

How is Christianity to Impact a Pagan Society? Titus 2:15-3:2

Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on August 24, 2008

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There are many different answers given to the question of how Christians are to impact an ungodly and even anti-God culture like ours:

- Pacifism (no engagement)
- Political activism, lobbying and trying to legislate morality
- Protests and marches with placards, even violence to abortionists
- Picketing and making as much noise and trouble as we can
- Pretending in the church to be like the world as much as possible to supposedly win them to Christ in the process
- Professional marketing of Christianity by corporate techniques to reach the demographic by finding out what each customer wants
- Pulling out our family from any contact from the world

Somehow what is rarely brought up is praying, paying taxes, preaching the gospel and practically living our faith before others.

As always, we want to know what God wants us to know in His Word.

Titus 2:15-3:5 (NASB95) ¹⁵These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you. **3:1** Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, ² to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. ³ For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. ⁴ But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, ⁵ He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy ...

HOW IS CHRISTIANITY TO IMPACT A PAGAN SOCIETY?

#1 By Lifting up Scripture Courageously (2:15)

#2 By Living as Submissive Citizens (3:1-2)

#3 By Loving other Sinners to Christ (3:3-5) – *this one next week*

1. By Lifting Up Scripture Courageously

¹⁵ **These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.**

Every part of the church has been addressed, and now this verse summarizes the role of Titus, and by application, all who seek to lift up the Word of God as supreme, with their delegated authority.

“THESE THINGS” would include everything Paul has said in chapter 2, if not the entire letter. It is *these things* that will make an impact in a pagan society, as he’s taught in chapter 2, godly older men mentoring men in the faith, women doing likewise, younger women being keepers at home and loving their husbands and children, younger men being self-controlled and an example to all

SPEAK – picks up the same verb from 2:1, perhaps rounding out this whole section, or this verse may look forward or cover the book as a whole as well, and by application, all of God’s Word.

EXHORT – we’ve discussed this word before, which means to come alongside to help, encourage, admonish, often positively

1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NASB95) ¹⁴ We urge you, brethren, **admonish** the unruly, **encourage** the fainthearted, **help** the weak, **be patient with** everyone.

The Puritan Richard Baxter has written in the vein of Titus 2:1-10

See also that when you are [ministering to individuals] your own manners reflect the character of what you are communicating. So speak appropriately, and therefore differently, to each one. To the dull and the obstinate, be blunt and earnest. To the tenderhearted and the fearful, be gentle, and insist on the need of their spiritual direction. To the young, lay more stress on the enticements of sensual pleasures and of the great need to have control over their passions. To the old, prepare them for death and for the need to withdraw from the foolish ways of this present world. To the young, be free; and to the old, be respectful. To the rich, preach self-denial and the deceitfulness of prosperity. To the poor, show the glory of the Gospel. Note, too, the temptation of each group, each sex, each profession, and each one’s employment. Be as simple and humble before them as you can. Give them scriptural evidence for all that you may say. Then they will see that it is not just you, but God who is speaking to them. Be serious in all things, but especially in the way that you apply the truth to their specific needs.”¹

REPROVE – This is the word we’ve seen before in Titus for rebuking or refuting error in doctrine or living. It’s the other side of the double-edged sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

I believe it’s Vance Havner that said: “God’s Word both comforts the afflicted and it afflicts the comfortable.” That’s what it does.

These words in Titus 2:15 are used of God’s Word itself and why and how it is to be preached this way. Look a few pages earlier:

2 Timothy 3:16-4:3 (NASB95) ¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for **teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training** in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for **every good work [also in Titus 3:1 at end]**. ¹ I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: ² **preach the word**; be ready in season *and* out of season; **reprove, rebuke, exhort**, with great patience and instruction. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires

That’s an authoritative charge based on an authoritative Word. It’s because God’s Word is inspired by God for each of those things; Paul can tell Titus to speak, exhort, and rebuke with all authority.

In Titus 2:15, this word for authority was used in that day for kingly authority – we are a herald or ambassador for the King and if we give the King’s message there is inherent authority and power with it. Not a human *authoritarian* - the authority a preacher has is not his own, it is from God’s Word as a faithful officer of it. A preacher can speak with authority when he expounds the truth of God and can say with full conviction “Thus says the Lord.”

Look at Titus 2:15 again – each of these verbs are present tense commands the man of God is to keep on doing as a habit, all of life

And do it **with all authority**, it says. When Jesus finished His first sermon recorded in the gospels, the people all marveled because He spoke as someone having authority, not like their scribes.

WITH ALL AUTHORITY – The source is our Almighty Lord who used the same phrase in His Great Commission: “**All authority** in heaven and earth is given unto me. Therefore go and make disciples, baptizing them ... and **teaching them to obey everything I commanded you**. For lo, **I am with you always**.”

As ambassadors for Christ, and spokesmen for Him, we are to teach others to obey everything Christ taught, courageously, fearlessly and without flattery, without hesitation or manipulation – the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help us God. We are to lift up the Scriptures courageously even though our world doesn’t want to hear it and may disregard us. Even some in the church were apparently disregarding young pastors like Timothy as immature or inexperienced, and of course many today would disregard me similarly or would say my teaching is intolerant, irrelevant, ignorant, etc.

Paul says here don’t be deterred or put off if anybody despises you, disregards you, or disrespects you, just keep proclaiming God’s Word in season and out, when they want it and when they don’t.

A sin-confronting, Christ-compelled, God-centered message with authority is not popular or always well-received in our culture of T-shirts saying resist authority, question everything, etc. It was not many years ago when kids had a healthy fear of authorities and respect of adults in general, but we have a generation that has grown up with no respect for authority and much of that can spill over into the church. God’s Word tells those who would teach it not to be deterred by that, not to tickle ears but to box their ears with the truth where appropriate. Speak the Scriptures, including the convicting ones, clearly, compassionately and courageously.

What Philips Brooks said in his famous 1877 Yale *Lectures on Preaching* sounds a much-needed warning. “If you are afraid of men and a slave to their opinion, go and do something else. Go and make shoes to fit them. Go even and paint pictures which you know are bad, but which suit their bad taste. But do not keep on all your life preaching sermons which say not what God sent you to declare, but what they have you to say. Be courageous.”²

Authority wasn’t popular on the island of Crete, where Paul already said in 1:10 that there are many rebellious or insubordinate men, and there are those who contradict who need to be refuted by godly men. But we need sermons with authority and courage.

Steve Lawson at the 2001 Shepherd’s Conference called for men of courage to lift up the Scriptures to a dying world and to malnourished churches, and that sermon was used mightily by God in my life to propel me to Seminary, a call I was sensing for awhile but I needed that passionate message to kick me into the ministry.

Steve Lawson is a great example of someone who fulfills Titus 2:15 “with all authority” and he joined his voice that night to faithful voices from the past who called for men to heed this truth.

He first quoted Alexander Maclaren, Scottish preacher of the nineteenth century, who spoke of the authority and passionate and powerful “manner befitting those who bear God’s message. They should sound it out loudly, plainly, urgently with earnestness and marks of emotion in their voices. Languid whispers will not wake up sleepers. Unless the messenger is manifestly in earnest, the message will fall flat. Not with bated breath as if ashamed of it, nor with hesitation as if not quite sure of it, nor with coldness as if it were of little urgency-God’s Word is to be pealed in men’s ears.’

Lawson cried out, “*where are such courageous men today?*”

Richard Baxter said, “I preach as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying men.”
– *Where are such dying men today?*

George Whitfield commented, “I love those that thunder out the Word. The Christian world is in a deep sleep. Nothing but a loud voice can awaken them out of it.” *Where are men like him today with thunder that God can use for another great awakening? May God cause some in this room to wake up and take up His banner!*

The evangelist D. L. Moody: “The best way to revive a church is to build a fire in the pulpit.”
May God enflame more pulpits today!

Lloyd-Jones, the late pastor of London’s Westminster Chapel, once said, “Preaching is theology coming through a man who is on fire.”³ *Where are those today on fire for truth who can spread their passion to others and start a forest fire that can’t be stopped?*

As I told the adult SS class last year when I played a Steve Lawson clip, that’s who I want to be like when I grow up.

- Where are those in our day who can say like the prophet Jeremiah, that he couldn’t stop speaking God’s Word even under opposition, it was like a fire in his bones that he had to get out?
- Where are those who can say with the Apostle Paul: “*I am not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God for salvation of everyone who believes?*” This is not only for preachers, but all of us are to lift up the gospel with courage and without compromise

Where are those who can say courageously like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, “We will not bow your idols (even if it means you kill us)” or like the persecuted disciples in Acts

We heard about one such courageous young man last week, Masab Youssef (now Joseph), who converted to Christianity from Islam as the son of the founder of the Hamas terrorist group, as I shared last time. I saw him on FOX News a few days ago and the correspondent asked him if he feared for his life. Was he worried that his testimony was signing his own death warrant? His reply on TV “they can kill my body, but they can’t kill my soul.”

It's only the Word of Christ and the power of His gospel that can change pagan societies, one heart at a time, whether in the ancient near east, the modern middle east, or modern America. The solution is not political, but God can use everyday people like you and me when we lift up His Scripture with courage to our world.

There's a second way Christianity is to impact an ungodly society,

#2 – By Living as Submissive Citizens

Titus 3:1 Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed

Occasionally, I will interact with Christians who seem to think we don't have to submit to our government or authorities because they are so pagan and ungodly, as if we have it worse than NT times. But God's Word always applies, and if you know some history, you wouldn't say that, because you would know we have it far better in our post-slavery democratic society that still has freedoms

MacArthur writes: 'Paul knew what it was like to live in a thoroughly pagan culture, far more pagan than what we experience ... And he knew what it was to be in a world of abusive deadly inequality and slavery. He knew what it was to be in a culture of tyrants, petty dictators who were murderous. He knew what it was to be under abusive leadership. He knew what it was to see a society engulfed up to its ears in sexual perversion, the breakdown of the family. We read in some ancient documents about people who had 26 and 27 wives and/or husbands, depending on the situation. The world was literally flooded with idols, petty gods. People were heavily taxed and the tax collectors were extortionists who took what wasn't justly due them.

If anybody complained they would take their life as soon as look at them. And the world was full of terrorists, people who were going around executing those who had done something against them. Even in the Jewish world there were the Zealots ... the guys who carried the daggers and came up behind the authorities in Israel and stabbed them to death, terrorism was everywhere.

... And [Paul] wasn't calling for any kind of protest. He wasn't calling for any kind of contention or any kind of war against the existing mentality, he was calling for the preaching of the gospel that transforms the life. But it wasn't just the preaching, it was the living within the church and outside the church that gave a platform that made the message believable. You see, what God had done for the Christians in Crete He wanted to do for a lot of other folks, too. And the conduct of the believers there was crucial to that saving work, that saving enterprise. So he tells Titus to instruct the people with authority. Remember that in chapter 2 verse 15 ... With authority regarding their duty in a pagan world.⁴

Titus 3:1 says "Remind them" – call this to mind. In the grammar, keep reminding them of their duty, as men are prone to forget. This is something Christians do not always do well, and some think because their ultimate allegiance is to God that we can disregard the authorities God has put us under. Some think that because our citizenship is in heaven, we can disregard our citizenship on this earth. Paul says remind them of their duty to government, and he uses the terms rulers and authorities to cover every level on down.

TO BE SUBJECT – Put yourselves under the authority of, to submit or subject yourselves to your human authorities or rulers.

TO BE OBEDIENT – We are called to obey everything Jesus commanded us and also everything governing authorities commands. And remember, the NT was written during the pagan reign of Rome, and an Emperor who would burn Christians to death to light up his palace, feed them to lions. Our govt. may not always honor God but our only exception to disobey would be if they someday command us to disobey God – ex: in the last verse we are commanded to speak God’s Word, but in the book of Acts, some Jewish rulers commanded the disciples not to speak of Christ anymore. Their reply: “We must obey God rather than men.” In the Roman Empire, the day came when Christians were commanded to worship the emperor or die – they chose to die.

READY FOR EVERY GOOD DEED – Christians should not only be law-abiding model citizens, but in both actions and attitudes, we should seek to be salt and light and to show Christ by good deeds.

One responsibility to our nation that we don’t think about enough is our calling to be thankful for and pray our secular leaders. We need to remember 1 Timothy 2 in our day of professional complainers and critics about every level of human authority.

1 Timothy 2:1-4 (NASB95) ¹First of all, then, I urge that **entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men,** ²**for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.** ³This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

We should desire all types of men to be saved, including those in authority who may make our lives difficult. We should be thankful for and pray for our leaders, as the early church fathers did.

Clement of Rome (possibly the fellow worker Paul mentions in Philippians 4:3) prayed the following prayer near the end of the first century, no doubt thinking of the severe persecution by the emperor Nero, and more recently by Domitian:

Guide our steps to walk in holiness and righteousness and singleness of heart, and to do those things that are good and acceptable in Thy sight, **and in the sight of our rulers** ... while we render obedience to Thine almighty and most excellent name, **and to our earthly rulers and governors.**

Thou, O Lord and Master, hast given them the power of sovereignty through Thine excellent and unspeakable might, that we, knowing the glory and honour which Thou hast given them, may submit ourselves to them, in nothing resisting Thy will. Grant them therefore, O Lord, health, peace, concord and stability, that they may without failure administer the government which Thou hast committed to them. For Thou, O heavenly Master, King of the ages, dost give to the sons of men glory and honour and power over all things that are in the earth. Do Thou, O Lord, direct their counsel according to what is good and acceptable in Thy sight, that they, administering in peace and gentleness with godliness the power which Thou hast committed to them, may obtain Thy favour.⁵

Justin Martyr, the second-century theologian and church Father, wrote to the Roman emperor Antoninus Pius,

“Everywhere we [Christians], more readily than all men, endeavour to pay to those appointed by you the taxes **both ordinary and extraordinary, as we have been taught by [Jesus]**.... Whence to God alone we render worship, but in other things we gladly serve you, acknowledging you as kings and rulers of men, and **praying** that with your kingly power you be found to possess also sound judgment.”⁶

During a time **when Rome was especially hostile toward Christians**, a later church Father, Tertullian, wrote,

“Without ceasing, for all our emperors we offer prayer. We pray for life prolonged; for security to the empire; for protection to the imperial house; for brave armies, a faithful senate, a virtuous people, the world at rest, whatever, as man or Caesar, an emperor would wish.”⁷

Look at Romans 12, a letter written specifically to those in Rome in the midst of this pagan nation.

The question had come up: What if you have an unjust or evil government that wrongs you or even persecutes you and takes away your rights (like the Roman govt. did)? Romans answers this

Romans 12:14, 17-13:7 (NASB95)

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse ...

¹⁷Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. ¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. ¹⁹Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,” says the Lord. ²⁰“BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD.” ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. ^{13:1}Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. ²Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. ³For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; ⁴for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. ⁵Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for *rulers* are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. ⁷Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

I read a Christian website someone sent me that tried to explain away our civic duty in this passage by saying Romans 13 doesn't refer to government, but only our submission to church leaders and rulers. But that doesn't work with the context, the words in the Greek language, the mention of taxes and customs, and verse 4 that mentions “bearing the sword” – deadly force, capital punishment.

Taxes have been around since Genesis where God directed Joseph to collect a fifth of all they produced each year to be paid to the Egyptian govt. That particular twenty percent “tax” was divinely sanctioned, if not divinely authored, and was divinely blessed. In the law God gave to Israel, there were numerous taxes and tithes of possessions taken to support their government and religious and civil leaders, and as you read different writers that add them up, I've seen some say that approximately 24% of their resources a year might be given, some would put the figure around 30 or less.

Consider the following historical background:

‘[Both in ancient and modern times many taxes were unjust and many] taxes that *are* justly levied are *not* justly spent by the government body that collects them. Yet, just as with submission to human government in general (Rom. 13:1–5), Paul makes no exception in verses 6–7 for a Christian’s paying *all* taxes ... the Roman government of New Testament times was pagan, despotic, and often merciless. Some of its emperors declared themselves to be gods and demanded worship from every person in the empire. Also as noted before, the empire had many more slaves than freemen ... And of special concern to Jews and Christians was the fact that part of the Roman taxes were used to support pagan temples and other religious institutions throughout the empire.

... tax collectors ... were free to charge virtually any rate they wanted and to collect taxes almost as often as they wanted, under the protection of Roman soldiers. Whatever they collected over the prescribed amount for Rome, they could keep for themselves. As would be expected, abuse was rampant, and because most of them were fellow countrymen, tax collectors often were more hated than the Roman officials and soldiers. The gospels vividly reveal how much the tax collector was despised in Israel ... the backdrop for Paul’s teaching about the Christian’s obligation regarding taxes.’⁸

Turn to Matthew 17 to see what Christ had to say about taxes in this type of ungodly society and ungodly system of administering.

Matthew 17:24-27 (NASB95)

²⁴ When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the two-drachma *tax* came to Peter and said, “Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma *tax*?” ²⁵ He said, “Yes.” And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?” ²⁶ When Peter said, “From strangers,” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are exempt. ²⁷ “However, **so that we do not offend them**, go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and **give it to them for you and Me.**”

This is important, because even though Jesus could have rightly rationalized a way to escape paying the tax, He did not want to offend the authorities – testimony is at stake in our civil obedience.

My former pastor has pointed out:

‘The force of Jesus’ example in this instance was especially compelling for His followers. He explained to Peter, in effect, that, as the Son of God, He had no obligation to pay a tax to support God’s own house (v. 26), but that, as the Son of Man, He did so in order not to give offense to the civil authorities and to be an example to His disciples (v. 27). His action on that occasion is all the more poignant in that the contribution went to the coffers of the high priest and chief priests, who, a short while later, would put Him to death. The money, in fact, went into the treasury of the temple, which had become so corrupt that Jesus had already cleansed it once of its moneychangers and sacrifice sellers (John 2:14–16) and would do so again shortly before His arrest and crucifixion (Matt. 21:12–13). It was even out of the temple treasury that thirty pieces of silver would be taken to bribe Judas into betraying Christ. Knowing all of that, Jesus paid the tax without hesitation or reservation.’⁹

Matthew 22:17-21 (NASB95)

¹⁷“Tell us then, what do You think? **Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?**” ¹⁸ But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, “Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? ¹⁹“Show Me the coin *used* for the poll-tax.” And they brought Him a denarius. ²⁰ And He said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” ²¹ They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” Then He said to them, “Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s.”

‘He was stating unequivocally that paying taxes to human government is a God-ordained obligation. The facts that Rome was despotic, pagan, often unjust, and even the fact that the caesar depicted on that particular coin was Augustus—who called himself the son of god—did not abrogate the obligation. Taxes are to be paid.’¹⁰

Our pattern is Jesus, who Himself as King of Kings obeyed His earthly authorities, beginning with obeying His parents, and showed respect to Roman rulers and authorities as an example, even to extorting tax collectors who worked for godless authorities.

Back to Titus 3

² **to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.**

Malign = “speak evil” (KJV), “slander” (NIV), “discredit, damage the reputation of” (*NET Notes*), insult, speak against

This doesn’t mean we shouldn’t deplore sin or even denounce sin, but it does mean we must not detest or defame the sinners themselves, who we are to love. They need saving grace, not our slander.

Submission to government in general doesn’t mean we can’t disagree strongly, such as with the CA Supreme Court ruling legalizing homosexual marriage, which I believe we should speak out God’s truth about it. But we are not to engage in hateful rhetoric against homosexuals as some quasi-Christian groups do that you see on the media and we even see sometimes in our community. Our concern is not personal animosity towards govt. or individuals, because our enemy is not flesh and blood but is the spiritual forces of evil that blind the unbelieving (that we used to be). We are not to malign men, but we are called to magnify God’s truth by speaking it in love, even publicly where it’s not popular.

Unlike the original readers of this book we live in a society where we can actually vote and have a say in many matters, and if you believe God’s Word that homosexuality is sin and you want to retain the biblical definition of marriage in our State, I believe you should vote on that in November. If you’re not registered to vote, if for that reason alone, I feel compelled to compel you to register.

We are not to curse or revile – it says that even angels do not revile Satan but instead they call on the Lord to rebuke him. You do see many of the Psalms calling on the Lord to deal with the unrighteous – why not take your concerns about sinners in our world and take them to the Lord in prayer like the psalms rather than unloading on your fellow man (after all, the Lord’s the only one who can do anything about it, not your neighbor)

Be Peacable = not disturbing the peace, “avoid quarrelling” (ESV), don’t be quarreling or combative. Our only offense should be the cross we preach, not the conduct we display. Some people will be upset by the message, but we don’t want it to be due to our manner or arrogance, etc.

Gentle-considerate, reasonable, forbearing, conciliatory, courteous

“**showing every consideration**” (NASB) or “perfect courtesy” (ESV) or “all meekness” (KJV) or “all humility” (NKJV) or “true humility” (NIV) or “always showing gentleness” (HCSB)

ALL MEN – all types of men, probably not just referring to civic leaders or governing authorities now, this verse has moved to the Christian’s obligation to all people. Look at 2:11 where it says God’s grace appeared to all men (although we know most reject salvation when it’s offered, God’s common grace still was available to the most pagan on the island of Crete). The implication is that since God’s grace is extended to them we must extend grace to them as well, a theme we see Jesus teach many times (ex: Sermon on Mount). The ‘all men’ we should treat this way would include unbelievers, and we might even say, especially unbelievers based on the context (see 3:3ff).

Let’s let the Apostle Peter have the last word in 1 Peter 2. This passage helps us see the ultimate motive behind all this.

1 Peter 2:13-3:6 (NASB95)

¹³ Submit yourselves **for the Lord’s sake** to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, ¹⁴ or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. ¹⁵ **For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.** ¹⁶ *Act* as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but *use it* as bondslaves of God. ¹⁷ Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, **honor the king.** ¹⁸ Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but **also to those who are unreasonable.** ¹⁹ For this *finds* favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows **when suffering unjustly.** ²⁰ For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer *for it* you patiently endure it, this *finds* favor with God. ²¹ For **you have been called for this purpose**, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you **an example for you to follow** in His steps, ²² WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; ²³ and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting *Himself* to Him who judges righteously . . . **3:1** In the same way, you **wives, be submissive** to your own husbands so that **even if any of them are disobedient to the word**, they may be won without a word by the **behavior** of their wives, ² as they observe your chaste and **respectful behavior.** . . .

¹⁵ but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, **yet with gentleness and reverence;**

The gospel is very much at stake in the way we live before unbelievers. Ultimately God’s glory is the motive here:

Jesus said that we are to be salt of the earth and the light of the world that shines before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:13-16).

1 Peter 4:11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; **so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.**

¹ As cited by Paul Apple, *A Devotional Commentary on the Book of Titus*, available at www.bibleoutlines.com

² Philips Brooks, *Lectures on Preaching* (New York: Dutton, 1877), 59.

³ Steve Lawson's sermon, with these quotes and others, is available from www.shepherdsconference.org or published in *Famine in the Land*, and also in *Bibliotheca Sacra Journal* Vol. 158, p. 331.

⁴ <http://www.biblebb.com/files/MAC/56-23.htm>

⁵ *1 Clement* ix.2–lxi.2. Cited in F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* [London: Tyndale Press, 1967], p. 235

⁶ “The First Apology of Justin,” chapter 27 in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, ed.. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, rep. 1973, p. 168].

⁷ “Apology,” chapter 30 in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 42.

⁸ MacArthur, John. (1991). *Romans*. Chicago: Moody Press, p. 229.

⁹ MacArthur, 233.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*