudden are zapped and you are Christlike or Godly. And you don’t have further to do or any place further to go.

We have learned:

1. The PROCESS for Godliness in study #1, is from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to an insatiable appetite of food of the Word of God which produces the godly life. And that’s a lifetime thing.

Secondly:

2. The PICTURE of it [Godliness]—fifteen life-size characteristics of the godly life.

Third:

3. The PERVERSION of it [Godliness]—why were the lives so ugly on the island of Crete. Basically because they had turned their ears from the hearing of the truth.

Then we got into chapter 2. We looked together at:

4. Godliness in RELATIONSHIP—how your godly life is to act toward me and how mine is to act toward you. And the fact that we need each other because through bouncing off of one another we learn by those experiences how to be godly.

The later part of chapter 2 we learned another lesson and that is:

5. it is the GRACE of God that trains us toward godliness and it is not legislated. It is not living by the Law that produces godliness.

God in His grace and unmerited favor never gives up on us, never gets discouraged with us. His unconditional and unchanging love is constantly undergirding every process that He works in our lives for good, and ultimately for our more godly lifestyle.

Then when we got to chapter 3 we faced the trauma of:

6. learning to live with DIVINE AUTHORITY—how to be submissive to His will, obedient to His Word, and available for His work in and through us.

And then in last week's study we chatted for a few minutes about:

7. the PATHWAY of the godly life.

Titus, what are you going to do when you get to Crete? And those people are going to oppose you and oppose your teaching. Are you going to forsake the Word of God?

And the apostle Paul says: "Have confidence in the instrument that you have." Be a faithful teacher of the Word. That's what's going to change the lives of those people on the island of Crete.

And avoid foolish controversy and genealogies and contention and strife about legal battles (Titus 3:9) and be a man of God who's faithful in presenting the truth of the Word of God.

Now it's one thing to spend your time talking about principles of Godliness. It's another thing to look at the pretenders—the people who really aren't godly.

It's another thing to see it fleshed out in people. And this study serves a great contribution to the whole thing because now you're going to see godliness in people.

These are some of the men that have been raised up to enable the apostle Paul to carry out his ministry. Actually there are SIX MEN that are presented in this particular study and I want to hang a few things on these men.

One of them is not really named here and I sat there and as I meditated on these verses, realized I was neglecting probably one of the most significant characters in the whole thing.

Then I know you know that I'm referring to the apostle Paul. Paul had a life-changing experience on the road to Damascus. As a result of that, although he was very religious, he became a man who rearranged his priorities and went in a total different direction. All of the things that he lived for "he counted loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord." (Phil. 3:7)

He is a man who gave himself in unstinting service to the Lord Jesus Christ.

I can tell you this, that none of these men that we're going to look at would have bothered to give the apostle Paul the time of day if his life didn't in fact totally reflect all the principles and precepts that we studied in the book of Titus.

Back in chapter 1 and verse 4, Paul said to Titus: "You are a son, a true son in a common faith."

That tells you that everything that Paul's writing about, he has already experienced. And he in fact is in the process of

becoming godly too. And so he writes to a “son in the common faith.” (Titus 1:4)

If I were to characterize these men that we’re going to look at:

they are STABLE,

they’re SOLID,

they’re STEADY,

they’re SOUND, and

they’re SURE.

They’re really great men. And out of each one of their lives, there’s something different that you learn. And so I want to take each of them, realizing that Paul steps behind the scenes as almost the epitome of the example of a godly life.

He has taken pen in hand and under divine inspiration mentions the names of a few others here as we bring the letter to a close.

If you have verse 12, then we are now ready to break down the text and get the message the Lord has for us in this evening time.

v.12 When I shall send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for there I have decided to spend the winter.

“When I shall send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for there I have decided to spend the winter.”

“Now Titus, I’m getting ready to send you some relief. I’m either going to send you Artemas or Tychicus. When I send one or the other, I want you to leave Crete and come to Nicopolis because I’ve decided to go off tour for a time and take some rest. You know I don’t feel bad at all. Cretans want to put me on a guilt trip when I get ready to shut down one of these tours and take a little break and rest and get refueled to get back into the battle.”

Paul did it. He says “It’s rough traveling in the winter and I’m going to stay in Nicopolis, and when I send you relief you come on over here.”

Now what do you do during a time that you’re shut down? Well you spend your time evaluating, you plan your strategy, you set your goals, you get ready. And the apostle Paul, during the winter, has gotten more opportunities than he can handle in his ministry so he’s got to plan his strategy very carefully.

Now in this first verse, there are THREE of these men. If you list PAUL as number one, then the second one is ARTEMAS, the third is TYCHICUS, and the fourth will be TITUS—

because he is mentioned in the little word “you” in that verse.

And I want to talk about those fellows for just a few minutes before we go onto the next verse.

Number one, or if you're putting Paul down as number, it'd be number two, would be:

“Artemas”—we've only got his name.

When you take a little time to put some things with that and make some valid assumptions, you can realize a lot about him.

His name, first of all, means WHOLE (w-h-o-l-e) or SOUND. He is good stuff.

What can we assume about Artemas?

1. He's probably been evangelized by the apostle Paul's ministry. And he's been a close disciple of the apostle Paul.
2. Paul has got the same confidence in Artemas that he has in Titus.

He's going to send him in to this difficult assignment on the island of Crete so he's got to be good stuff. He's got to have spent time manifesting a good, solid faith and a growing relationship with Christ, and an appetite for the principles of the Word of God so that he in fact can go in and pick up where Titus has left off.

So he's a layman whose name only occurs in the text. But he is a man that evidently has been deeply touched by the gospel and who has grown to the point where he could be trusted with that ministry.

And for Paul, he saw that in:

2. ARTEMAS—he saw him as one that he could send in and he only mentions his name.

I thought of Philippians 4 at this point, verses 1-3. I just love that little phrase where, first of all, he says “I beseech Euodia and Syntyche”—these two fussing ladies in the congregation.

Wouldn't it be something gals to have your name in the Bible and the only thing about you is that you fussed? Huh? That's the question you're going to ask Euodia and Syntyche when you get there. Did you girls ever get that thing settled?

Evidently one of them was the chairman of the women's association and the other was a soprano in the choir. And

when you get to heaven, that's the very thing you're going to say to those women. They're going to get tired of answering that question. But they did make the record as fussing females.

But, there are a bunch more who didn't. And listen to what Paul says:

Philippians 4:2, 3

I also ask you to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also; and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are in the Book of Life.

There's a big host of them whose names didn't even occur in the text but their names are in fact "in the Book of Life."

Who's the second guy that's there in the text?

2. TYCHICUS—his name means "fortunate" and you are fortunate if you are knowing a person like this.

Tychicus is the kind of guy who can function and flourish in a position where the apostle has been and carried out a ministry.

There are a lot of references about him. Let me just give you a few.

Acts 20:4—he is an associate with the apostle.

Ephesians 6:21 says:

Ephesians 6:21

"But that you also may know about my circumstances, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will make everything known to you."

Colossians 4:7

As to all my affairs, Tychicus our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bonds slave in the Lord, will bring you information.

2 Timothy 4:12

But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.

Boy that tells you something about him.

Ephesus happened to be that church where the apostle spent more time in than any of the other congregations. That's why when you look at the letter to Ephesians, you scratch your head and realize you're in the heavenlies because you are in heavy truth in the book of Ephesians.

That was Paul's most expensive ministry. In fact they were so attached to him, remember when he went down to get into the boat, the Ephesian elders came down there and there was crying and they were praying together and sharing with another. They just hated to be separated from the apostle Paul and the ministry he had carried out there.

Who does he send in there to his number one church that he spent the most time with? It was a guy like Tychicus for him to carry out that ministry.

Now in those verses I just read to you, there were three phrases that characterized him.

First:

1. He's a "beloved brother."

Second:

2. He is a "faithful servant."

And third:

3. He's a "fellow bonds slave."

Now let me put some layman's tags on that:

1. He's a "brother"—this means that is in fact a believer, he's a brother spiritually in the family of God.
2. He's a "faithful servant"—and I emphasize the word "faithful" and I would use the word consistent.

Now some people who have got this ability, you can count on them being there when you need them the most. They're always showing up and they are just a therapy and such an encouragement, and such a blessing in your life because they're always there and always helping even though they've had to deny themselves many things in order to do that just to be a source of encouragement.

He is “faithful servant.”

And third:

3. he is a “servant.” He is a “fellow bonds slave.”

So I used the word “brother,” “consistent,” and “servant” to describe this guy.

William Barker's written a book. He's a Presbyterian minister. He's written several on biographies of little-known people in the Bible. And he wrote one called *Saints in Short Sleeves and Overalls* or *Apron Strings* or something like that. And in his book he describes Tychicus in the following paragraph. He likens him to the great generators that hum behind the scenes that produce the electricity and we don't even know they're there humming until the lights go out. This is what he says:

(*Saints in Aprons and Overalls: Friends of Paul* by William P. Barker, 1959)

He is one of those people who are there all the time, humming with power, but whom you do not notice. He is one of those upon whom the world depends so much, yet he did nothing to call attention to himself. He was no thundering orator. He was no inspired organizer. He plugged away day by day in a quiet but effective way. Tychicus acted as a combination letter carrier and trouble shooter. The letters each carry a few words about Tychicus at the close. Paul knew these Christians in

Asia Minor would want to have the latest reports on how he was and how the church was doing elsewhere. And Tychicus was to fill them in on all the news.

(page unknown)

Artemas, Tychicus, and let's review Titus for just a minute because I've got something additional I want to share with you. I know that will be a real blessing to you.

Titus can be seen in the THREE C's—do you remember that from the first study?

the COUNCIL,

CORINTH, and

CRETE.

Do you remember that Titus was the one who was a Gentile, not a Jew, who became a Christian under Paul's ministry. And the apostle Paul was called in before the Jerusalem council to defend his theological position that it is salvation by faith and faith alone in the Lord Jesus and apart from the Law. That was the position.

Now notice these bespectacled theological giants of the day gathered in conclave in conference in the city of Jerusalem.

The apostle Paul has come to town and he's brought along an exhibit. And when he stands to tell the story of how God has

blessed his ministry in all of these cities and places, there is great suspicion. To these legalistic theologians who cannot be freed from the bondage of the Law to recognize that grace and grace alone can provide through faith, salvation to those who will receive the Christ.

And Paul clears his voice and he says “I think it would be well if you heard from one of these men who has come to know the Christ and who knows nothing of your Law. Titus would you please speak.”

Now that would take a lot out of Crete. And I can see him stand up before that crowd and he says “I don’t know much about your Law and I don’t know much about your theological discussions and arguments, but I’ll tell you, one day I bowed my head and heart and I invited the living Lord Jesus Christ to come into my life and to forgive my sins. And I’m not the same man that stands before you as I was before I made that decision. My life has been drastically changed, my priorities rearranged and I have found meaning and purpose in speaking out the gospel message of Jesus Christ.”

When he finished with his little discourse, there were no dissenting votes. It is salvation by faith and faith alone.

That guy’s got to be good stuff to pull that off.

But how about number 2—take a guy like this that’s grown in the Lord and sent him into the worst church that you could—put him in Corinth. You talk about a church that is problem-

plagued. Woo! Corinth is sin-city. Man that church, they are so carnal and childish they don't even—they fill their minds with so much of the world they don't even have a hunger for the Word of God. They're little babies. They formed their own little cliques.

Some are going after Apollos and Paul and for Christ, and all the different groups in the confines of the church. The guy living in blatant and open immorality in the congregation. They're fussing with one another, going to law courts with one another. They're drunk at the communion table. And they're so mixed up with the charismatic phenomenon they can't understand spiritual gifts. And they're a church that is really mixed theologically with regard to the doctrine of the resurrection.

All of that! Sic'em Titus! Here's your first ministry and your first challenge! Go get 'em baby!

Titus says "haven't you got something a little easier for me?"

No, sending you to the little tough ones. I love them!

Pressure and stress produces character. Put me in there!

Thanks coach.

Titus goes into Corinth. He goes and confronts that guy, straightens that thing out so that when Paul writes the Second Corinthian letter, he asks the congregation to forgive

him and bring him back in again. He knew he was going to be alright. The guys' [can't understand] sin is on him.

On top of that, he must have taught the Word because they began to grow. You don't see any mention of the mixed up charismatic phenomenon in the last letter. And you don't see anything about drunkenness at the Lord's table.

You see a beautiful letter written to a church that have evidently finally gotten their act together. Why? Titus was faithful, that's why. And Paul probably when he got ready to leave he took an offering for the poor saints in Jerusalem. And to me that's the epitome of his ministry.

When you go in there and take a strife-torn church and pull it all together and have them respect you enough to give you an offering for the poor saints in Jerusalem, you have really done your deal.

But that isn't where it ends. He comes out of Corinth and he gets dumped on Crete.

We have already learned that they are selfish, they are brutal, they are godless individuals on that island, terribly unmotivated, unemployed stomachs. And here goes Titus. Did he pull it off? Did he get it together?

You know you don't find it in the text. But if you want to go with me one summer, I'll take you to the island of Crete. There's a fabulous museum there and much of the

archeologist's spade has uncovered a great deal. So we know a lot, even prior to this period by thousands of years.

But they have also uncovered a lot of churches from this very period of time when Titus was there. And they have found a recurring mark on the cornerstones of many of these churches. And here's the statement—this really got me when I read this.

“Dedicated to our beloved saint Titus.”

You see, he went in there and he pulled this thing off. He did the same thing in Crete that he did out there in Corinth—Mr. Consistent. Man who in pressurized situations and stress can manifest the godly life so people will eventually be drawn to the Savior. And who when it comes time to put their buildings up because their program is expanding to the point where they need a place to meet, they're going to dedicate a building to the guy who came to the island and who taught them—not only taught them, but he showed them the godly life.

Verse 13.

v.13 Diligently set forward on their journey Zenas the lawyer and Apollos in order that nothing be lacking for them.

“Diligently set forward”—what does that mean? Provide for the physical and financial needs of these two—“on their journey Zenas the lawyer and Apollos in order that nothing be

lacking for them.”

Now you’ve got two guys in this one. Now the last two:

4. “Zenas the lawyer”

Isn’t that amazing there is a lawyer who made the biblical text. That is just amazing. Will wonders ever cease?

“Zenas the lawyer”—he could have been an authority in Mosaic Law, or in fact in judicial law.

He evidently became a Christian under the ministry of Apollos because he is associated with him. He must have been one of his disciples.

He is a layman who chose to travel with Apollos and to assist him in the ministry.

Now what do you learn from that kind of a guy? Well you learn that as a Christian layman, God can use your professional secular training in His service. I think that’s really important.

You know many of you have never known the joy in your life of really trying to discover what it is God can use from your ability and your talent. Look at Dr. Luke. Here’s a physician who extended the ministry of the apostle Paul by traveling with him as a personal physician, under divine inspiration was the instrument who wrote the gospel of Luke (referring to

the life of Christ) and the book of Acts (the beginnings of the church).

You talk about a guy, if you would ask him in eternity “Was it worth it leaving your medical practice to do that?”

Man oh man he would say “Yes!” in a moment because of the sheer excitement of seeing his talents and abilities used to the glory of God.

I think we’re living in a day when it’s time for Christian laymen to rise up and recognize that it’s not time to be sitting around. We’re fiddling while Rome burns. And there is a place for you. Your talents and abilities can be used to the glory of God in a more significant fashion than I dare say they are being used right at this very moment. At least be exercising for God enough to try to discern that very real possibility.

I served on the staff of The Firs for many years before I came to Texas out of seminary. On the staff of The Firs they had a summer camp and a ski lodge and major conference center. It was my responsibility to program those facilities and to be there to handle the staff and the program for the camps.

And I’ll always remember that the ministry at the ski chalet was probably one of my most fun things as we had this lovely A-frame building that would house a little over a 100 people and we were a quarter mile from the mail ski lift and we had our own little rope pull in the back and we had 32 retreats a year at this facility. So we just lived up at the mountain.

And the Christian camping magazine asked me to write an article on our program because we were the only one in the United States that was doing something like that. Well we had a fantastic tool of evangelism. Boy you just invite people up and ski them until they're pooped and then teach them the Word of God and right in that environment they see God in all of His glory. It's a fantastic tool of evangelism.

And so I wrote this article, little knowing that a missionary in Japan was going to get that article. When he got it and read it, he says "Hey! The Japanese people are crazy about skiing!" And he writes this urgent letter back and says "Send us the plans for that building so we can put one here in Japan!"

So I wrote him back and said "I'll not only send you the plans but I'll give you the name of a man who can come and build it for you." And our maintenance man works 20 hours a day. You'd always see him either behind a chainsaw or in a caterpillar or a tractor or pouring concrete or putting up rafters and beams or repairing something or working in the sewer or somewhere. He was the most faithful man. I gave his name to that missionary and that dear guy was called by this individual to come to Japan to build that building.

He went out there and in six months they built this ski lodge with missionary help and today they are having retreats like crazy for Japanese people. Since that time Doug Anderson has had the most phenomenal ministry. He's been to Guatemala, helped with radio station TGNA. He's helped in making a

vacation home on Lake Atitlán down there. And he's been many, many places in the world using his professional talents and abilities to the glory of God. And that guy is totally changed! He is so excited he can't hardly find time to pass between the sheets until the next assignment. I mean, he just loves the fact that he's finally found something where his talent and his abilities can be used.

"Zenas the lawyer" must have been in that same kind of stuff. He had figured out how he could assist and how he could be of help. And here he ends up on the island of Crete, getting ready to go, and Paul says "Send them on. Give them some bucks and help them and send them on their way."

And of course the last guy is:

5. "Apollos"

Apollos is an Alexandrian Jew.

Acts 18 describes him. He is very educated, very eloquent. He is a man mighty in the Scriptures. But when he comes to the local congregation Priscilla and Aquila are sitting in the audience and say "Hey, there's something missing in that guy's message."

Here's a dear lay couple in the congregation say "We've got to invite him over to dinner and straighten him out."

Here's a guy, standing room only in the synagogue, when he

preaches. He's got all these metals and he's mighty in the Word of God. In fact, he had a profound impact on the city of Corinth. His name is mentioned there in that particular ministry.

And Priscilla and Aquila say "We've got to help him." So they invite him over to dinner. Can you get the picture?

Aquila, boy she serves up something out of sight—Priscilla I mean. And Aquila's sitting there and they're eating together and having a good talk. And all of a sudden they go "Ouch!" She just kicked him and said "Get on with it!"

Every preacher knows when he's invited out to lunch he's going to hear something besides lunch. And so Apollos has been wondering why they've been so friendly and so here it comes.

Aquila says "You know Apollos we've been listening to you and there's something about your act that doesn't ring true. Did you know that John the Baptist has been beheaded?"

He said "No."

"Did you know that Jesus Christ has been crucified?"

"No."

"Did you know that three days later he rose from the dead and since that time he's gone back to glory?"

“No.”

I can see Apollos with his trained theological mind sitting there.

Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely He hath born our griefs, He carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem Him, stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, each and every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

It's almost like the substitutionary atonement of the Savior comes alive.

I believe right there Apollos comes to know Jesus Christ in a personal way. Fired up with this additional information, he moves into a very significant ministry in the later part of his life.

What do you learn out of that guy's life?

Alexander White—I always read him on everything. He's very verbose but he is so rich that you just have to take a little bit of it at a time. And he says this confrontation between

Priscilla and Aquila and Apollos the following:

I admire all the three so much, I really do not know which to admire the most; Aquila and Priscilla in their quite extraordinary wisdom and tact and courage, and especially love. Or Apollos in his still more extraordinary humility, modesty and the mind of Christ. A shining student of Alexandria, a popular and successful preacher, not standing room when he preached...followed about by admiring crowds and with many seals to his ministry among them, such a famous man to be taken to task about his pulpit work by two old workers in sailcloth and carpets. And to be instructed by them how to preach and how not to preach, the whole thing is laughable, if it were not for its impudence. So I would have said, had I been in Apollos' place, and like the true Alexandrian he was, and the true preacher, and true coming college and successor of Paul, Apollos instantly saw who and what he had in Aquila and Priscilla. In a moment he felt they were by far his superiors in the things of the pulpit at any rate, and he at once made it both easy and successful for them to say to him all that was in their minds and hearts. I would far rather have Apollos' humble mind and quiet heart, at that supreme moment of his life than all his gold medals, first class certificates and all his crowds to boot. The noble young Christian gentleman that Apollos is at that moment he in fact proved himself to be.
(source unknown)

What am I saying? I'm saying the godly life is a humble, approachable life. And it never displays the attitude of

knowing it all. Here we see it displayed in a man like Apollos.

Verse 14.

v.14 And let those also who are ours learn to be engaging in good works to meet pressing needs, in order that they may not be unfruitful.

“And let those who are ours”—that’s Christians—“learn to be engaging in good works to meet pressing needs, [in order that they may not be unfruitful.]”

I just put Philippians 4 verses 10 down to 19 there. Basically that means:

Learn how to be involved in the lives of those who are in the ministry, to take care of their needs without making an issue out of it.

That’s part of the godly life.

Verse 15.

v.15 All those with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in faith. Grace be with you all.

“All those with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.”

The apostle sends the greetings from those who are with him and he wants to greet all those in faith. And then he ends the letter like he started:

“Grace be with you all.”

When you use the word “grace” you encompass the total epistle and the total relationship with God. It is God’s unmerited favor that provided your salvation. It is God’s unmerited favor that trained you in the godly life. And it’s God’s unmerited favor that one day and at one moment we are going to experience in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, when He comes to take us home.

Now I want to underscore here FIVE LESSONS that I got out of those verses.

Lesson #1: Godliness is for the layman and the preacher alike.

Godliness is for the layman and the preacher alike.

We’re talking about a common, common project here.
Godliness is for the layman and the preacher alike.

[Lesson] #2: The Lord can use your professional and secular training in the ministry.

The Lord can use your secular and professional training in the ministry.

And if you haven't thought that through, I really hope you will consider how God can use your talents and abilities and your training in ministry.

[Lesson] #3: Authentic godliness never displays the attitude of knowing it all.

Authentic godliness never displays the attitude of knowing it all.

Lesson #4: Godliness is manifested in supplying the needs of those who are preaching and teaching the Gospel.

Godliness is manifested in supplying the needs of those who are preaching and teaching the Gospel.

Just like that Philippians 4 passage says Paul had learned whatever his state was, to be content. He'd learn to abound and he had learned to go hungry. But he also knew that the Lord would lay it upon the hearts of those people who knew Christ and who were sensitive to meet his needs. And the Philippian saints took care of those needs.

You know when we first launched that in this little ministry with no visible means of support, there were many times that I made wrong assumptions. I would think, you know so-and-so is probably going to be the one who's going to take care of that need. But you know, I always made a wrong verdict.

From a human point of view, you know you always think the

rich folks are the ones who support the ministry. That's not true. The ministry that we're involved in has been totally supported by the unnamed and many times, the unknown.

When in fact by the total surprise, there've been occasions when we have been right down very close to the bottom, like we were last fall on one occasion and I was out on tour for the first time, for the first week. When I came to the class in Mount Pleasant, I had been praying earnestly that God would supply our needs. And a guy walked up and says "I sold five of the Lord's bulls this week, here's the check."

I went to another class and this guy says "You know I've been coming down here to OneMain Place all this time and I've never had a part in your work because you've never said anything about it. And two weeks ago I wrote a check to help you but I'm slow discerning what the Lord wanted me to do. Well I now know. Will you wait a minute for me to go get the check and I'll bring it to you?" And I said sure. When he brought it I just said thanks and put it in my pouch.

When I got home and looked at the pouch, it was nearly \$9,000 in the checks and the sale of bulls. Pearl says "Go out again for another week."

Those stories could be multiplied many, many times over in the eight or nine years that we've traveled. As God has been faithful and He certainly has met all of our needs. The present day and there's enough money to pay the bills for the end of February and take us on into March, so God is good.

And that's the last lesson. We are challenged to meet pressing needs. We're challenged to meet pressing needs.

Now I wondered how I should end this series of studies.

Knowing that some of you sitting here in the audience are not Christians, and you're really making a genuine search, I'd really pray that God would somehow make today real special since I would be talking to you—knowing that some of you are new to me and to the ministry and all, and how to just really communicate the truth.

You know when you pray like that, you've got to expect it. God is going to be very special in what He does.

When I got to my car this morning in Bryan, there was a manila envelope on my seat. And I opened it and it was a picture of a football player kicking a punt deep in his own end zone. You already know who it is.

And on the letter and on the picture it said:

To Don—

NFL world record punt—98 yards

September 21, 1969.

New York Jets vs. the Denver Broncos.

But the greatest kick for me
came on February 6, 1978.

Born again

Steve O'Neal.

His wife Judy had called me last week to tell me that Steve's dad had been stricken with a heart attack. And I stopped by in Hearne on Monday to see his dad and I asked him if he's a Christian. He said "No, I'm not ready to die but this is the second one. I should have died."

I said "You know I'd really love to help you." But there was another guy in the room and right as I got ready to just visit with him a minute, here came his tray of food. So I said "You know I'll chat with you later. I'll try to get some help to you."

He says "But this is the last week." And I said "Yeah, I know that."

I went onto Bryan kind of scared that he might die before I got a chance to get back with him. I was just haunted with it and I got together with Steve last night and I said "You know Steve the greatest thrill in all the world for you to go up and lead your dad to the Lord."

He says "Yeah but he won't listen to me like he'd probably listen to you."

And I said "OK. I'll go up there on Wednesday morning before I go onto Dallas and Fort Worth."

I got there about 8:00 and he was eating his breakfast. Here's this other guy in the room—you know I just hate to embarrass

people about this. I like to visit with them in private about spiritual things.

And this other guy's laying there and the curtain is pulled on top of that, and they've been visiting back and forth with each other. And finally I said "Mr. O'Neal, I've come to make good my promise to share with you how you can know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior." I said "I want to go over this little booklet right here that I went over with Steve back in 1978. In fact, he loaned me his little book to share with you the Gospel."

He says "Boy I'm ready. I want to get this thing taken care of right now."

The other guy was laying on the bed there. I said "You know, I'm going to talk to him about spiritual things but if you want to listen in, you know, that's alright. You can just join us right here." I just felt constrained to say that.

So I started talking to Wayne and I went through the basic plan of salvation and I said "Now here's the prayer that you need to pray if you're ready to invite Christ into your life." And before I got the words out of my mouth, the guy started praying them.

And as soon as Wayne finished praying I said "You know, did Christ come into your life?" He said "I think so." I said "Well can God lie?" He said "No." I said "Well you know where He is, don't you?"

Here's this guy laying on his bed, he says "Hey, how about me having some of the piece of that action too?"

So I said "You want to become a Christian? He says "Oh I really would." He described his family a little bit and I got over by his bed and he prayed this same prayer to invite Christ into his life.

8:15 one birth, 8:20 another birth and I'm on my way to Fort Worth by 8:30.

Two dear guys, both of whom were laying in the hospital bed, invited Christ into their life.

You know I wouldn't trade those experiences for anything. I would not want for anything in the world to sing 16 verses of "Just as I Am" right now and ask you all to raise your hands or to meet with me afterwards, or to coerce you with any emotional pressure. I have given you a message. I have told you exactly what needs to be done to know the Christ. And it's yours.

I call God in His Word to witness against you this day. But I highly recommend that you choose life, because you don't have very long.

Now what about you Christians? Well I'll tell you one thing, when we get to meet again together like this, you better be a lot more godly than you are right now.

And I want to tell you something else. You can expect the same of me because the ground is level in this deal. And with those marathon verses in Philippians 3:12, you forget the progress you've made, which is behind you, and you press toward those things which are in front. You press on.

The challenge is to keep changing, to keep growing and to become more Christlike. And I want to leave you with that thought.

Let every day serve as a contribution to growing, maturing and developing in your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father, we know Your Spirit has spoken. Thank You for answering my prayers for a very special day today in the ministry that You've given us. Thank You for Wayne and Don, down in the hospital in Hearne. Both now who are brand new brothers in Your family, born again by the Spirit of God. Lord I pray that their witness would be a lighthouse to the rest of the folks there at the hospital. And above all to Steve and the family, again of Your faithfulness in bringing part of his family to Christ. I just pray that You might be with each one of these folks here. We know in a group this size there are those who are anxious, who are worried, who are concerned about a future. Maybe there's some unresolved conflict, maybe some deep problem that really comes to the surface right now. Thanks that You've promised grace for the thorns in the path, that Your strength is made perfect in our weakness. Oh how often we're reminded of that as we see our

own frailty and inability to cope with circumstances that surround us. Thank You for Your unconditional and unmerited grace, Your unconditional and unchanging love. Those arms of love that surround us, even we end up in a prodigal experience, to draw us close, to forgive, to cleanse, and to set us upon the path again to pursue the godly life that will ultimately lead to being made like Jesus Christ. And thanks too for the confidence we have that soon we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. And thanks too that You're not going to give up. That we can be confident of this very thing, that He which hath began a good work in us, will continue to perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**A Practical Study of TITUS:
Growth Toward Godliness**

“Beginning to Look More Like Jesus”

STUDY NUMBER EIGHT – THE PARTNERS OF GODLINESS – TITUS 3:12-15

NOTES

v.12 When I shall send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for there I have decided to spend the winter.

v.13 Diligently set forward on their journey Zenas the lawyer and Apollos in order that nothing be lacking for them.

v.14 And let those also who are ours learn to be engaging in good works to meet pressing needs, in order that they may not be unfruitful.

v.15 All those with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in faith. Grace be with you all.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Titus 3:12-15 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What does Paul command Titus to do in verse 12?

3. Who is Paul hoping to send to take the place of Titus?

4. Where is Paul hoping to spend the winter?

5. What does Paul ask to be done for Zenas and Apollos, according to verse 13?

6. What are the Cretan Christians supposed to be learning, according to verse 14?

7. Describe what is involved in the “good works to meet pressing needs” in verse 14.

8. To whom does Paul send greetings in verse 15?

9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Godliness is for the layman and the preacher alike.

LESSON #2: The Lord can use professional, secular training in the ministry.

LESSON #3: Authentic godliness never displays the spirit of knowing it all.

LESSON #4: Godliness is manifested in supplying the needs of those who are preaching and teaching the Gospel.

LESSON #5: We are challenged by the Apostle to learn to meet pressing needs.

LESSON #6: The challenge is to keep on changing, keep growing, and becoming more Christlike.

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