

Making a Difference by Doing Good and Meeting Urgent Needs

Message 02 of the series “#For334: Be The Difference”

A. The Apostle Paul left Titus on the island of Crete to train and organize believers so they could make a difference in their sinful culture.

“This letter is from Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. I have been sent to proclaim faith to those God has chosen and to teach them to know the truth that shows them how to live godly lives... I am writing to Titus, my true son in the faith that we share. May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior give you grace and peace. I left you on the island of Crete so you could complete our work there... The people of Crete are all liars, cruel animals, and lazy gluttons.” Titus 1:1, 4-5 (NLT)

Life Application: God has placed us where we are so we can make a difference in our culture.

“Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.” Philippians 2:15 (NLT)

B. Paul reminded Titus that doing good and meeting urgent needs are powerful ways to demonstrate God’s love and make a difference.

1. Doing good to others is NOT optional if we want to live out our faith.

“Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good.” Titus 3:1 (NLT)

“This is a trustworthy saying, and I want you to insist on these teachings so that all who trust in God will devote themselves to doing good.” Titus 3:8 (NLT)

“What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don’t show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, ‘Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well’—but then you don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, faith by itself isn’t enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. Now someone may argue, ‘Some people have faith; others have good deeds.’ But I say, ‘How can you show me your faith if you don’t have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds.’ You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror.” James 2:14-19 (NLT)

2. We do good to others in response to God’s goodness toward us, NOT to earn God’s love or salvation.

“Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But—“When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace he declared us righteous and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.” Titus 3:3-8 (NLT)

“We love because he first loved us.” 1 John 4:19 (NIV)

“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT)

3. When we do good to others, we earn the right to be heard.

“Our people must learn to do good by meeting the urgent needs of others; then they will not be unproductive.” Titus 3:14 (NLT)

“Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.” 1 Peter 2:12 (NIV)

4. We must not let disagreements or foolish arguments distract or discredit us.

“They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone... Do not get involved in foolish discussions about spiritual pedigrees or in quarrels and fights about obedience to Jewish laws. These things are useless and a waste of time. If people are

causing divisions among you, give a first and second warning. After that, have nothing more to do with them. For people like that have turned away from the truth, and their own sins condemn them.”

Titus 3:2, 9-11 (NLT)

C. Four ways we can make a difference by doing good and meeting urgent needs.

1. We can become aware.

“You know the saying, ‘Four months between planting and harvest.’ But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest.” John 4:35 (NLT)

2. We can commit to prayer.

“So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.” Hebrews 4:16 (NLT)

- We can pray for leaders (school board, city, state, national).
- We can pray for healing (physical, emotional, spiritual).
- We can pray for wisdom.
- We can pray for strength.
- We can pray for courage.
- We can pray for opportunities.
- We can pray for the right words to say.

“I took my troubles to the LORD; I cried out to him, and he answered my prayer.” Psalm 120:1 (NLT)

3. We can show we care.

“When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.”

Romans 12:13 (NLT)

- We can help clean up, organize, get started.
- We can help people grieve.
- We can share resources (house, food, time, money, blood, etc.).
- We can help rebuild, start over, reconcile.

“Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others.” 1 Timothy 6:18 (NLT)

4. We can be ready to share.

“...if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it.” 1 Peter 3:15 (NLT)

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news, the good news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel reigns!” Isaiah 52:7 (NLT)

John Schmidt•10-14-18•john@centeringlives.com

Passages of hope and encouragement:

God loves us. Psalm 103:11, Psalm 136, John 3:16, 1 John 4:7-10

God forgives us. Isaiah 1:18, Psalm 103:8-14, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 John 1:9

God is always with us. Psalm 23:4, 34:18, 121:1-8, Matthew 28:20, Romans 8:38-39

God is our refuge and strength. Psalm 3:3, 18:1-3, 32:7, 46:1-7, 91:1-4, Proverbs 18:10

God is bigger than any problem. Matthew 14:24-33, Mark 4:35-41, Luke 1:37, John 16:33

God answers prayer. Matthew 7:7-11, Luke 18:1-8, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Peter 5:7

God will provide. Psalm 103:5, Matthew 6:25-34, Philippians 4:19, James 1:17

God can bring good from painful situations. Romans 5:3-4, 8:28, 2 Corinthians 1:8-10, James 1:2-4

We live in a fallen, broken world now, but heaven will be perfect. Romans 8:20-23, Hebrews 13:14, Revelation 21:3-5

CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever helped someone learn a hobby? How did you teach them?
2. In Titus 1:1-2, 5, Paul reminds Titus what his mission is and why he was left on Crete. Paul challenged him with two tasks. What were they?
3. Have you ever heard the statement, "Disciples are not made by accident"? In your opinion, what does this statement mean?
4. Read Titus 3:1. Why was it important for Paul to teach the believers to be submissive to the Roman empire? In our current political climate, how is this verse important to us today?
5. Read Titus 3:2-3, 8-11. Based on your personal observations, why is it better to be known for what we do versus what we are against?
6. At the end of the letter to Titus, Paul drops a heavy thought in 3:14: "Our people must learn to do good by meeting the urgent needs of others; then they will not be unproductive."
 - How is a person taught to do good?
 - What does it look like when someone meets the urgent needs of others?
 - Why does Paul want all Believers to be productive?
7. What are some ways you can help those in urgent need? Examples: Hurricane Michael, a house fire, a broken down vehicle, a medical emergency, or a broken relationship.