

**Invasion** – by definition an invasion is a bit of a hostile word. It refers to an unwanted intrusion either by an individual or army w/ the intent of occupation.

In most instances, an invasion is NOT considered a good thing – at least not by those being invaded; but I do believe there's one instance when an invasion isn't an *intrusion* but rather an *infusion* – and that's when God's grace invades the life of a condemned sinner to bring freedom and life.

Today I want to begin a series on a small yet vital N.T. book I believe will bring us great encouragement. It's a personal letter penned by Paul to his protégé in the faith – Titus.

In this letter, Paul speaks of a war being waged b/w Spirit and flesh, the church and the world. He concludes – *if the world invades you, then the world will invade the church; but if Christ invades you, then you will invade the world.*

**Background** – 1&2 Timothy, Titus are Pastoral Epistle. These were personal letters from Paul intended to encourage his protégé in the ministry and to empower them to lead God's people. Paul's intent in this letter was to empower/instruct Titus in his ministry in Crete.

**Who was Titus?** Titus was a Gentile convert in Paul's ministry who showed great potential in the faith. As a result, Paul began to mentor/disciple him. We learn in **Galatians 2** that Titus grew so well that Paul presented him to the Jerusalem Council as testimony of God's moving among the Gentiles. *This was a big deal as Paul's testimony of Titus served as proof that the Gospel was for everyone under a new covenant* – basically communicating that as N.T. believers, we live under a new covenant of grace since Jesus came to fulfill the Mosaic Law.

From there, Paul began to use Titus in a variety of situations, ultimately dispatching him to pastor the church in Crete. Apparently he had the ability to walk into a tough situation and navigate it w/ courage for the sake of the gospel. In Crete, Titus had to deal w/ a particular threat brought by a group known as *Judaizers*. This group had infiltrated the church and falsely was teaching that yet again people had to adhere to the Mosaic Law for God's approval. So Paul sent Titus to restore order and to bring healing.

Before we dive in, I want to remind you that this book is about an **invasion** – either the world is going to invade the heart of man and the church; or Christ is going to invade the heart and the believer is going to invade the world. In either case, there's a hostile takeover at hand. One is an **intrusion** while the other is an **infusion**. One is intending to occupy – while the other intends to set people free.

This AM, I want to begin where Paul ends. I believe it's vital we understand the doctrinal basis of this invasion so that we have no questions as to why Paul offers the instruction he offers to Titus and to us. In **Titus 3:3-8** we find the heart of this book – and the invasion and intrusion of the heart.

*At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not b/c of righteous things we had done, but b/c of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the H.S., whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by his grace we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:3-7*

**Talk about an invasion of the best kind.** If there was just one text in the Bible on which to pin your hopes this would be it. In this passage Paul sweeps across the wonderful truth of the Gospel and the sovereign initiative of God to seek and rescue His creation from the wages of sin. Truth is there are doctrines in this text so profound you could ponder them for years w/out ever discovering the depth of their truths. Simply put – this is a passage where one could wade in its simplicity or drown in its immensity.

Contextually, Paul encourages us to retain a sensitivity to what it means to be hopelessly lost. For if we ever forget, we're likely to lose sight of our commission to take the Gospel into all the world. So *He offers (3) imperatives*.

## I Never Forget WHO You Once Were

*At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.*

Paul reminds us that before the cross, all of us *by birth* and *by choice* were sinners in need of a Savior. At one time, we were all foolish, disobedient, deceived, and enslaved to sin – depraved enemies of God – w/ no ability to save ourselves.

we too were – *imperfect* – meaning over and over again we too were trapped in a soul condition incapable of escaping – totally depraved and enslaved. *He said we were:*

## A FOOLISH

foolish (*anoetos*) not having a mind – it refers to one who's totally ignorant lacking clarity/understanding. In the context – it is referring to one who is oblivious to their sinful condition and to God's atoning sacrifice.

## B DISOBEDIENT

disobedient (*apeithes*) defiant and stiff-necked, unwilling to abide by or even acknowledge the rule of God – one who's determined to go in the opposite direction of God.

## C DECEIVED

deceived (*planao*). Referring to a person who doesn't mind being led astray – even enjoying the journey into depravity.

## D ENSLAVED

enslaved (*douleuo*) a state of bondage conditioned to sin. The *present tense* signifies this is a lifestyle while the *active voice* indicates this is a willful choice to submit to the corrupt desires of our fallen nature inherited from Adam.

The result is an insatiable bent towards any hedonistic desire whereby one can find some sense of gratification. **Rm. 1:18f**

**Here's the kicker** – every person ever born was born into this condition – *a state of depravity* – incarcerated to sin – lost and hostile to God's love and resistant to His grace.

That's the bad news! Here's the good news. When all hope seemed lost – *God demonstrated His love for us in this way – while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

## II Never Forget WHAT Jesus Did For You

*But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not b/c of righteous things we had done, but b/c of his mercy. He saved us, not b/c of righteous things we had done, but b/c of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the H.S., whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by his grace we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

### A God Took the INITIATIVE

but when – in the nick of time when all hope seemed lost, in his kindness, God took matters into His own hands.

kindness (*chrestotes*) to graciously provide what is needed.

love (*philanthropia*) from *phileo* (affection) and *anthropos* (man) meaning to have a generous affection for man

The essential truth not to miss is that when we were lost and incapable of saving ourselves, God took the initiative to pour out His generosity to an undeserving creation to rescue us from the power, penalty, and punishment of sin. In kindness, when we were deserving of condemnation – God did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves – **He saved us.**

saved (*sozo*) to rescue someone from great peril. God took the initiative to rescue the fallen creation from eternal condemnation by paying our ransom in full.

WHY? He did it b/c of His *mercy*? HOW? He did it by the **washing of rebirth** and the **renewing work of the H.S.**

## B God Made an INVESTMENT

mercy (*eleos*) a generous kindness to an undeserving person. God invested Himself in Christ to seek and to save the lost.

Mercy is similar to grace. Whereas *grace* relates to guilt; *mercy* relates to affliction. Whereas *grace* relates to the sinner in his sin before God the judge; *mercy* relates to the condition of the sinner in his sin. Whereas *grace* judicially forgives the offender for his wrongdoing; *mercy* compassionately helps him to recover. *MacArthur*

rebirth (*palingenesia*) regeneration – born from above.

renewal (*anakainosis*) to transform by re-creation.

*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; the old is gone, behold all things have been made new. 2 Corinthians 5:17*

**In other words**, by a Divine work of God, our lives are transformed from lost to found, from death to life, from foolish to realized, and from bondage to set free.

The result of this great work of God and our faith response is that God has been granted permission to invade our lives for the forgiveness of sin – and he's being allowed to infuse His grace into our lives through a spiritual invasion to give us a God-given purpose for living.

### III Never Forget HOW God Wants to Use You

*This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to engage themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.*

**This is simple** – a life invaded and transformed by the Gospel cannot help but allow God's grace to be released so that others might come to experience God's amazing grace.

When we remember who we were and what Christ has done to rescue us from our condemnation – it'll show up in our lives. We can't help but to allow God in us to move through us to bring glory and honor to His name.

Have you truly experienced this personal invasion of God? Has His grace come to occupy and transform your life? Is there any evidence that God has saved you?