

How to be a Good Citizen and Neighbor
(Titus 3:1-8)

Background:

- **Letter written during reign of Emperor Nero**
 - He was a fornicator; had a homosexual marriage
 - Killed mother, step-brother, two wives.
- **#1 religion was Emperor Worship**

Background:

- **Titus 1:5** – Paul left Titus behind in *Crete*.
- **Crete Civilization:**
 - Viewed self as the birthplace of Zeus; idolatrous
 - Worshipped mother of Zeus; sexual practices
 - Naked artwork and statues everywhere.
- **Titus 1:12** – Cretan Reputation
 - They were a warring, judgmental, factious, argumentative group.

How are we to behave as good citizens?

- Rise up, rebel against ungodly government?
- Use politics to change country into a Christian nation?
- Get in face; Point out how awful sinners are all the time?
- **NOT what Paul teaches in Titus 3:1-8.**

How are Christians to be good citizens?

- **Titus 3:1** “Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work.”

How are Christians to be good citizens?

- **1) They need to be **submissive** to rulers & authorities.**
- **1 Pet 2:13-14** “**Submit yourselves** for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.”

How are Christians to be good citizens?

- 1) They need to be **submissive** to rulers & authorities.
- Subjection is a “**voluntary** attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, or carrying a burden” (Strong's).
- **Eph 5:24** “But as the church is **subject** to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.”
- It has an attitude of **honor** and **respect** (Eph 5:33).

How are Christians to be good citizens?

- 1) They need to be **submissive** to rulers & authorities.
- **Submission has an attitude of honor and respect.**
 - 1 Pet 2:16-17 “Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.”

How are Christians to be good citizens?

- 2) They need to be **obedient**.
- Rom 13:2 – If we resist authorities, we resist **God**.
- **Disobedience sends the wrong message about Christianity** (Titus 2:5,8,15).

How are Christians to be good citizens?

- 2) They need to be **obedient**.
- **Exception to the rule: Acts 5:29**
– "We must obey God rather than men."
- **1 Tim 2:1-2** "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, **godly** and **dignified** in every way."

How are Christians to be good citizens?

- 3) They need to be **ready** for every good work
- “Let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, **so as to help cases of urgent need**, and not be unfruitful.” (Titus 3:14)

Christian Neighbors (Titus 3:2)

- 1) Are To **Speak Evil** Of No One
- **They are not to slander or malign someone.**
Especially when someone mistreats / slanders us, we are not to repay evil for evil --cf. Rom 12:14,17.

Christian Neighbors (Titus 3:2)

- 2) Are To Avoid **Quarreling**
- Don't be argumentative; be peaceable (NAS/NKJ).
- This stands in contrast to the false teachers in vv9-10, who are trying to pick fights and are divisive.

Christian Neighbors (Titus 3:2)

- 3) Are To Be **Gentle**
- I.e. We are to be equitable, fair, patient.
- Rom 12:18 – “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live **peaceably** with all.”

Christian Neighbors (Titus 3:2)

4) Are To Show Perfect Courtesy Toward All People (ESV) / Show All Humility to All Men (NKJ)

- **When we need to have that humble attitude...**
- **2 Tim 2:24-26** – when correct opponents
- **1 Pet 3:15-16** – when defending our hope

But Why?

- **1) WE used to be just like them.**
- **Titus 3:3** “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.”
- **Matt 7:12** “Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them...”

But Why?

2) The Gospel has appeared to change our lives.

- **Titus 3:4-8** “But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life.”