

How Should We Then Live?
The Church in a Pagan Nation Pt 2
Titus 3:1-3

New Testament churches were small islands in a sea of paganism. You see, they existed in an absolutely pagan culture. The Gentile world knew nothing about the Bible. It knew nothing about biblical morality. It knew nothing about Christian values. It knew nothing about a godly sense of mercy or justice. It knew nothing about a proper understanding of freedom within the framework of moral code. It was purely and totally and comprehensively and utterly pagan. These churches were born them in a culture with no Christian influence. There was no cultural Christianity. There was no Christian influence on social behavior or on the belief systems. The Gentile world was literally engulfed in idolatry, all of it designed by Satan. Their cultures were totally controlled by a Satanic agenda worked out through utterly and totally depraved human beings involved in worshiping demons.

Paul knew what it was like to live in a thoroughly pagan culture, far more pagan than what we experience because in our country there is a great force of truly regenerated people. And he knew what it was to be in a world of abusive deadly inequality and slavery. He knew what it was to be in a culture of tyrants, petty dictators who were murderous. He knew what it was to be under abusive leadership. He knew what it was to see a society engulfed up to its ears in sexual perversion, the breakdown of the family. We read in some ancient documents about people who had 26 and 27 wives and or husbands, depending on the situation. The world was literally flooded with idols, petty gods. People were heavily taxed and the tax collectors were extortionists who took what wasn't justly due them. If anybody complained they would take their life as soon as look at them. And the world was full of terrorists, people who were going around executing those who had done something against them. Even in

the Jewish world there were the Zealots, the Sacarei(?), the guys who carried the daggers and came up behind the authorities in Israel and stabbed them to death, terrorism was everywhere.

So the churches then were in direct opposition and contrast to everything within the framework of cultural life.

It was an ugly world. And Paul never ever says in any of his letters, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, we need to moralize our pagan culture. We need to impact our culture some how." No, all he ever said was, "We need to evangelize it." And he wasn't calling for any kind of protest. He wasn't calling for any kind of contention or any kind of war against the existing mentality, he was calling for the preaching of the gospel that transforms the life. But it wasn't just the preaching, it was the living within the church and outside the church that gave a platform that made the message believable. You see, what God had done for the Christians in Crete He wanted to do for a lot of other folks, too. And the conduct of the believers there was crucial to that saving work, that saving enterprise.

Given that obvious understanding, we might assume if we listen to Christians today in America that the early church should have made its primary agenda to impact culture, to try to get the various nations into which the church had been born adopt some kind of politically Christian agenda. Somehow the early church, some would seemingly want to tell us, should have put together some kind of biblical morality, some kind of biblical value system and worked very hard to get the nations to adopt that biblical moral code. However, the early church never did that. It had nothing to do with that. It did not concern itself with whatever the moral code of the nation was. It was not concerned about social

behavior. It was not trying to influence culture politically or judicially or legislatively. The early church existed to do one thing and that was to reach lost people with the gospel. That was the beginning and the end of their purpose and that is still the church's purpose, that is still our only purpose, that is why we are in the world.

It has been something of a nice thing to live in a country like America which has had such strong Christian influence. I mean, we are somewhat privileged to be living in the western world and in all of the western world to be living in that part of the western world, the English-speaking part of the western world, and particularly the United States where Christianity has had such an influence in the past 150 plus years on our culture. But that isn't how it is in most cases. Certainly through the history of the church that was not the case and it is not even the case now in all parts of the world, for several hundred years churches have existed in places like India that are utterly and totally and comprehensively pagan and other parts of Asia, many many of the nations of Asia, of course, have had Christian missionaries for years and years but their culture is still completely and comprehensively pagan. There is no element of Christianity that is involved in their cultures from a legislative standpoint, from a judicial standpoint, from a religious standpoint, from an educational standpoint.

It is not necessarily important that the church somehow impact its culture to make it superficially Christian. That is not our goal. That is not our agenda. That is not our purpose. It's been a nice thing for those of us who live in America to have had Christianity influence our life as a nation...and we were a nation founded by people who wanted Christian freedom and they wrote things in the early documents of our nation to preserve Christianity, at least as much as they could, so that our culture has been influenced by the Bible, by Christian values and Christian standards. And those things have become an important component in our society.

Now we all know that's changing and it's changing very rapidly and it's changing right before our eyes. We are nearly fully secular and whatever remains to be done to make us wholly secular, we are rapidly doing it. America is abandoning its Christian influences as fast as it possibly can. And we are all being faced with some very disturbing changes. Those of us who are Christians don't like this. We have sort of assumed that a nation should be as Christian as it possibly could be, although that assumption is not certainly a biblical one. We like it that way and now it's changing and it tends to make us sad and even angry. We watch biblical standards being replaced systematically by anarchy, by total moral freedom without any seeming moral limits and this pervasive mentality of equal rights that makes everybody into an egotist demanding his own rights, whatever they are deemed to be.

And as Christians watch this demise, they often react with anger and fear. For example, in February of 1990, Pat Robertson held a meeting after the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C., and that meeting was designed to call for the formation, he said, of a Christian anti-defamation league. He said, and I quote him, "You've called us fools so we'll call you bigots. Christians are tired of being stepped on and the time has come to stand up for Christians' rights," end quote.

Now was he declaring war on a non-Christian culture? A Christian anti-defamation league? I wonder if you could get Stephen to join? Or Paul? You call us fools, we'll call you bigots...that sounds like retaliation, that sounds like vengeance, that sounds like we're declaring war in a non-Christian society. Is that what we are to do? Are they the enemy? Are they to be hated? Are they to be fought against? On the other hand, aren't they the people we're supposed to love and reach?

Frequently on Christian television programs you will hear various hosts and not the least of which is Paul Crouch on our own local TBN hurling abuse at non-Christians in the media who question

the integrity of Christian broadcasting. These abusive statements against the Christian media sometime involve cursing them or consigning them to the judgment of God or even wishing that God would take their life. Is the non-Christian media our enemy? Are we supposed to be attacking the system of government? Are we supposed to be attacking the human institutions and forcing them politically or by intimidation into some biblical morality?

In the summer of 1991 there was something called "The Joshua Project." And they promoted it very widely with full-page ads in Christian publications. And The Joshua Project aimed, quote, "At taking back the culture." Now that again sounds like a declaration of war. That sounds like some kind of conflict, some kind of revolt. Somebody's got it and we've got to go get it, a sort of a crusade mentality, if you want to go back in history and look at the Crusades. The conference project that I mentioned described its purpose, I quote, "To sound the alarm, to instill the vision, to establish the leadership that will enable us to reclaim the heart of our culture," end quote.

Now that all sounds very noble. But is it? Is that our agenda? Are we to make sure that through legislation and intimidation and through the judicial process by going to court and suing and whatever else are we to do through politicizing and campaigning this particular agenda of taking back the culture? Is this what we're all about? Are we to create a superficial Christian culture? David Rambo responding to that, he's the president of the Christian and Missionary Alliance says, and I quote, "God expects us to be salt in the world but let's do it in the context of God's redeeming love for all men and women. We must focus on the gospel, proclaiming it winsomely to secular people rather than alienating them on matters that are not central to our message," end quote.

John Seale, an author writes, "A politicized faith not only blurs our priorities but weakens our loyalties." That is a very insightful statement. It both blurs our priorities and weakens our loyalty. Our

priority is to preach the gospel, our loyalty is to Jesus Christ and His Kingdom alone. He went on to say, "Our primary citizenship is not on earth but in heaven. Though few evangelicals would deny this truth in theory, the language of our spiritual citizenship frequently gets wrapped in the red, white and blue. Rather than acting as resident aliens of a heavenly kingdom, too often we sound like and act like resident apologists for a Christian America. Unless we reject the false reliance on the illusion of Christian America, evangelicalism will continue to distort the gospel and thwart a genuine biblical identity," end quote.

If we consume our time and our money and our energy and our thoughts and our plans and our efforts in trying to make a Christian America, we will distort the gospel and thwart a genuinely biblical identity. He is exactly right. In fact, he went on to say, "American evangelicalism is now covered by layers and layers of historically shaped attitudes that obscure our original biblical core," end quote.

If you say to the average person "What is a Christian?", how many of those layers are they going to have to search through to find the reality? We must reject our confused loyalties. We must reject our compound concerns with regard to the passing world. We must reject all efforts to externally change culture and we must get on about doing what we're supposed to be doing. Billy Graham said, "So long as the gospel remains the gospel and the church the church, so long as the church of God is in need of reformation, the world of mission and one last person of salvation there will always be a future for those who seek to define themselves by the gospel itself," end quote. He is right. We cannot afford to weaken our spiritual mission, we cannot afford to obscure our priority of gospel proclamation, we cannot afford to become confused about which kingdom we belong to by getting involved in efforts to change cultural norms, cultural morals, cultural values, cultural behavior.

And certainly we can't get so engulfed in that that we become the enemies of the very people we seek to win to Christ. We can and we must reject sin as sin but we do not engage in defamation and destruction and efforts to superficially change a culture. The task of evangelizing the lost calls for focus on that very thing.

Crucial then to the effort of evangelization is this entire text of chapters 2 and 3 in Titus because here he is calling for Titus to teach the churches how to live. The issue of evangelization is not cleverness and gimmickry, it's not entertainment, it's not marketing strategy. It's not figuring out what the cultural hot buttons are and punching them all. That is not it. All of the money and time and energy and effort going to that is just so much uselessness. People are saved because a sovereign God redeems them upon the hearing of a powerful testimony of the gospel. That's how salvation works. It's not a matter of gimmickry or technique or whatever, ingenuity. Most churches think that that's the way you reach the world, Paul is saying the way you reach the world is to demonstrate what a saved person looks like. And it's so stark and it's so dramatic and it's so marvelous and it's so exciting and it's so unique and it's so different and so compelling that people come to find out whether God will save them the way He saved those whose lives they've seen. That's evangelization God's way.

So if we are to know how to behave in a pagan society, first of all Paul says, we must remember our duty and it's very clear. We went over that in detail. And the reason is why? Because God desires to save. And our lives are the platform on which salvation is proclaimed believably. It's the same thing we saw in 1 Timothy 2. You are to be under the king and all those in authority over you and you are to pray for them and you are to live a quite and peaceable life and a godly life and a wise and careful and thoughtful life and to be a good citizen. Why? Because God desires all men to be saved. And what makes the gospel

believable is not fighting Christians, not protesting Christians, not politicizing Christians, not Christians who want to start an anti-Christian defamation league, not Christians who want to damn and curse and consign to hell the media. What makes Christianity attractive is winsomeness, is people who are covered, as it were, in the righteousness of Christ and who manifest His love

CONTEXT

Listen, before you get slanderous, before you get angry at those in authority in your country and those around you who are in sin and those who have an immoral agenda, before you get hostile and slanderous and angry and before you court those kinds of emotions that lead to venomous kinds of acts and thoughts of vengeance, before you become inconsiderate, before you fight for the cultural Christian agenda, before you attack the ungodly and attack the unsaved, Paul says remember once you were one of them. Did you forget? Did you forget? Did you forget that you used to be like that and you couldn't do anything about it? And there you have in verse 3 another one of those lists that Paul loves to give, you find them in Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 6, Galatians 5, Ephesians 4, one of those lists that defines the universal and comprehensive depth of human fallenness. All of us were like that. Paul himself was a blasphemer, he says in 1 Timothy 1, and a persecutor, and a violent aggressor, but he did it ignorantly in unbelief. As if to say, I did it because I didn't know any better.

You look at the gay agenda and you watch the homosexual pride parade and you listen to all the lesbian advocacy and you see all of the Playboy mentality and the filth and the pornography of our time and you watch this agenda being pushed on the social institutions and taught to your children, everything from sex education to passing out birth control devices and all of the stuff going on and something in you becomes hostile to all of that and you've got to stop and realize that the people doing that are doing it in utter ignorance. Look at verse 3, you were once foolish. What

does that mean? They lacked understanding. They are completely ignorant, anoetos, without knowledge, without understanding. They don't know what they're doing. **Ephesians 4:18** says basically the same thing, that the Gentiles are darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them because of the hardness of their hearts. They're dark, they're ignorant. The god of this world has blinded their minds which compounds the darkness. And naturally they cannot understand the things of God, says Paul in his letter to the Corinthians.

So what do you expect? As soon as you knock the pinions out from under cultural Christianity and there aren't any restraints, their ignorance is going to take over. As soon as there's no compelling biblical criteria, they're left to their own devices and this is what you should expect. This is unbelievers acting like unbelievers. This is depravity manifesting itself. I suppose you thought that somehow the more intelligent people became, the more likely they were to approximate a biblical morality...wrong, absolutely wrong. If you want a good insight into that, pick up a book written by Paul Johnson called The Intellectuals. He is probably the foremost historian in our world today of western civilization and you will go through the most unbelievable morass of filth in reading about the intellectual philosophical architects of contemporary western culture and you will find out that those men who were smart enough to design the whole culture in which you live were the most debauched human beings on the face of the earth...and their lives would make a black mark on a piece of coal. Intelligence and education has nothing to contribute to morality.

Now I think...we're shocked, I think, when we look at institutions of higher education because we assume there is some...something so reasonable about biblical morality, so intelligent about biblical morality that smart people who study carefully would come to wise conclusions. But they cannot override their depravity. They're ignorant no matter how educated, no matter how many Ph.Ds

they have, they're blind and ignorant and darkened. What do we expect from them? Nothing more than what their own depravity could engineer. (copied from gty.org)

Review

1 Submission and Obedience

Lesson

2 Readiness for Good Works

v1 to be ready for every good work.

Ready (2092) (**hetoimos** from an old noun **heteos** = fitness) means ready, prepared, in a state of readiness.

TDNT says that

The clear meaning of this word group is preparation both in the active sense of “making ready” and in the passive of “readiness,” “ability” or “resolution.” (Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Eerdmans)

Here in Titus 3, Paul says that Titus is to continually remind the Cretan Christians to continually be (“be” is in the present tense =

this is to be their habitual practice, their very lifestyle) in a state of readiness, fitness and preparedness (**hetoimos**) as good Christian citizens to carry out good deeds.

As good citizens, believers must also "be **ready** to do whatever is good"--prepared and willing to participate in activities that promote the welfare of the community. They must not stand coldly aloof from praiseworthy enterprises of government but show good public spirit, thus proving that Christianity is a constructive force in society. (*Ibid*)

Why are believers to be "**ready**", "ripe", "primed " or "prepared", able to respond without delay or hesitation? In short this attitude equips us for every **good deed**.

Our third major duty toward society is to have a readiness "for every good deed." Here the apostle Paul is not referring to some minimal, reluctant adherence to doing what we already know is right, but to a sincere willingness and heart preparation to do good works to everyone, as we have the opportunity. No matter how antagonistic the people around us may be, we are to be kind servants to them when their lives intersect with ours.

"So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith" (*Galatians 6:10*).

God wants us to be recognized for what we might call "consistent and aggressive goodness"—good deeds done out of love for the Lord and love for other people.

R. L. Dabney adds that...

The gospel teaches us that while believers are not rewarded on account of their works, they are rewarded according to their works...While our works are naught as

a ground of merit for justification, they are all-important as evidences that we are justified.

Spurgeon put it this way...

I would not give much for your religion unless it can be seen. Lamps do not talk, but they do shine.

3 Respectful in Speech

v² to speak evil of no one,

To malign no one (KJV = **speak evil of no man**) - To which Spurgeon remarks...

Oh, how necessary is this exhortation even to this day!

Malign (987) (**blasphemeo** derived from **bláx** = sluggish, slow, stupid + **phémē** = rumor, fame) OR MORE LIKELY (derived from **bláptō** = to hurt, injure, harm + **phémē** from **phēmí** = to speak) means literally **to speak to harm** and in general therefore means to bring into ill repute and so to slander, to **defame** (to harm the reputation of by libel or slander), speak evil of, to **rail at** (revile or scold in harsh, insolent, or abusive language and rail stresses an unrestrained berating), to speak **calumny** (noun form = a misrepresentation intended to blacken another's reputation = the act of uttering false charges or misrepresentations maliciously calculated to damage another's reputation), to **calumniate** (verb form = to utter maliciously false statements, charges, or imputations about - calumniate imputes malice to the speaker and falsity to the assertions)

Next, we have the scriptural duty of not maligning anyone, not even those unbelievers who are most antagonistic toward biblical standards.

Titus 3:2 begins with Paul's command "to malign no one," and refers to cursing, slandering, and treating with contempt. In fact the Greek term rendered "malign" is the one from which we derive the English word *blasphemy*. We can never use such speech with a righteous motive.

It is sad that many believers today speak scornfully of politicians and other public figures. When they do that, they actually manifest a basic disregard of their responsibility toward authority and hinder God's redemptive plan. In another of Paul's pastoral letters, he urges us to pray for everyone's salvation, even for that of those who occupy official positions of authority (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

First Timothy chapter 2 verse 1, here was Timothy in Ephesus, another corrupt idolatrous city. He says to Timothy, "I want to urge you that entreaties and prayers and petitions and thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity." Listen to that. We're to be tranquil, that's peaceful, quiet, godly, dignified. And what is our attitude toward the President and the Congress and the judges, the kings and everybody in authority? We pray for them. This is what God wants us to do, to pray for them constantly, making petition, prayers, entreaties for those in authority that God will work in their lives, that God will save them because God, it says in verses 3 and 4, is a saving God who has sent, verses 5 and 6, Jesus Christ to provide salvation. God wants to save and we want to pray for their salvation. Don't malign them, pray for their salvation.

Literally [Titus 3:2](#) reads "*no one continually malign*". Clearly "**no one**" refers first to God but also includes men, whether believers are not, even those who contribute most to the assault on biblical standards! Our Lord Jesus has set the example for us to follow in His steps, for even

"while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously." (see [note 1 Peter 2:23](#)).

In sum, even while contending against the worst of sins committed by the worst of sinners, we must never stoop to maligning those whose sin we detest.

J. Vernon McGee explains "'malign no one" by adding that "we are to malign no one, and we are not to repeat gossip. It has been said that you can't believe everything you hear today, but you can repeat it! That is what he is talking about here—we are not to repeat what we hear. Many evil reports are passed from person to person without even a shred of evidence that the report is true. Another old saying is that some people will believe anything if it is whispered to them!" (McGee, J V: [Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

Transformed lives are one of the most eloquent testimonies of the power of the Gospel. When we malign others we give a poor testimony of the saving power of the Gospel. Paul writing to the saints at Ephesus exhorted them to

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and **slander** (blasphemia) be put away from you, along with all malice. ([Eph 4:31-note](#)).

You are writing a Gospel,
A chapter each day,
By the deeds that you do

And the words that you say.

Men read what you write,
Whether faithful or true:
Just what is the Gospel
According to you?

--- Author unknown

4 Peaceful and Gentle

v2 to be peaceable, gentle,

Be (einai) is **present tense** calling for an uncontentious spirit to be the Cretan Christian's continual practice or habit of life (only possible for a believer who is filled with/controlled by the Holy Spirit).

Lenski remarks that people who are ever fighting are wretched citizens and neighbors.

Such a disposition mars the influence of Christian people. Be continually refusing to engage in quarrels and conflicts.

Uncontentious (269) (**amachos** from **a** = without + **mache** = battle) according to Vine originally meant "invincible" (incapable of being conquered, overcome or subdued) but then came to mean a "non fighter", one who is reluctant to fight and who is not always looking for a fight (especially of a verbal nature).

Not quarrelsome (not apt or disposed to quarrel in an often petty manner = stresses an ill-natured readiness to fight without good

cause). This person is **not contentious** and so does not exhibit an often perverse and wearisome tendency (even a fondness) for arguing, quarreling and disputing. You usually know who these folks are!

Wuest says that **amachos**

describes a person who does not go about with a chip on his shoulder. (Wuest, K. S. *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*: Eerdmans)

Paul goes on in verse 2 to mention two more Christian duties. First, he reminds us that we must be friendly and peaceful toward the lost, not belligerent and quarrelsome. In the ungodly, postmodern **world** we live in, it's easy to condemn those who contribute to the culture's demise and write them off as corrupt sinners who will never change. If God's love for the **world** was so broad and intense that His Son died for a multitude of sinners (**John 3:16**), how can we who have received that redeeming grace be harsh and unloving toward those who have not yet received it? Until God is pleased to save an individual, he or she is going to behave like an unbeliever, and it is wrong for us, meanwhile, to treat them contemptuously for acting according to their nature.

Matthew Henry adds that Christians are to be "no fighters, either with hand or tongue, no quarrelsome contentious persons, apt to give or return ill and provoking language. A holy contending there is for matters good and important, and in a manner suitable and becoming, not with wrath nor injurious violence. Christian must follow the things that are conducive to peace, and that in a peaceful, not a rough and boisterous and hurtful way, but as becomes the servants of the God of peace and love (**Ro 12:19-note**). The glory of a man is to pass over a transgression; it is the duty of a reasonable, and therefore certainly of a Christian man, whose reason is improved and advanced by religion; such may

not, and will not, presently fall foul on one who has offended him, but, like God, will be slow to anger, and ready to forgive. Contention and strife arise from men's lusts, and exorbitant unruly passions, which must be curbed and moderated, not indulged; and Christians need to be reminded of these things, that they do not by a wrathful contentious spirit and behaviour displease and dishonour God and discredit religion, promoting feuds in the places where they live." (Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible)

Secondly, Paul reminds us that we must be "gentle," a word in the Greek that means being fair, moderate, and forbearing toward others. Some have translated this term "sweet reasonableness," a definition denoting an attitude that does not hold grudges but gives others the benefit of the doubt.

Gentle (1933) (**epieikes** from **epí** = upon, on [intensifies meaning] + **eikós** = fair, equitable - but see [note by Vincent below](#)) is a Greek word that is difficult to translate. This word includes the ideas of **gentle** (free from harshness, sternness, or violence), **forbearing** (holding oneself back from especially with an effort; controlling oneself when provoked), yielding, **equity** (freedom from bias or favoritism), **lenient** (mild and tolerant disposition, exerting a soothing or easing influence), unassertive, fair, fitting, appropriate, suitable, proper.

Marvin Vincent says **epieikes** means "not unduly rigorous, not making a determined stand for one's just due."

When applied to authorities (**epieikes**) denotes indulgence, equity, lenience. It also denotes a humble, patient steadfastness which is able to submit to injustice, disgrace, and maltreatment without hatred or malice, trusting God in spite of it all...it is reasonableness in judging." (Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek NT)

5 Consideration for Others

v2 ***showing all humility to all men.***

Other translations - showing all meekness (KJV), showing all humility (NKJV), to show true humility toward all men (NIV), to be...polite to all people (ICB), they should...show courtesy to everyone (GWT), show unqualified courtesy toward everybody (Amplified)

As **Spurgeon** reminds us "Meekness and gentleness are two of the ornaments of our faith. I would that some professed Christians would understand that unholy contentiousness is not after the mind of Christ, it is not according to that gracious command, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls." No, the Christian must be willing to suffer wrongfully, and to bear it in patience; he is never to be one who renders evil for evil, or railing for railing.

Showing (1731) (**endeíknumi** from preposition **en** = in, to + **deíknumi** = to show) means to point out, to demonstrate, to put on display, to prove, to show proof, to show forth, to show oneself, to give visible proof, to show in anything and implies an appeal to facts. The preposition (**in**) in the compound suggests more than the simplest demonstration. It is like laying the index finger, as it were, on the object.

Consideration (4240) (**prautes**) describes the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance. **Prautes** is a quality of gentle friendliness - gentleness, meekness (as strength that accommodates to another's weakness), consideration, restrained patience, patient trust in the midst of difficult circumstances.

In Greek literature **prautes** was sometimes used of a feigned, hypocritical concern for others that is motivated by self-interest. But in the New Testament it is always used of genuine consideration for others.

Prautes denotes the humble and gentle attitude which expresses itself, in particular, in a patient submissiveness to offense, free from malice and desire for revenge...controlled strength, the ability to bear reproaches and slights without bitterness and resentment; the ability to provide a soothing influence on someone who is in a state of anger, bitterness and resentment against life...the word indicates an obedient submissiveness to God and His will, with unwavering faith and enduring patience displaying itself in a gentle attitude and kind acts toward others, and this often in the face of opposition. It is the restrained and obedient powers of the personality brought into subjection and submission to God's will by the Holy Spirit (see note [Gal 5:23](#))...the opposite of arrogance...the word stands in contrast to the term *orge* (wrath, anger as a state of mind)...It denotes the humble and gentle attitude which expresses itself, in particular, in a patient submissiveness to offense, a freedom from malice and desire for revenge...mildness, patient trust in the midst of difficult circumstances. (2Cor 10:1) (Compiled from the Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek NT)

Prautes was used in secular Greek writings to describe a soothing wind, a healing medicine, and a colt that had been broken. In each instance, there is power for a wind can become a storm, too much medicine can kill and a horse can break loose. Thus **prautes** describes **power under control**.

The final duty in the apostle Paul's list of reminders to believers is that they should be "showing every consideration for all men" ([1 Timothy 2:2](#)). The word rendered "consideration" always has a New Testament meaning of genuine concern for others. Scripture clearly describes Jesus as the One supremely characterized by humility, or consideration for everyone—the same trait that should identify His followers. Jesus used the word to depict Himself when He told His followers, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am *gentle* and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls" ([Matthew 11:29](#), emphasis added).

All our dealings with unbelievers should display that kind of attitude, as the apostle Peter also wrote: "Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence" ([1 Peter 3:15](#)). Sincere, heartfelt consideration to all men is foundational for our Christian walk in a **pagan** society.

Our duty as we relate to an increasingly secular and ungodly culture is not to lobby for certain rights, the implementation of a Christian agenda, or the reformation of the government. Rather, God would have us continually to remember Paul's instructions to Titus and live them out as we seek to demonstrate His power and grace that can regenerate sinners. Changing people's hearts one individual at a time is the only way to bring meaningful, lasting change to our communities, our nation, and even the whole world.

(Adapted from a [qtv.org](#) blog on Church in a pagan world)

It has been said that to often are rearranging the chairs on the Titanic.

I would like to take that analogy and carry it a little further.

Imagine that you along with a number of other people boarded the Titanic with previous knowledge, by the maker that the ship had some fatal flaws, and because you were granted special privilege to see into the future thru a special book, that the ship would hit an iceberg and sink on its maiden voyage....

you along with the others that know this board the ship, and bring with you materials, and flotation devices enough to save all that are on the ship.

But as the ship departs and continues on its voyage, some of the people who know of the demise of the ship, and brought the materials to make the flotation devices begin to really enjoy the ship and all of its wonderful attractions. Their focus becomes the ship instead of the future demise and destruction coming. As time goes on, many forget about what's coming and forget about the materials we brought on board. They begin to complain about the service, the food and the accommodations, some even think that we would do better if we had other men in leadership of this vessel, after all who would drive a ship into an iceberg.

As time goes on, we spend more and more of time attempting to make our ride on the ship more comfortable, we forget that we should have been spending our time building the flotation devices, but we believe we got plenty of time and even perhaps maybe that book is wrong about the future of this ship. After all not even God can sink it. right???

So we spend our time talking of the changes needed in leadership, the problems with the ship, the strange, and sinful people on board, how dare they act like that we even spend time rearranging the chairs on the Titanic and then suddenly, the ship hits the iceberg.... We run about in panic, trying to get our material and build the floatation devices, but it is too late. Too late for you to work, too late for the ship and too late for all the people. YOU SPENT YOUR TIME CONCERNED ABOUT THE WRONG THING.