

Sermon Brief, Important Cross References and Quotes, Helpful Links, Fill in the Blank Listening Aid, “How Well was I Listening Questions”

August 29, 2021

Titus 3:4-7: A Needy Church

Sermon (Not so) Brief:

1. What kind of church does God want us to be?
2. We have a culture.
3. In other words, we have things we believe and we have a way we live.
4. Ray Ortland talks about gospel doctrine and gospel culture, and it's important we get both right.
5. It's possible to believe something and not have a culture that matches up with what you believe.
6. In Galatians 2 Paul has to confront Peter for just that. Peter believed in justification by faith alone, but at that moment, the way of life he was promoting didn't match up with justification by faith alone.
7. We need good doctrine as a church and we need a culture that matches up with our doctrine.
8. In Titus 2, Paul puts it a little more positively. He tells Titus, “But as for you speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.” There are believers in Crete coming from a bad culture and Titus needs to help them think about how to live in a way that corresponds to what they believe.
9. And so over the next couple of months I want us to look at the Bible and think about some specific ways gospel doctrine should impact our church culture here at Cornerstone. I picked out a number of words that I am praying will so characterize our church, the way we think, the way we act, the way we feel, the way we go about things at Cornerstone Bible, that they sort of become our church culture and we are going to start with one of the most basic today by talking about being a “needy” church.
10. What kind of people go to that church? That's a needy church. Those people really see themselves as needy people. Another way to say it, I want to talk about being a humble church. But I like the word needy, just because it is a little more surprising. We don't think of that as a good value normally. We like to think of ourselves as self-reliant. We don't mind people thinking we need help, but we definitely mind them thinking we are helpless.
11. Which is a problem in many different ways. If we feel self-sufficient. If we have such a hard time acknowledging or admitting our neediness. First of all, it's a problem in our relationship with God. One of the biggest barriers to knowing and enjoying and serving God is a sense of self-sufficiency. You show me a person who has a high opinion of themselves, and I will show you a person who isn't growing in their relationship with God.
12. Bottom line, if we view ourselves as fundamentally good and capable people, we are denying and living in a way that is the opposite of the very basics of what the Bible teaches about how salvation works.
13. If you take your Bible and turn to Titus 3, I want to think about what the Bible teaches about salvation. In verses 4-7, Paul gives us one of the most complete statements on how salvation works in the entire Bible. He talks about our need for salvation, the

means of salvation, the blessings we experience as a result of salvation, and we'll talk about all that another time, I am sure, but today I just want you to look at what he says about the SOURCE OF SALVATION.

14. Where does salvation come from?
15. Three words.
16. Verse 5.
17. He saved us.
18. That's the main idea Paul's wanting us to understand and it's one of the main ideas of the Bible actually. This is Christianity 101. As someone has explained, "Nothing in your salvation starts with you. Everything in your salvation depends on God. God alone is the sinner's hope of salvation. The only thing you contribute to your salvation is the sin from which you need to be saved."
19. Which of course is a stunning truth that should change everything about us. If you want to pick one doctrine that should change our church culture, it's this one, and yet so often it doesn't change church cultures.
20. You think of so many problems in church cultures, and they are often all symptoms really, of how hard it is for us to continue believing what the Bible teaches about our neediness.
21. We know we are needy, but we don't always feel needy.
22. Which is why I want us to look at this passage and remember. Because Paul gives us four proofs here that the source of salvation has to be God, and I know these are familiar, but you are going to have to preach them to yourself, because these are four places we need to look to remind ourselves of how needy we really are.
23. **First, look at who you were. Second, look at what you deserved. Third, look at how God responded. And fourth, look at why He responded the way He did.**
24. We are a needy church. We are this needy. God has to save us. We can't save ourselves. And that should change us. How? What does a needy church culture look like?
25. One, a needy church is a hopeful church. Second, a needy church is a humble church. Third a needy church is a merciful church.
26. There are two evil extremes. One is to treat sin like it's no big deal, but the other is to be so "rigorous that every little fault is enough to make us speak in tones of thunder." You see people who are easily offended and are so hard on people and who are getting upset all the time at other people's errors? John Calvin says, "there is never any excessive rigour without cruelty, nor cruelty without pride. Whoever despises his neighbors prizes himself too much." And is denying the gospel by the way he lives.
27. If absolutely every single good thing we have as a church is a result of God's grace, then how can we not show that grace to others.
28. We believe he saved us. But has it changed the way we live? Our culture? We are a needy church, but do we act like a needy church? Is it clear when people look at our way of living, our pattern of life, the way we relate to others, the way we relate to God, the way we speak, the way we respond to sinners, that we are a needy church?

Important Cross References:

1. Galatians 2:11-14
2. Titus 2:1
3. Romans 3:9-20

4. "You show me a person who has a high opinion of himself as a pattern and I will show you a person who isn't growing in his relationship with God."

Helpful Links:

1. [Gospel Doctrine plus Gospel Culture equals ?](#)
2. [How to Build a Gospel Culture in your Church](#)
3. [Being Needy is Not a Fault, It's A Design](#)
4. [In Need of Help](#)
5. [Help and Be Helped](#)
6. [You are Fooling Yourself](#)

PowerPoint Presentation [Link](#) With Fill in the Blanks [Link](#)

Fill in the Blank Listening Aid:

- I. Introduction
 - A. I want to talk about being a _____ church.
 - B. If we view ourselves as _____ and _____ people, we are denying and living in a way that is the opposite of the very basics of what the Bible teaches about how salvation works.
- II. In Titus 3:4-7, Paul's explaining the doctrine of salvation.
 - A. He talks about our need for salvation, the means of salvation, the blessings we experience as a result of salvation.
 - B. But today, I want to look at this passage and notice what Paul says about the _____ of salvation. Where does salvation come from?
 - C. Paul gives us his answer at the beginning of verse 5. It's just three words, and yet, these are three of the most important words in the entire Bible.
 1. He _____ us.
 - D. Nothing in your salvation starts with _____. Everything in your salvation depends on _____. God alone is the sinner's hope of salvation.
 - E. We are the _____. God is the _____.
 - F. Which of course is a stunning truth that should change everything about us, but so often doesn't, because it is hard for us to continue to believe what the Bible teaches about our neediness.
 - G. We know we are needy, but we don't _____ needy.

III. Paul gives us four proofs the source of our salvation has to be God, and these are truths you have to preach to yourself. They are four places we need to look to remind ourselves of how needy we really are.

- A. First look back at ____ you were.
- B. Second look at _____ you deserved.
- C. Third look at ____ God responded.
- D. Fourth look at _____ God responded the way He did.

IV. Conclusion

- A. We are this _____ as a church. God has to save us. We can't save ourselves. How should this impact our way of life? What does a needy church culture look like?
 - 1. A needy church is a _____ church.
 - 2. A needy church is a _____ church.
 - 3. A needy church is a merciful church.
- B. Do we have the right gospel _____ at Cornerstone? And do we have a church _____ that matches up? Is it clear when people look at our way of living, our pattern of life, the way we relate to others, the way we relate to God, the way we speak, the way we respond to sinners, that we are a _____ church?

How Well Was I Listening Questions

That's not a great name for this section. But, I thought you could use these questions for your children. I also realized that it might be helpful for you and not just for your children. So, here are some questions you should be able to answer after listening to the message. (If you are using this with your children, please recognize that obviously not all these questions will be suitable for every age. You might have to come up with your own that will more fit their level of understanding. I tried to include a little of both. But if you can answer these questions, then you definitely will be able to do that as well.)

- 1. What is the topic we are talking about at church right now?
- 2. What is gospel culture and why is it important?
- 3. Is it possible to believe something and not have a culture or way of living that matches up with what you believe? What do you think?
- 4. In what passage in the Bible do we read about Paul confronting Peter and why did he confront him there?

5. What does Paul tell Titus that he has to speak to the believers in Crete?
6. Today we specifically talked about wanting to be what kind of church?
7. What are some synonyms for this word?
8. What is the opposite of feeling needy?
9. Why is feeling self-sufficient and self-reliant a problem?
10. How is thinking of yourself as a good and capable person the opposite of what the Bible teaches about salvation?
11. Specifically what does Paul tell us about the source of salvation in Titus 3:5?
12. If God is the only one who can save us, what does that tell us about ourselves?
13. Even though we know we were so desperate, only God could save us, it's sometimes hard to continue to believe that we really are that needy. What are some examples that demonstrate we don't really always feel as needy as the Bible says we are?
14. If understanding how needy you are is so important, and yet you don't always feel needy, what can you do?
15. In this passage Paul gives us four proofs that salvation has to be from God. These proofs are places you can look when you don't feel as needy as you really are. What are the four proofs of our neediness?
16. If all this is true about us, how should it impact our way of life. What does a needy church culture look like? We gave three characteristics. Can you remember them? What are they?
17. What are some signs you have forgotten how spiritually need you really are, and what are some evidences that you do understand your own neediness?