

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE:	Zeal: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
SERMON REFERENCE:	Titus 2:11-14, 3:8-9
LWF SERMON NUMBER:	#2035

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) To be zealous means to be on fire, to be enthusiastic, and to be full of passion.
 - i) This is what most church members need.
 - (1) We sometimes come to Sunday morning services with a nonchalance and an indifference.
- b) Isaiah 9:6
 - i) The Bible says that the zeal of the Lord would perform this.
 - (1) Isaiah 9:7
- c) We need to learn something about godly zeal.
- d) Charles Haddon Spurgeon once said that we might as well have a chariot without its steeds, a sun without its beams, and a Heaven without its joy as to have a person of God without zeal.
- e) Titus 2:11-14
- f) Every church in America and every Christian needs a burning, blazing, passionate, and emotional love for the Lord Jesus Christ that overflows in service and worship to Him.
- g) But there is a form of zeal that is ugly, ungodly, and misguided.
 - i) It leads to extremism and makes fanatics.
- h) Today's message will look at zeal from three points:
 - i) Zeal that displays the grace of God.
 - ii) Zeal that distorts the grace of God.
 - iii) Zeal that denies the grace of God.

2) ZEAL THAT DISPLAYS THE GRACE OF GOD (TITUS 2:11-14)

- a) Titus 2:11-14
 - i) If we believe this passage of Scripture, then we cannot be nonchalant about it.
- b) It has been said that lukewarmness is the worst form of blasphemy.
 - i) The Lord would rather have us against Him than to believe these truths and not be excited about them.
- c) We need to be zealous about truth.
- d) We find some glorious truths in Titus 2:11-14.
 - i) Verse 11 speaks of grace.
 - (1) Grace is a blessing.
 - (2) Grace came down at Christmas.
 - (3) We are saved by grace.
 - ii) Verse 12 speaks of holiness.
 - (1) We can't be lukewarm about holiness.
 - (2) Do you have a burning passion to be holy?
 - (a) There ought to be a burning desire in our hearts to be spotlessly clean and pure before God.
 - (b) We should have no unconfessed sin.
 - (c) We should have a zeal to be holy, zealous of good works.

- iii) Verse 13 mentions the second coming of Jesus.
 - (1) We should be praying, living, and longing for the Lord Jesus to come.
 - (a) Revelation 22:20
 - (2) This verse also mentions the deity of Christ.
 - (a) Our Savior, Jesus Christ, is the great God.
 - (b) We don't just tip our hats to Jesus; we bow the knee to Jesus.
 - (c) Jesus has to be all in all.
 - (i) We should be zealous about this.
- iv) Verse 14 talks about redemption.
 - (1) If we are saved, then we have been washed in the blood of Jesus.
 - (a) We should be on fire and excited about that.
- v) We should be passionate about the truth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- e) Today, we are supposed to say that everyone's religion is just as good as our own.
 - i) A great problem in America is that we have tried to homogenize everything, and there is no distinctive.
 - (1) But there is a faith and a truth that we are to earnestly contend for and never diminish.
 - (a) Be zealous for the truth, and stand for the truth.
 - ii) We have a great problem in our nation of truth decay.
 - (1) Today, if anyone stands for truth, then he is looked upon as a bigot.
 - (2) We are all supposed to get along.
 - (a) But it is better to be divided by truth than be united in error.
 - (i) Matthew 10:34
- f) There are some things that we cannot be moderate about.
 - i) If you passed a house that was on fire, would you moderately knock on the door to wake the people inside?
 - ii) We cannot be moderate about our love for the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - iii) Revelation 3:16
 - (1) In this passage, Jesus was speaking to the church in Laodicea, which typifies the church of the last days.
 - (2) He is literally saying, "You make me vomit."
 - (3) They were neither hot nor cold.
 - iv) Does your religion make the Lord nauseous?
 - (1) He would rather have us out and out against Him than to have us pretend to be on His side and not be zealous about it.
 - (a) Revelation 3:15
 - (i) Don't be lukewarm.
 - (b) This may not make sense to some.
 - (i) Some may believe that it would be better to be lukewarm than to be cold.

1. The cause of Christ has been hurt by lukewarm Christians who claim to be on the Lord's side but don't love Him or live for Him.
 - v) Revelation 3:19
 - g) There is a zeal that displays the grace of God.
 - h) Titus 2:11
 - i) Because of this, we are to be zealous of good works.
 - (1) We are saved by grace, but that doesn't mean that we are to be nonchalant about it.
 - (a) Ephesians 2:18
- 3) ZEAL THAT DISTORTS THE GRACE OF GOD (TITUS 3:8-9)
 - a) Titus 3:8-9
 - i) In this passage, Paul is talking to Timothy about grace and zeal.
 - ii) There are good works that display the grace of God.
 - iii) The people had zeal, but it wasn't zeal that displayed the grace of God.
 - (1) It distorted the grace of God.
 - b) There is a kind of zeal that is divisive and destructive.
 - i) It can be deadly and divide churches, homes, and communities.
 - c) There are some things that are good, but we can overdo them.
 - i) Cooking a steak is good, but overcooking will burn it.
 - ii) A loudspeaker is good; but turned up too loudly, it will distort the music.
 - (1) A good thing then becomes a bad thing.
 - d) Principles are good and can be used as tools, but a principle can also be used as a weapon.
 - i) A hammer is a tool that can be used to build a house, or it can be used as a weapon.
 - ii) There are people who take good things to such an extreme that they make that good thing a bad thing.
 - e) Extremism is a real problem in the body of Christ.
 - f) There is a foolish zeal.
 - i) Titus 3:9
 - (1) "Avoid foolish questions."
 - ii) Some people can get caught up in theological issues, but they do not have a burden for lost souls.
 - (1) Don't get drawn into endless debates.
 - g) It is fractious.
 - i) It causes division.
 - ii) Titus 3:9
 - (1) They generate contentions and strivings.
 - iii) A person who becomes a zealot or an extremist becomes a taskmaster who criticizes, judges, and causes problems in the church over things that really don't matter.
 - (1) For instance, people have different tastes in music.

- iv) Philippians 4:5
- v) This can happen in worship services.
 - (1) Some people like to applaud in a worship service, while others think it isn't appropriate.
 - (2) Some like to lift their hands while others do not.
 - (a) Psalm 47:1
 - (b) 1 Timothy 2:8
 - (c) This is simply a matter of preference.
- vi) There are those who sometimes get so extreme that they become joy killers.
- vii) We need to let the Lord be God in our hearts and lives and not find ourselves in formalism or fanaticism.
- h) It is fruitless.
 - i) Titus 3:9
 - ii) There are certain things that are good, but if a person becomes an extremist, then these good things will become bad things.
 - (1) A person can become extreme about a quiet time.
 - (a) We can become so legalistic about a quiet time that it takes the joy out of it, and it becomes a burden rather than a blessing.
 - (2) There are times when we ought to be sleeping rather than praying.
 - (a) Mark 6:31
 - (3) We ought to read the Bible, but there are times when we ought to be with our families instead of reading the Bible.
 - (a) There are those who take a principle and turn it into a hammer, which is extremism.
 - (4) We ought to be separated from sinners, from sin, and from iniquity.
 - (a) 2 Timothy 2:19
 - (b) We are to maintain good works.
 - (c) Titus 2:12
 - (d) But this doesn't mean that we cannot have some unsaved friends whom we are trying to bring to Jesus.
 - (i) If we don't have any unsaved friends, then we are more separated than Jesus was.
 - 1. Matthew 9:9-13
 - 2. Jesus was a friend of sinners.
 - iii) A person can become so zealous in serving the Lord that they run ahead of God.
 - (1) It is just as bad to run ahead of Him as it is to run behind Him.
 - (2) There is enough time in every day to gracefully do everything God wants us to do.
 - (a) Mark 6:31
 - iv) We ought to deny self, but denying self isn't necessarily denying ourselves things.
 - (1) Some people think that in order to deny self, we have to be somber.

- (a) Jesus wasn't somber; Jesus was a man of joy.
 - (i) He went to parties.
 - (ii) Little children sat on His lap.
 - (b) Jesus understood the meaning of Ecclesiastes 5:18.
- i) There is an extremism that is fatal.
 - i) Misguided zeal has caused the spiritual death of many people.
 - (1) Many people are lost because of this.
 - ii) Luke 9:54-55
 - (1) When the Samaritans acted wrongly toward Jesus, two of His disciples (James and John) wanted to command fire to come down from Heaven and consume them.
 - (a) But Jesus rebuked James and John.
 - (2) Later on, the fire of revival fell upon the Samaritans; and they came to know the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - iii) Simon Peter was a man with misguided zeal.
 - (1) In the Garden of Gethsemane where Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus, Simon Peter took out his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the High Priest.
 - (a) John 18:10
 - (b) Simon Peter wasn't ready to live for Jesus, but he was ready to kill for Jesus.
 - (c) Jesus told him to put up his sword, and Jesus healed Malchus' ear.
 - (i) John 18:11
 - (ii) Luke 22:51
 - (2) Simon Peter was a zealot.
 - (a) He had the wrong enemy.
 - (i) Ephesians 6:12
 - (ii) Malchus was not the enemy.
 - 1. He was a victim of Satan and needed the love of God.
 - (b) He had the wrong weapon.
 - (i) He used a sword.
 - (ii) 2 Corinthians 10:4
 - (iii) Later, Simon Peter took the sword of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and struck three thousand alive.
 - 1. Acts 2:41
 - (c) He had the wrong energy.
 - (i) He had been asleep.
 - (ii) Matthew 26:41
 - (iii) He wakes up having not prayed and goes forth, not in the energy of the Spirit, but in the energy of the flesh.
 - 1. The flesh profits nothing.
 - a. John 6:63
 - (d) He had the wrong attitude.
 - (i) He was mad and scared.

- (ii) James 1:20
 - j) Zeal should display the grace of God, not distort grace and make fanatics.
 - i) A fanatic is someone who has lost his direction and doubles his speed.
 - k) Titus 2:10
 - i) This means to beautify truth and adorn the doctrine of God.
 - (1) Put garments of praise and beauty on the doctrine of God.
 - l) Titus 3:1-3
 - i) Paul is talking to Christians and tells us that this is how we acted before we were saved.
 - (1) So, we should not look down upon the unsaved.
 - (a) We should put on the beauty of the grace of the Lord Jesus and let our lives display the grace of God.
 - (i) Our lives should not distort the grace of God.
- 4) ZEAL THAT DENIES THE GRACE OF GOD (TITUS 2:11)
 - a) Titus 2:11
 - b) It is grace that brings salvation.
 - i) We are not saved any other way.
 - (1) We are not saved by our zeal.
 - (2) We are not saved by our good works.
 - c) Romans 10:2-3
 - d) There is a zeal that denies grace.
 - i) There are some who say that they are too good and don't need to be saved.
 - (1) There is nobody so bad they cannot be saved and nobody so good they need not be saved.
 - e) We need the grace of God.
- 5) CONCLUSION
 - a) Titus 2:11
 - b) Salvation is a gift, purchased with the blood of Jesus.
 - i) This gift is to be received in repentance and faith.
 - c) Have you received the gift of salvation?
 - d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
 - e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16