

Series: Order in the Church (12/7/16)

Title: Bringing God to Life

Text: Titus 3:8

Is God for Real?

Illus: God is not Real, Chickens are Real!

2010 Gallup Poll: 73% Americans are convinced God exists.

Jobs are Real... Families, Suffering, Money, Life, Chickens.

But God?

Editorial from the June 16th, edition of the Atlantic Journal.

The World is too big for us to handle all at once.

Too much going on. Too many crimes. Too much violence.

Too much devotion to entertainment.

Try as you will, you get behind in the race.

Its an incessant strain to keep pace and still you lose ground.

Science drops its discoveries on you so fast it bewilders us.

The Political world changes so fast you're out of breath

trying to keep up with Who's In and Who's Out.

Everything is High Pressure.

Humanity cannot endure much more of this.

June 16th, 1883

How do we communicate to our 21st Century society that God is Real?

That Jesus is a safe harbor?

That Jesus is the Essence of Genuine Hope?

That The Gospel is the Answer, and His Grace is Available?

We are to be Advertising a Truly Reliable Gospel:

(Titus 3:8) This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

This is a faithful saying, - The Gospel is Reliable!

I will that thou affirm constantly, Advertise Constantly.

What are we to advertise constantly?

The Truth of God's Love and Kindness: Vs 4

Faith in Christ alone, apart from good works, saves us: Vs 5a

God's Spirit washes & Regenerates at Redemption: Vs 5b

God's Spirit Renews us day by day: Vs 5c

Jesus Christ, equal to God the Father, is sufficient to save: Vs 6

Christ has dismissed all charges against & has replaced our sin with His righteousness. Vs 7a

He has adopted us and made us co-owners of the coming kingdom. Vs 7b

We have every right to be confident.

This is not Folklore, or old wives fables.

This IS the Everlasting Gospel!

No need to beat around the bush, or soften the blow for the punch line.

Illus: The KIOSK operator at the Mall

Come on buddy, I am doing you a favor.

We have the ONLY Gospel that saves!

WE ARE TO SPEAK WITH CONFIDENCE!!!!

Titus was to be there example: (Vs 8)
these things I will that thou affirm constantly...

Paul hinted at the possible temptation to hesitate:
(Titus 2:15) *These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.*

Illus: *Like a football coach shouts a play in the last few seconds of OT.*

There is no doubting the play.

No mistaking the passion.

“I know you are young, the culture is evil, the church may even resist the truth, BUT Stay in the Game!”

The Temptation to hesitate is just as fierce today.

The Temptation to skip certain subjects.

The Temptation to skip certain passages or chapters of scripture.

Paul is using present tense... We are to keep telling it.
these things I will that thou affirm constantly,

Paul begins this chapter with a similar theme:

(Titus 3:1a) *Put them in mind to...*

Remind them, Remind Them Again, Remind over and over until it sticks.

Illus: *A Doctor, Lawyer, & a Pastor went deer hunting. all three shot at a buck.*

All three argued their shot killed the buck.

The game warden pronounced the Pastor killed it.

The bullet went in one ear and out the other!

As a Pastor, I am reminded that Sheep are prone to forget.
Illus: *6-9th grade boys have to be reminded over and over:*

Paul's challenge is to all of us:

Pastor, Deacon, SS Teacher, Awana Worker. PEW & Pulpit.
The World needs to hear the message over and over again.

We are the Gospel Ad Campaign to our community:

We are the Gospel Bill Board along the Interstate of life.

We are the Gospel Powerpoint Presentation, classroom to office.

We are communicating a completely reliable Gospel!

We are to be Surrendering to a Truly Personal God:

(Titus 3:8c) *they which have believed in God*

Why is it so surprising that God would ask us to do something outside our comfort zone.

Our flesh hates serving God.

Our Flesh wants to be served and doesn't like to share.

God has saved us.

God has blessed us.

We are not serving because it feels good.

We are serving because He asked me too.

Illus: *Make a Wish foundation goes to great lengths to fulfill the wishes of dying children.*

Children have gone to great lengths to be at the bedside of a dying parent.

Why can't we obey a living savior who died for us?
God is not an impersonal life force.
He is a Real Person.
Who Really gave His life for Ours.

(Titus 3:8c) *they which have believed in God*
Paul is writing to those who truly know him.

A Christian who lives with the conviction that God is truly alive and is personally involved in our lives is the kind of Christian who be the most effectively used of God.

Paul is saying that Really believing in God is evidenced outwardly by Devoted Obedience.

We are to be Engaging In Truly Good Deeds:

(Titus 3:8d) *might be careful to maintain good works.*
We don't serve to attain heaven, but because we are heaven bound we serve!

We re saved by faith alone, but we faith is never alone.

Paul saturated this letter with exhortation to live our faith out loud!

(Titus 2:7) *In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works:*
(Titus 2:14) *purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*
(Titus 3:1) *to be ready to every good work,*
(Titus 3:8) *be careful to maintain good works.*
(Titus 3:14) *And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.*

Remarkable Christianity is More than Proper Doctrine.
Its the proper application of Doctrine through good deeds.

The Kindness and Goodness of God was never meant to be kept to ourselves.

We are to be the franchise operator and distributor of God's Kindness, Love, and Grace to the World.

This represents the character of the Devious we have said, we have surrendered our lives too. (Luke 6:35) *But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.*

(Titus 3:8d) *might be careful to maintain good works.*

"Be Careful" - INTENTIONAL!

Not an ISOLATED Incident!

A Lifestyle of consistent service to other.

Just as we were Ambushed by God's Grace, we should be targeting others with God's Grace and Kindness.

illus: Do you know someone you can always call on for help?

They love helping others.

Happy to help and be a blessing.

They are an exception to the Rule!

Illus: Bumper Sticker;

"Yes this is my truck. NO! I will not help you move."

They are Ready to Engage Others! Are We ?

Are We someone others thinks of as ready to distribute God's Goodness and Kindness?

If we model this, we will make a mark on Eternity for God!
Illus: Like a pebble in a pond. Ripples out to contact all shores of the pond.

Initiating a Truly Exceptional Lifestyle: (Gal 6:10) *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

Every Chance We Get!

If we are people of Creativity, Energy, Willingness, & Initiative, then the first place to be benefited is the church family. (*Household of Faith*)

The Members of this church need your Hands as well as your Heart!

Illus: When Sara and I were dating, I would dress up, make an appointment to come, but I didn't have any responsibility.

I would help out, but I would take personal responsibility, until we were married and living together.

It's time for some folks to stop DATING the church.
It's time to settle down, Join and become Family.

80/20 principle:

What about doing good outside the church?

Illus: Wood River Ill. - Ambushed by God's Goodness.
(Titus 3:8) *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in*

*God might be careful to maintain good works. **These things are good and profitable unto men.***

- Not just the religious elite.

- Not just for those we know, but don't know also.

Illus: The Drama of Grace is not a Broadway play where we sit and watch as a spectator, but don our costume and climb on stage and live out our face on the world's stage.

Illus: In Paul's day, Infanticide was an epidemic.

One Christian started to collect and care for them.

This was an affront to Roman culture: prized the human form.

They were confronted, as a society with their guilt.

The only recourse was to kill this unknown Christian.

Seneca, wrote for the majority opinion, "Weak, Abnormal, & Sickly children are to be drowned at birth."

Today's Medical Ethics have not changed since

Dionysius, in AD 250 wrote about a plague that swept through Alexandria.

"Citizens thrust aside friends, family, or anyone who seemed remotely sick. Dear friends, cast aside upon public roadsides, left to die, unburied, and shown terrible contempt."

Then he wrote about the Christians..

"The believers did not spare themselves but kept each other, and visited the sick with no thought for their own peril."

The Reality of Christianity is demonstrated through Sacrificial Good Deeds.

Are You For Real?

In 2011, NY Times Editorial reported that Evangelical Christians are disproportionately likely to donate their income, go to the front lines, at or abroad, in the battles against hunger, malaria, human trafficking, and genocide. Some of the bravest Christians you meet are these Christians who live their faith. I am not a Christian, but I stand in awe of those I've seen risking their lives in this way."

The Greatest Obstacle to the Gospel, is a Christian who will not live out their faith.

The Greatest Advertisement for Christianity is a Christian who brings his faith to life.

The World says that laboring is demeaning.
The Bible teaches that Laboring is honorable.

The World says that Children are a burden.
The Bible teaches that Children are a blessing from God.

The World says, Love things, Use People, Get what you want.
The Bible Says, Love God, Serve people, get your needs met.

The World says, "I have never seen God."
The Christian says, "Let me show you."

The world is fairly convinced that
**Jobs are Real, Houses are real, Families are real,
Sufferings are real, Money is real, even Chickens are real!**

But God? they are not sure.

When a genuine Christian comes along,
They advertise a Reliable Gospel.
They Surrender to a Personal God.
They Engage in Good Deeds.
They Initiate an exceptional lifestyle.