

Making a Difference in a Wicked World Titus 3:1-7

Introduction:

1. There is no avoiding the fact - we live in a wicked world.
 - At this present time, Satan is operating as the *"god of this world."*

2 Corinthians 4:4

 - In **1 John 5:19**, the Bible says, *"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."*
2. The Bible is clear. As believers, we aren't to fall in love with this world and we aren't to just **blend in** with the world. But on the other hand, we aren't to retreat into our Christian caves and holes and hide out until Jesus comes.
 - We are to **live out** the life God gives us in this present world. **Titus 2:12**
3. **Philippians 2:15** says that we are to shine as lights in the world. We are to make a difference (an impact) on this world as we live our lives.
4. This passage describes the kind of attitude that we (as believers) are to possess as we live in the midst of a wicked world.

First, we are to have an attitude of submission - not defiance. vs. 1-2

1. In verse 1, "principalities, powers and magistrates" is speaking of governmental authority.
 - Paul says, "Remind the believers in the churches to be good citizens in society."
 - We aren't to compromise with this wicked world, but we aren't to intentionally antagonize those in this world system.
 - I've seen Christians get the attitude, "Now that I'm saved, I'm above the laws of the land. I don't have to listen to government officials who aren't even saved. I'm above that - I'm a child of the King of kings."
2. This attitude of defiance is not godly and not according to Scripture. Romans 13 teaches that governmental authority was God's idea, and when you disobey the laws of the land and think you can disregard them, you are disobeying God.
 - The only exception is if they ask you to violate God's commands. **Acts 5:29**
 - He goes on to say in **Romans 13:6**, *"For for this cause pay ye tribute also..."* As a Christian, you enjoy many of the benefits (a military to protect you, police, firefighters, public roads, etc.), so you pay your taxes like everybody else.
3. In verse 2, Paul forbids believers to try to change culture by force. Too many Christians think they are going to reform culture by reclaiming power structures, political parties, or economic structures.
4. Our job is not to Christianize the government, society, or the pagan culture around us. Paul lived under the wicked tyranny of the Roman government, but Paul wasn't decrying the government, their unjust tax system, or the political wickedness of the time. He wasn't trying to lead a revolution and take over power structures.
5. What was he doing? He was preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel has social impact, but not by attempting to take over power structures, but rather purifying the hearts of the people within those structures.

6. **1 Timothy 2:1-2** is our model. Pray for your leaders and demonstrate the transforming power of God's grace in your daily walk with Christ. Through godly living and the preaching of the gospel, we become the conscience of the nation.

Second, we are to have an attitude of humility - not arrogance. vs. 3-4

1. Have you ever met someone who thought they were a cut above everybody else? Unfortunately, many Christians exude this kind of attitude as they deal with others in the world.
2. Paul had a habit of reminding believers what their lives were like before they knew Christ. He does this in verse 3. Can you associate with any of the things on this list? If you were saved at a young age, you can look at this list and see what your life would have been like without Christ.
3. When we were hateful, lustful, and disobedient, the kindness and love of God appeared to us (vs. 4). Aren't you glad God loved you even when you were unlovable?
 - While we were yet sinners, Christ humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. **Romans 5:8; Philippians 2:8**
4. This is why we are to have an attitude of humility in this world. When we are tempted to be arrogant, self-righteous critics of everything and everybody around us (politicians, media, entertainers, co-workers), Paul says, "Remember who you were before Christ."
5. Remember what it was to be lost, to be a part of this wicked world, enslaved to sin and living for yourself.
6. Christian, you will not impact this world for Christ by displaying an arrogant, "better than you" spirit, but by humbly remembering the pit Christ saved you out of.

Third, we are to have an attitude of hope - not defeat. vs. 5-7

1. According to verse 5, God has mercifully saved us. Saved us from what? He has saved us from the sinful bondage in verse 3.
2. We aren't saved and forgiven based on any good works we could muster up. Man can try his very best, but in the final analysis, he is still a lost sinner in need of a Savior.
3. So God, in His mercy, has offered us His very life. God will wash us from our sins and regenerate and renew us with His Spirit, His life. vs. 5
4. It is all a gift that comes to us through Jesus Christ. vs. 6
 - The moment a sinner trusts Christ and His finished work on the cross, he is justified (made righteous and acceptable to God) and made an heir of God, based on the life of God that has been imparted to him. **Galatians 4:6-7**
5. The end of verse 7 says, "...according to the hope of eternal life." The word "hope" means a sure, steadfast, confident expectation. We have eternal life as a present possession.
6. Too many Christians have a "defeatist" mentality. They focus on the wickedness of the world, the world's disdain for Christians, political corruptness, and they get a negative, cynical, defeated attitude.

7. Let me remind you, Christian, we have the hope of eternal life! We are more than conquerors through Christ (**Romans 8:37**). *"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* **1 Corinthians 15:57**
 - John said, *"Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."* **1 John 4:4**
8. Our lives and attitudes should reflect the hope and victory we have in Jesus Christ.

In Conclusion:

1. We will not Christianize the world and make it a holy place. Only Christ can do this, and He **will** at His Second Coming to earth.
2. We will not win this world to Christ by taking over power structures and political kingdoms. Only Christ can do this, and He **will** at His Second Coming.
3. Christian, you are called to live out the grace of God in your daily walk with the attitudes we saw in this text.
4. As we preach the gospel and live a transformed life, we make the gospel credible and believable to a lost world. This is how we make a difference in a wicked world.