

Series: Order in the Church

Title: Wax-Free and Sun-Tested

Text: Titus 3:12-15

The Real Deal:

My in laws collect antique pottery and glass.

Antique glass for instance has a unique property that tells you it is antique.

The Glass form 100 years ago, contains Manganese.

When you place a jar in the sunlight, the light interacts with the Manganese and gives the glass a purple hue.

The genuine Antique is revealed by the light.

In Paul's day, people used pottery for everything.

They used a similar test to determine the authenticity of well made pots.

Dishonest Potters would cover cracks with Wax, and glaze over them.

If you purchase the pots indoors, you couldn't tell.

But when taken outside in direct sunlight, the crack filled with wax would show up as a lighter color.

this was such a problem, reputable potters would stamp the word, *SINE CERA*~ *without wax*.

SINE CERA ~ Sincere - without effort to appear as something your's not.

Sincerity vs. Hypocrisy (Fake)

Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives.

(1 Pet 1:22) *Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:*

Sincerity Protects You: Do people believe you?

Are you Credible? - Sincerity is build on TRUST!

Have you given them reasons in the past to doubt your sincerity?

Illus: The boy who cried wolf.

Illus: When we give the boss an excuse for not fulfilling our tasks, but really we were up all night bing watching our favorite TV show.

Trust is build when we act w/ Integrity when making choices

(Tit 2:7-8) *In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Sincerity Protects You*

Sincerity Prepares You: You learn to discern when people are fake.

(Lk 20:20) People tried to do this with Jesus.

(2 Pet 2:3) People will try to do this with you.

Illus: Do you have friends that compliment you just before they ask you for something?

Nice outfit, can I borrow a dollar?

Illus: You were told they don't like you, but now that you have a new toy, they want to come over. ***Ulterior Motives Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives.***

Daddy always said: "There is no such thing as a free lunch.

Marlboro Adds: *What do They Want?*
Does Cigarettes make you a Cowboy?

Beer Commercials:

What does Football & Beer have in common?
(1 Cor 3:16-17) *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*

What do they really want?

Your Money, Your Health, Your Youth

Sincerity is the Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives.

Sincerity Protects You - Sincerity Prepares You

Sincerity Propels You:

Are there things you would do for Grandma, you won't do for others? You know she loves you!

Illus: "People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care!"

(1 Jn 3: 18) *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*

People will follow you if they are sure you are interested in what's good for both of you, not just out for yourself.

Sincerity Preserves You: People are willing to put up with your faults, if they are positive you love and care about them.
(Ps 32:2) *Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.*

Illus: I have friends that love my kids. I would do almost anything for them.

Sincerity is a powerful thing, that cannot be bought, only earned and lost in one misstep.

Sincerity is Credibility.

Credibility is earned through TRUST. ***Like a Piggy Bank Trust is build when we act w/ Integrity when making choices.***

Every mis-step take the TRUST balance to \$000.

To be Real, Authentic, Genuine, Sincere, Without Wax means to be open and honest about our cracks and flaws, an willing to work it out rather than cover them up.

(Ps 51:17) *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*

Authentic Christianity:

Real Christianity is Wax-Free and Sun Tested!

Sometimes, I think Paul had all the answers.

Dogmatic, unsmiling, never uncertain about what to do.

This section of Titus starts to reveal Paul the Human.

Honest Dilemmas: (Titus 3:12a)

"OR" Paul hadn't made up his mind yet.

Paul is saying: *"I don't know who I am going to send yet."*

"No, I don't have it all figured out yet."

Paul doesn't Spiritualize his uncertainty.

"I am seeking the Holy Spirit's leading."

"It is a serious matter of prayer."

"I don't know yet" is an real answer.

(Matt 21:22) Ask believing, and God will answer.

(Matt 7:7-8) Persistence will bring an answer.

(Luke 18:7) Sometimes the answer is “*Wait*”.

Paul’s Dilemma:

Artemas: His name is the masculine form of the fertility goddess Artemis.

A Gentile, obviously born to an Idolatrous Family.

Is only mentioned here, this once.

Tychicus: A Gentile, came to faith later in life.

His name means, “*Fortunate*”,

Is mentioned several times in Paul’s writings.

Delivered the Letter to Colossian Church.

Accompanied Paul on a missionary journey as is documented in (Eph 6;21)

Both were equally qualified, as was Titus, to lead these gentile believers.

Paul wasn’t looking for Better Methods:

Paul was looking for Better Men:

God does not anoint plans, He anoints People!

Won’t you let God Anoint you!

(Plug Men’s Prayer Advance)

Paul chooses in the end to send Artemas, and we find Tychicus sent to relieve Timothy in Ephesus. (2 Tim 4:12)

The Point is... Paul is Real.

He doesn’t have all the answers.

Authentic Christianity is displayed the Honest Dilemmas that we have to seek God for an answer to.

Personal Deference: (Titus 3:12b) **be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.**

Everything about this letter has been about Titus’ ministry on Crete.

Organizing Churches, Appointing Elders, Challenging, Discipling, Demonstrating Remarkable Christianity.

But this verse tells Titus that his ministry is about to be interrupted.

“Wait a minute!” You sent me, its become my home.

I have fought battles with false teachers.

Power struggles with rebellious elders.

I am starting to see fruit!

What do you mean, I am not staying?

I imagine this phrase jumps off the page like a bombshell.

Titus’ plans are about to be totally interrupted.

From what we read later, we find he is sent to Dalmatia, another difficult mission field to fix.

Evidently he goes without complaint (2 Tim 4:10)

If we hold Titus up to the light we find an authentic Believer

Titus defers to the Authority & leadership of the Holy Spirit through the Apostle, being willing to have his life interrupted.

Are we willing to allow God to interrupt our lives?

All of us has had our lives & plans interrupted by our job. Military, promotion, changing companies, and Careers.

Titus' plans were interrupted to focus him on the Will of God for him to perform the Work of God.

Are you willing to let God interrupt your life plan?

Career: Can God interrupt your Life Plans to call you into the ministry?

God interrupted Mine!

(Explain my career plan, status, & call to ministry)

I knew I would never be truly happy outside of God's will.

Paul may not have known who he was going to send to Crete, but he knew where he was going to winter, and where he would go in the Spring. (Rom 15:24,28) - SPAIN

God interrupted Paul's plans,

He did winter in Nicapolis.

Artemas did arrive in Crete.

Titus did leave for Nicapolis.

Paul did leave for Spain, but was arrested and went to Rome in chains, and never did see Spain.

Titus & Paul, put their entire lives into the ministry, had their plans interrupted.

Irregardless, they deferred to the Sovereign Authority of God. Hold them up to the light.

You will find Authentic, Remarkable Christianity. they let God, order their steps.

We all want to live our lives of predictable ease and comfort on smooth trails as far as the eye can see.

The reality is, God likes to go "Off Roding".

Smooth paths, can, in a quick turn, be rugged terrain.

There is nothing wrong with Planning, but our plans need to be written in pencil, but let God hold the eraser and have the authority to do a Re-Write as He sees fit.

What about our Daily Service: Can God interrupt your daily plans to call you into the ministry?

We are all busy!

We all have deadlines and commitments.

We all have families with their desires & commitments.

But, Can GOD interrupt your Daily/Weekly plans?

Coming to church is NOT SERVICE! Its WORSHIP!

SERVICE, is getting the gospel to others, & discipling them to do the same!

Does God get any of your time outside of church for that?

Can God interrupt your daily/weekly life so the Gospel can get presented?

Selfless Deeds: (Titus 3:13) ***Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.***

Apollos & Zenas are the Couriers of the letter.

They are on their way to a different mission field.

This might not have been in the church budget, but Paul is asking for a special offering.

Wait a Minute! Who is Zenas? A Lawyer?
He is mentioned no where else in Scripture.
Only saved Lawyer in scripture.

Helping someone else bear fruit, by partnering with them financially. (1 Cor 6:10-11)

We are not to help those propagating False Doctrine.
(2 John 9-11)

Illus: I get contacted by missionaries & ministries that are not sound in doctrine. I have to turn them away.

Unified Disciples: (Titus 3:14) *And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.*

Paul is identifying a great teaching opportunity for Titus to lead the churches of Crete to meet a pressing need.

Remarkable, Authentic Christianity is demonstrated by serving others in the area of FELT needs too.

“Learn” this is not going to come naturally for the Cretans. Titus will have to lead them.

We have to learn to maintain a lifestyle of Good Works. Not to keep score, but to be fruitful to God. (Col 1:10)

Pastor & Pew are to be engaged in the ministry of hospitality and encouragement

This is not something we embrace naturally.
It has to be taught and modeled for others to see & imitate.

Get Real!

1. None of us should occupy the role with a sense of permanence.
2. None of us is beyond needing helpful assistance.
3. None of us should avoid being intentionally generous.
4. None of us can make it without the goodness of God’s grace. (Titus 3:15)

(Titus 3:15) ***All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.***

Paul began this letter by sending “Grace”, and now he ends its with Grace as a Blessing.

Grace be with you all. or ***Y’all*** which is the RSV the Revised SOUTHERN Version.

No One is left out!

We will never accomplish this letter without God’s Grace.
We will never serve each other without God’s Grace.
We will never submit to authority without God’s Grace.
We will never pursue godly maturity & humility without God’s Grace.

We will never establish Christ honoring homes without God’s Grace.

We will never stand against False Teaching without God’s Grace.

We will never stay focussed on the truth without God's Grace.

We will never live with a longing expectation of Christ's return without God's Grace.

Authentic, Remarkable Christianity is Impossible with the Empowerment of God's Grace.