

**THE SERMONS, LECTURES, AND SONGS OF
SIDNEY EDWARD COX**

Paul's Epistle to Titus
Chapter 1, Verse 3
Lesson 3

Editorial Note: What follows is one of a series of Bible lessons on the book of Titus.

These lessons were delivered to the Grace Bible Church in Detroit, Michigan sometime between 1967 and 1972. Sidney Cox was 80 years of age in 1967.

Sidney and Violet Cox resided in Detroit during their retirement years. In 1962, they retired to the Salvation Army retirement home in Detroit, "The Eventide." Violet was in failing health and ultimately died in 1967. Sidney continued residency there until a late in life move to Birmingham in 1972.

During the latter part of his life, Sidney Cox had developed a close relationship with the Christian and Missionary Alliance ("CMA"). CMA operates as a vast network of churches, similar to a "denomination." Grace Bible Church was a CMA church to which Sidney and Violet belonged during their years in Detroit. Sidney was often asked to lead Bible studies such as this study of Titus, and often filled their pulpit to preach.

John Douglas Cox, grandson of Sidney Cox. December 29, 2008.

Now, let's turn please to this letter to Titus, and remind ourselves of one or two things. Today, most of our thought will be centering in verse three. Perhaps it would be a good thing to read that first of all. Verse three. You will remember that for two Sundays, we have been concentrating our thought on the introduction of the book, the man who stood at the portals of it. We have enjoyed, I think to some extent, looking at his magnificence. We have watched him increase, and at the same time, we decrease. Well that's always the case when you look at the Apostle Paul. The more you look at him, the bigger he gets. And at the same time, the smaller we get. And it's so fine that that is so - that as he increases, we decrease.

We saw something of the wonder of the teaching that lies right before us as the door is open, not merely a man standing there in all of his wonder, but the marvel of the teaching that is there - the teaching that has to do with a faith that produces godliness. God's people clothed with godliness and a faith that produces that, and the wonder of a hope that is a certainty, and not a speculation. We're not talking when we say, "The hope of eternal life," we're not talking at all as the world talks. When he says, I hope this, or I hope that, or I hope so. Not at all the same kind of thing. Here is the wonder of an absolute certainty, and underneath there is the promise of God and the character of the one who made the promise. And we have been looking at this thing.

And now we're going to look a little further. And we're getting to verse three and let's read it all together. Alright. Everybody please. "But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching,

which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Saviour.”¹ Now before we go anything further, any further, because there are three points in that, in that verse that I want us to consider. But before we go any further, I want to give you another simple outline of this little book. You’ll remember that we gave one last week, and we mentioned that all of them as we give them, there’ll be several more, are all almost so very simple indeed. So we’re not attempting to get into anything that is complicated, not at all.

Now make a note of this if you please, here’s a three-fold outline of this little book. Chapter one - sound doctrine. Chapter two - sober thinking. Chapter three - sanctified living. Sound doctrine, sober thinking, sanctified living. Now I’m not going to say anything about those, except this, just to make this suggestion. You now have the first, second, and thirdly for a right good sermon. And I’ll tell you the person who ought to preach it - you! You’re the one who ought to preach that sermon. You make your own sermon on that. No excuse for you now. You’ve got the title. You’ve got the first, second, and thirdly. Make your own sermon. And then, my dear, you take yourself by the arm sometime when you’ve got that sermon preached, when it’s all ready to preach. And you take yourself somewhere where there’s a good sized mirror, and you stand right in front of it, and you preach that sermon to yourself. You tell yourself about sober thinking and sound doctrine, and even though you may be embarrassed a little bit, when you come to the sanctified living part of it, because most of us are though we’re not, we, we don’t excel anymore than we ought to when it comes to the question of sanctified living. The kind of living that the Holy Spirit produces when he gets hold of a believer and sets him apart entirely unto God. Preach that sermon unto, for yourself. Get somewhere there’s a good sized mirror there and look straight in the mirror and preach that sermon at yourself. And you’ll be surprised what a fine sermon you’ll preach, and what a fine congregation you’ll have, too. You sure will. Try it sometimes. Try it.

Now there are three very important points in that third verse, and I want to linger a little bit because sooner or later we’re going to get down to taking a look at the man to whom this letter was written. I’m rather anxious for us to have a good look at Titus, too, because he’s worth looking at. But before we do, and in order that we might understand a little better what we shall be looking at, let’s take a look at three things that I mentioned in that third verse.

Now, here they are. First, “In due times.” Do you see those words? “In due times.” Second, right in the middle of the verse, “Committed unto me.” Third, right at the end of the verse, “God our Saviour.” Now, there are three things there, and they are the utmost importance. Let’s take them in order and take a good look at them there. Let’s take the cover of off it.

What about that word, “In due times?” What does it mean? What does it mean? Now you find it over and over again, sometimes the word “due” has to do with the payment of a debt. You give a person that which he’s “due.” You’ll find it frequently that way. But in addition to that, it has to do, as in this case, with time. Something’s happening in time. A, “Due time” is appearing. Let us keep in mind, if you please, that God’s clock is always moving. That God’s program is always unfolding. And at certain times, God’s clock strikes. And when it does, it is a time of utmost importance. God’s clock is striking right here, and if you put your ear down to that verse you’ll hear the sound of it. And it isn’t any cracked bell either. Not at all. God’s clock struck. God’s program had been moving on and on and on

¹ Titus 1:3

and on up to a certain point, and then the clock struck. "In due times," something happened. Now you'll find that over and over again, many a times.

Sometimes you'll find it as a point of time that is referred to as such. Such as, "The ninth hour." Something happened at, "The ninth hour." Next Friday afternoon, we shall be considering something that happened at, "The ninth hour." I'm going to be involved in something like that at, "The ninth hour." Next Friday afternoon, you'll be thinking about it, too. Well you ought to. Something like that. Something like a point of time. Sometimes you'll hear the very words there, "In due time" Christ died for the ungodly. God's clock struck. You see. God's clock struck. "In due time" we shall reap if we faint not, that's still in the future. But it's coming as sure as the rest of them, that time when the reaping time comes. Not only for that which is wrong, but for that which is right. The reaping time is coming. God's clock will strike again. And we've got the thought of it, and the sound of it, and the wonder of it, and the importance of it before our very eyes. God's clock strikes. Not only did it strike at the end of one dispensation and the beginning of another, but it strikes all the way along. Something's happening. What's happening here? Why is God's clock striking here? What particular point in God's calendar had been reached at this point? What was it? What?

Well all you have to do is look at that second verse. Something had been committed unto Paul. And when that moment came, however it came. When that moment came, God's clock struck, for here was something that had been kept in the background more or less was now being released and flowing out like rivers of living water. And something was happening. Sure it was. For the man that stood at the entrance of our letter is the man involved in it. Can't you hear him say, can't you hear him standing up before us and saying, "Something was committed unto me. God put something in my hands." Not the first time that he'd said it, he said that in his very first letter when he wrote to the Thessalonians, and he said, "I've been put in trust with the gospel." Don't you see? A man has been put in trust with something. My, fresh from the hands of God - this beautiful and lovely thing that has been flowing like rivers of living water over the face of the earth and particularly over the face of the Christian church ever since. And we're in this church this morning because of it.

Something that was committed. What was committed? What? What was the particular thing that was committed unto this man? What did God commit to him? Not a new doctrine. Not at all. Not something that Paul originated. Not at all. For he's the one that tells us over and over again, "I'm giving unto you that which I've received."

What was the particular mission that God gave to Paul? Now you can add all the other things you'd like to, but don't overlook this one. God made Paul and God gave to Paul a ministry of explanation. Paul was God's great explainer for the Christian church. That which had been formed and which had been only dimly understood, now becomes as clear as daylight. And the great thing that Paul was given was the ministry of interpretation and also of explanation.

Let me give you one instance of that. The gospel had already been completed. And Paul, as if he was answering a question from somebody who says, "Well we've heard all about the gospel. We know in general what the gospel is. We know what you mean. Or, we think we do. But tell us, what is the gospel? What is it? Now, we've heard about what happened at Calvary, but we don't know why it happened. Now Paul, you tell us why it happened, not just what happened, you tell us why it happened." And Paul said, "Certainly I will." He said, "This is the gospel. This is the content of it.

This is the thing that makes it so precious. This is the thing that gives it its crimson color. Christ died, according to the scripture, and was buried, and the third day rose again. That's the gospel." It's the only definition of the gospel that's given in all of the scripture, is that one. And here's a man who takes the cover off something that had been faintly discerned, we've known all about it, at least we'd known of it's existence and where it was and what it was to a certain extent. Now, we've got the detail of it. And you can follow him all the way through, giving the explanation. Telling us what it means, all the way through. This was Paul's great mission that God gave to him - the mission of explaining God's truth, and he does it superbly. No one else has ever done it like him.

There are three great foundation facts of the Christian church. Wherever you find them, there's the Christian church. And if they are absent, there is no Christian church regardless of what the name may be. Let me give you the three facts that are underneath the Christian church that make it. When they are there, there's the Christian church. The first one is a completed gospel. And when the Lord Jesus said on that cross, "It is finished," the gospel was completed. Nothing needed to be added to that. That was finished. Now, he's the one that explains that.

The second great mark of the Christian church is the intercessory work of Christ, our great high priest at the right hand of the Father. That's the second. There is no Christian church anywhere, unless we have a great high priest. One of the reasons why I believe Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews is because there you find the great explanation of the intercessory work of Christ at the right hand of the Father - our great high priest. We have such a high priest. And somebody cries it with exaltation, and it sounds strangely like the voice of Paul to me. It sure does. We've got it there.

And the third great mark of the Christian church is the indwelling by the Holy Spirit of every believer. And when you've got all three, you've got the Christian church, and without them, you haven't got it at all. A completed gospel. A great high priest. And the Holy Spirit indwelling every believer. And when you've got that, you've got the Christian church. And you can add all the organization and the rest of it to it, but that's the great central fact and foundation of it. We're talking about a man here to whom God committed that great ministry of explanation telling us what happened on Calvary and why. Telling us about our great high priest, not merely stating the fact that we have such a high priest, but what he's doing for us day by day. And some of us in this room that absolutely depend on his intercession haven't given one thought to it today. We haven't given one thought to the fact that there He prayed for you today, mentioned you by name, talked about you to the Father, offered the value His blood for you today, and some of us haven't give it one thought. And the fact that the indwelling of the Spirit of God indwells every believer, and you've got the three things, and here is the man who talked more about them than anybody else, and to whom we owe the greatest debt that mortals can owe to any other mortal. The debt of explanation. He told us what Calvary meant. He told us about our great high priest. He told us about the indwelling Holy Spirit. Of course.

And there was a great ministry - a ministry of explanation. And I don't wonder when we think of it, and what has happened since that moment, I don't wonder that God's clock struck. I don't wonder that there must have been sounds in heaven of rejoicing that a certain point had been reached in God's calendar. That this program that had been unfolding had now reached such a point as that. Where would we be today? What would, without this ministry of explanation that was given to the Apostle Paul? What would we know about the marvel and majesty of Calvary? Don't you see? What would we know about the ministry of our great high priest? What would we know about what happens when the Holy Spirit

comes to indwell a believer, not for a little while, but to be with you forever? What would we know? And we take our shoes off in the presence of a man that was given such a ministry as that?

The ministry of explanation. This is what it means. This is what happened. This is what it means. Did you hear it? And that's the great thing that happened, and I don't wonder that it came in with the sound of God's trumpet blowing, the sound of God's clock striking. And I wonder when this river of living water was released to flow over hearts everywhere and reach us in this Grace Bible Church this morning - rivers of living water that began like this. Rivers of explanation so that we know what we're talking about, not merely talking about a Calvary we don't understand. We know something about it now. Certainly we do. We know something about the value of His blood. Of course we do. We know something about its sin covering properties. Of course we do. The ministry of explanation that was given particularly to the Apostle Paul.

Now underneath that, we've been talking about some tremendous things, but underneath, just as we found underneath the great words that preceded it in that first and second verses, the great truths that were there. And we found underneath, the promise of God and the person who made the promise. So underneath this, we find the under girding of the majestic statement, God our Saviour.

Now, my dear, that's something that you won't find anywhere else, except in the Epistle to Titus. That's the only place where we find the three words, "God, our Saviour." Now you'll find them three times, as you would expect, in this little letter. Here it is, three times we find them there, and it's so very interesting to find it. Just the three times that we find it there. In the first place, you want the verses? 1:3, 2:10, 3:4. Let me give them again, 1:3, 2:10, 3:4. And the first one, a commandment to be obeyed. In the second one, a doctrine to be adorned. In the third one, a life to be lived in kindness and love. And underneath, these majestic words, "God our Saviour." And you won't find them anywhere else.

And here's a man, wonderful this man, to whom was given this ministry of explanation to tell us not only what happened but why it happened. And to enlighten our minds and hearts through the Holy Spirit as only the Holy Spirit can do. No need for us to be ignorant. We ought to give a reason for the hope that will be, that is in us. But where would we find that reason for the hope that was in us, that is in us? Here's where we find it. Here's where we find it. And we are indebted more to this man of whom we are thinking and talking about this morning than to any other one.

He wasn't the only one to whom God gave a ministry of explanation, not by any means. Because, the ministry given to Paul had to do with the church, but there was something else beside the church. There was the family of God, as well. And John received a gift from God of explaining what the family of God means. And it is just as great as that what was given to Paul. Paul doesn't talk about the new birth, he implies it, but John explains it. He's the one that explains what it means to come into the family of God by the new birth. And this ministry of explanation, great as is in the case of the Apostle Paul was not only given to him. There was a similar ministry given to others as well. And we think particularly of John, because it has to do so obviously with the family of God. How we come into the family of God. How we're born into the family of God. He's the one that talks about that. I think some of you already know that in the New Testament the words, "Born again," are mentioned fourteen times. And of the fourteen times, thirteen times in the writings of John. He's the one that talks about the new birth, the entrance into the family of God. He gives the explanation of it. What it means to belong to the family

of God. Paul, on the other hand, gives the great explanation of what it means to come into the church of God and belong to it. What it means.

So we find ourselves facing three great things this morning, all out of this simple little verse that we read together a few moments ago. When God's clock struck, and God's calendar said, "This is the day, and the time and the hour." And the man we see from ministry that was wonderful and more wonderful as the time goes by. And under girding it all, this great thing - God, our Saviour. Just remember if you please, that God hasn't stopped doing things for individuals. I'm wondering what he's explaining to your life. Because remember, my dear, that as you move around, you are a living epistle, read and known of all men. I wonder what folks, for what impression, what explanation do they get about the cross and about the blood and the fact that grace is in the center of our thoughts all the time. When our lives talk, as they do, and talk loudly. Something that's worth thinking about it. It most certainly is.

And with that thought in mind, let's go out and think about it. Let's go out and think about it. And two weeks from today, we may be following just a little further along and coming to look at the man to whom Paul wrote, the place where he was, and the task that was given unto him.

Out Father we pray that this word may have reached its destination. We had nothing to do with it. We had nothing to do with it, except just to stand in adoration as some of it opened up to these feeble minds, this one in particular. And we pray, our Father, that as we go out, we may have heard something that will bring our hearts to the place _____ how great Thou art and how wonderful is Thy grace. And there'd been some small measure, you can still go on interpreting the wonder of the gospel, even through lives as common placed as ours. Hear our prayer through Jesus' name, Amen.