

Avoiding Burnout

Titus 2:11-14 with Philippians 2:12-13

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I. Introduction

The key to avoiding burnout is to remember that it is *God who is at work within us to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

II. The Centrality of God's Grace

A. 1:1-4 – Salutation

B. 1:5-16 – Identify true and false church leaders

C. 2:1-10 – Instructions for the saints – *Godliness unto good works*

D. 2:11-14 – The Grace of God in Jesus Christ - *The Redeemer and Purifier of a people who are zealous for good works*

C' 2:15-3:8 – Instructions for the saints – *Godliness unto good works*

B' 3:9-11 – Reject false church leaders

A' 3:12-15 – Final Greetings

The foundation of obedience is *the _____ of God at work.* Paul makes this connection clear with the word “*For*” (11). The reason Titus should obey is that *the grace of God has appeared.*

A. What Grace Has Done

The Scriptures declare that we are lost and need salvation. Why? Our problem is twofold – we are guilty before God and we are unable to live righteously. In Scripture, salvation is not simply God “*bringing us to heaven*” when we die. Salvation is about *forgiveness* and *transformation*. We need to be _____ of that which we have done, and we need to be _____ to walk in newness of life. God has accomplished both these things in sending His Son Jesus.

B. What Grace Is Doing

Perhaps you have heard it said that _____ is the motivation for Christian service? “*Look back at what God has done for you and now do good things for others.*” This is deceptive. While gratitude is important, present obedience is not an attempt to pay God back for what He has done; it is a further fruit of God’s _____ in our lives.

C. What Grace Will Do

The grace of God teaches us to look to the future – *looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.* The grace of God reminds us of the blessed hope that sin and death will be _____.

Our salvation from beginning to end is in the hands of God. Jesus is the one who *has delivered, is delivering, and will deliver you* from the destructiveness of sin. God’s grace accomplishes all these things.

III. Application

A. Lower the Standard? Easy-believism

Some respond to burnout by lowering the standard, getting rid of the expectations. But the grace of God does not teach us to lower the standard; the grace of God empowers us to strive toward and to obey the standard.

Throughout his letter to Titus, Paul exalts God's moral law. Older men are to be *sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; the old women likewise, are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teacher of good things, etc.* (2:1ff) The man or woman who professes to know God but who rejects God's law is defiled (1:16). Paul does not lower the standard.

What does Paul do? He points us to the _____ of God which enables us to preserve the standard. The grace of God does not teach us to lower the standard but to preserve it and to pursue it in faith. As the Apostle John tells us, "*By this we know that we have come to know God, if we love Him and keep His _____.* And His commandments are not burdensome."

B. Achieve the Standard Self-Sufficiently? Pelagianism

Yet if we refuse to lower the standard, if we keep the standard high, there is an equally dangerous temptation. As our character develops, if we forget or neglect to highlight that it is the grace of God which accomplishes these things in us, then we will become arrogant and prideful.

While the former error is the easy-believism error – we can have forgiveness without transformation, we can have justification without sanctification – this latter error is that of Pelagianism. Pelagianism teaches that we have the capacity in _____, using our own free will, to pursue what is right and to live lives of purity.

So the Pelagian solution to burnout preserves the standard and insists that all that is really necessary is for us to work harder. Burnout is for _____. Consequently, when we are under the sway of Pelagianism, we will focus increasingly on self and our own work rather than focusing upon Christ to do the work in us.

But the Christian option, the option that focuses upon the grace of God at work in us, _____ the standard and keeps one's eyes fixed upon _____ as the only one who can empower us to keep it (1 Cor 15:10; Phil 2:12-13; Col 1:29).

IV. Conclusion

The key to avoiding burnout, discouragement, being overwhelmed, is to remember that it is *God who is at work within us to will and to do for His good pleasure.* Our salvation from beginning to end is in the hands of God. His _____ must lie at the foundation of all our labor, service, prayer, relationships, etc. Only if we remember this and regularly turn our eyes to Him in faith to sustain us and strengthen us will we avoid burnout.