

25-0302p Transcript

25-0302p - *Why Are We Here?*, John Nousek

Bible Reader: John Nousek

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Why Are We Here?

Transcript (0:04 - 26:57)

Scripture Reading

Bible Reader: John Nousek

Titus 1:15-16,

(0:30) And so I'd like to begin by reading from the book of Titus. (0:36) It's chapter 1, verses 15 and 16, which says,

(0:44) To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure. (0:53) But even their mind and conscience are defiled. (0:57) They profess to know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work. (1:11)

Transcript

Preacher: John Nousek

(0:04) Good evening. (0:05) So this evening's message from God's Word comes to us with the title, (0:12) Why Are We Here? (0:13) It sounds like one of those big universal questions that we all seem to come to at some point in our lives. (0:21) But I will tell you, while we are here, there are things that God expects of us.

(0:30) And so I'd like to begin by reading from the book of Titus. (0:36) It's chapter 1, verses 15 and 16, which says, (0:44) To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure. (0:53) But even their mind and conscience are defiled.

(0:57) They profess to know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work. ()

(1:15) Now, I looked up that phrase, good work, (1:24) because what I realized is 53 times in the scriptures, the phrase, good work, or good works, appears. (1:41) And it says 18 of those instances were in the Old Testament, but primarily it's in the New Testament, 35 times.

(1:54) And the most frequent occurrence is found in the book of Titus. (2:01) Six times. (2:07) And the book of Titus, this letter is written by Paul to Titus, a young man, (2:14) and he remained on the

island of Crete, and that's when he received this letter.

(2:20) It provides specific instructions on the role of elders within the church, (2:26) as well as encouragement towards godly behavior for those who believe in God. (2:32) And so I read that phrase, good work, and it caused me to do a few things. (2:44) First of all, have you ever heard someone say, or even thought maybe to yourself, (2:50) gee, I wish I could find some really good work.

(2:55) And in that sense, what you might be thinking is, (3:00) something I really enjoy, something I want to do, something that seems easy to me, (3:05) almost to the point where it's the kind of work where you don't even have to get out of bed. (3:10) And still they pay you. (3:12) Wow, that'd be good.

That'd be really good work. (3:16) But that's not what we're talking about here. (3:24) See, I looked up in my concordance the word good as it relates to this, (3:32) and in the six times I saw it in the book of Titus, (3:37) there are two different uses, there are two different Greek words for good.

(3:42) One is agathon, and that's good in the sense like, (3:49) for those that are here, you can see, like this pencil right here. (3:54) It's a good pencil. It does what I want it to do.

(3:57) It operates, it functions like a pencil. (4:02) It's good for its purpose. (4:04) Well, that's one kind of good.

(4:07) But there's another good, and if I'm mispronouncing this, I hope not. (4:14) I think I can do this. (4:16) Kalos.

K-A-L-O-S. Kalos. (4:22) And that kind of good is the beautiful, valuable, virtuous, better, fair, well-worthy, (4:33) completely different type of good.

(4:36) And even in my strong concordance, it specifically says, (4:40) in the definition of this word, kalos, it says it's not the other one. (4:47) It's not agathon. (4:50) That's surprising, but don't get those two confused, okay? (4:54) We're not talking about a pencil.

(4:56) We're talking about virtuous. (5:03) So in the book of Titus, I'd like to read that phrase one more time, the second verse. (5:12) They profess to know God, but in works they deny him, (5:17) being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.

(5:27) So those that have been disqualified because of their abominations, their disobedience, (5:35) are not even qualified for the good like the pencil. (5:44) They're not even good for that. (5:48) That's really something.

(5:55) Paul is giving Titus a tool here, a tool in order to discern the difference between, (6:02) if you will, the wheat from the chaff, the sheep from the goats, (6:07) the righteous from the unrighteous, the good and the abominable. (6:19) So I'd like to read Titus 2, verses 6 through 8. (6:28) Paul says to Titus, (6:30) Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, (6:34) in all things showing yourselves to be a pattern of good works. (6:39) Now this is the kalos, the virtuous good.

(6:43) In all things, showing yourself to be a pattern of good works. (6:50) In doctrine, showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, (6:57) sound speech that cannot be condemned. (7:00) That one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.

(7:10) And then dropping down a few verses in Titus 2, 11 through 14, (7:16) For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, (7:21) teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, (7:28) we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age. (7:35) Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, (7:40) who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from every lawless deed (7:47) and purify for himself his own special people, (7:53) zealous for good works. (7:56) Again, the virtuous good works.

(8:04) And in Titus 3, 1 to 2, (8:08) Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, (8:11) to obey, to be ready for every good work, (8:17) to speak evil of no one, (8:19) to be peaceable, gentle, (8:23) showing all humility to all men. (8:31) So we have three times now, Titus is being instructed about good works. (8:40) He's a young man.

I said that before. (8:44) He probably has all sorts of things that he's capable of doing. (8:49) He probably has, as young men often do, few ailments that stop him from doing all kinds of hefty things.

(9:00) So is that what we're to be doing? (9:02) Are we expected to be lifting heavy lumber and doing all sorts of very strenuous activities? (9:15) Well, what we've heard so far is just good works. (9:19) What does that look like? (9:21) For Titus it might be, for a young man it might be, those kinds of strenuous things. (9:33) God's Word that says keeping ourselves from harmful speech is pleasing as a good work.

(9:43) I just read verse 2, to speak evil of no one, (9:46) to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. (9:51) That's even to those that he said earlier, to be your adversary. (9:58) All men, it doesn't say all men except, that can be a tough one.

(10:07) God does give us tall orders sometimes. (10:12) Proverbs 17.9, 17.9 in Proverbs it says, (10:22) He who covers a transgression seeks love, (10:27) but he who repeats a matter separates friends. (10:33) That sounds like a good work.

(10:36) Sometimes it's best, as one grandmother said to me, (10:42) Johnny, zip it. (10:51) And in James 1, 26 and 27, (10:56) it reads, if anyone among you thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue, (11:04) the bridle being a restraint, like with a horse, (11:09) you have a bridle and you put it around its head and direct it where you want it to go. (11:18) If anyone among you thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue, (11:22) but this deceives his own heart.

(11:24) This one's religion is useless. (11:29) Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, (11:35) to visit orphans and widows in their trouble (11:39) and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. (11:44) So if you want to please God, (11:48) just take care of those who are unable to take care of themselves.

(11:54) I think we've seen a lot of those folks in our day. (11:59) There are people that cannot take care of themselves. (12:03) He says, visit the orphans and widows in their trouble (12:11) and, there's the and, to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

(12:20) So, here's a warning. (12:23) Let's not trick ourselves into playing games with what we do. (12:29) Because, on one hand, we go about our day and we think, (12:35) oh, today I'm going to do this wonderful thing.

(12:39) And, check, got it done. (12:43) That's how it is. I'm okay now.

(12:47) Except, also in the book of James, in the third chapter, (12:52) God gives us a couple of verses about that. (12:56) James 3, chapter 3, verses 11 through 13. (13:03) Does a spring send forth water and bitter from the same opening? (13:10) Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear fig trees? (13:15) Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

(13:21) Can't have it both ways. (13:23) If you want to please God. (13:27) Who is wise and understanding among you? (13:29) Let him show by, what? (13:33) Good conduct, that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.

(13:43) So, that again is the same word, the same virtuous word, (13:49) kalos, for good. (13:53) And, the next chapter in James, (13:57) Therefore, to him who knows to do good, this is chapter 4, verse 17, (14:04) to him who knows to do good, the same kalos, (14:09) and does not do it, to him it is a sin. (14:16) So, when it's time to act, (14:19) and we see it, (14:21) we see someone in distress, (14:23) we see a need that needs met, (14:29) we turn our back on that, (14:31) because, (14:35) it is sin.

(14:38) That's what God says. (14:40) So, what exactly should we be doing? (14:44) You know, God gives us examples. (14:47) In Matthew 25, (14:50) verses 42 to 46, (14:58) Matthew 25, 42 to 46, (15:01) For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me.

(15:04) I was thirsty, and you didn't give me a drink. (15:08) I was a stranger, and you didn't invite me into your home. (15:11) I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing.

(15:16) I was sick, and in prison, and you didn't visit me. (15:22) Then, they will reply, (15:25) Lord, when did we ever see you hungry, or thirsty, (15:28) or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, (15:32) and not help you? (15:35) And he will answer, (15:37) I tell you the truth, (15:39) when you refused to help the least of these, (15:43) my brothers and sisters, (15:45) you were refusing to help me. (15:50) And they will go away into eternal punishment, (15:53) but the righteous will go into eternal life.

(16:01) So, God tells us. (16:05) My words, not his, but he tells us. (16:07) Keep your eyes peeled.

(16:10) Because situations are going to come up. (16:15) He doesn't say, (16:18) only those that sit next to us in the pew, (16:21) or only those that believe all the same things (16:25) that we believe. (16:28) He tells us.

(16:31) All men. (16:34) Here's another example. (16:36) In Acts 9, verses 36 through 42.

(16:44) It's an account of a person by the name of Dorcas. (16:50) In Acts 9. (16:52) 36 to 42. (16:54) At Joppa, there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, (16:57) which is translated Dorcas.

(17:00) This woman was full of good works (17:05) and charitable deeds, (17:07) which she did. (17:09) But it happened in those days that she became sick (17:12) and died. (17:13) When they had washed her and laid her in an upper room, (17:17) and since Lydda was near Joppa, (17:19) and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, (17:23) they sent two men to him, (17:25) imploring him not to delay in coming to them.

(17:30) Then Peter arose (17:32) and went with them. (17:34) When he had come, (17:36) they brought him to the upper room, (17:39) and all the widows stood by him weeping, (17:42) showing the tunics and garments, (17:45) which Dorcas had made while she was with them. (17:50) But Peter put them all out (17:53) and knelt down (17:55) and prayed.

(17:57) And turning to the body, he said, (17:59) Tabitha, (18:02) arise. (18:04) And she opened her eyes, (18:06) and when she saw Peter, (18:09) she sat up. (18:11) Then she gave, (18:13) gave her his hand, (18:16) then he gave her his hand (18:18) and lifted her up.

(18:19) And when he had called the saints and widows, (18:23) he presented her alive. (18:25) And it became known throughout all Joppa, (18:29) and many believed on the Lord. (18:32) So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa (18:35) with Simon the Tanner.

(18:39) I read this, (18:41) and I'll tell you what it means, (18:43) or what it says to me. (18:46) This means we should look for opportunities to do good. (18:53) See, (18:54) Dorcas abounded or excelled in good works.

(18:58) Those that knew her (19:01) were weeping over this woman who died because (19:05) she was nice. (19:07) She helped. (19:09) She did all these great things.

(19:13) I wonder if there were people in her crew, (19:15) in her circle, (19:18) that didn't agree with everything she had to say (19:21) and didn't agree with (19:25) everything she did, (19:27) but were recipients of some good deeds that she did. (19:34) And she was (19:36) raised from the dead. (19:42) So, (19:46) so what are these good works he wants, (19:50) that God wants from his people? (19:52) Well, is it to provide for orphans and widows in their distress? (19:57) Yes.

(19:59) You read that in James 1. (20:00) Is it to apply (20:02) wisdom and sometimes to ignore, (20:06) cover an offense? (20:09) Yes, we read that in Proverbs 17. (20:13) Is it to give a glass of cool water on a hot day, (20:17) even to those that offend us? (20:21) Yes. (20:23) Read that in Matthew, (20:25) chapter 25.

(20:27) It's the whole package. (20:30) And you may say, (20:32) yeah, but what can I do? (20:36) I don't know how to make clothing (20:40) or (20:42) I don't really know any orphans and widows. (20:49) And although it's March, it still snowed this morning, (20:52) so we don't have too many hot days just yet.

(20:57) You know, (21:00) but there are many things that we can do. (21:03) And we need to look out for those, (21:07) for those opportunities (21:08) because God said so. (21:11) In John chapter 13, verses 30 to 35, (21:16) excuse me, verse 34 and 35, (21:20) it reads, (21:22) a new commandment I give to you, (21:24) that you love one another as I have loved you, (21:27) that you also (21:30) love one another.

(21:33) By this, (21:34) all will know that you are my disciples. (21:38) If you have love for one another, (21:45) all will know, (21:47) even those that might not care less about me. (21:56) But yet, (21:58) does that mean I need to have all these things going on? (22:01) I need to be visiting orphans and widows (22:03) and I need to be over here and I need to be... (22:07) Well, let me tell you something.

(22:09) In 1 Corinthians 12, verse 17, (22:12) it says, (22:15) if the whole body were an eye, (22:16) where would the sense of hearing be? (22:19) If the whole body were an ear, (22:22) where would the sense of smell be? (22:26) There will be opportunities. (22:29) That's what it seems to say to us. (22:33) I don't expect you to have this whole thing (22:37) every time, (22:40) but it's a matter of the heart.

(22:44) Can we check on somebody (22:46) who hasn't, we haven't seen in a while? (22:48) Give

them a call, make sure they're okay. (22:51) See if they need anything. (22:54) Offer encouragement to someone (22:55) who just isn't quite feeling it these days.

(23:02) Maybe you're repairing your neighbor's screen door. (23:06) They don't know how to do that. (23:09) They don't know the first thing about screen doors.

(23:12) Maybe you do. (23:14) Maybe you don't. (23:18) You know, just sometimes a kind word is a lot.

(23:22) So God wants his children, that's us, (23:24) to do these good works (23:25) using whatever skills or abilities (23:28) he has granted us. (23:31) It's of great importance (23:33) to the Messiah. (23:38) This is how we demonstrate (23:39) belonging to Christ, (23:42) our obedience to his word, (23:45) living out our love for the Lord.

(23:47) We show our love for God (23:49) and for others (23:50) because they bear the image of the creator. (23:57) But we don't do these works (23:59) to become saved. (24:01) Rather, we do them (24:03) out of obedience (24:06) because we love God.

(24:10) He loved us first. (24:13) So, (24:16) let me give you this one warning here. (24:19) In Matthew 6, verses 3 and 4, (24:25) well, I'm going to start with verse 1. (24:30) Matthew 6, verse 1. (24:33) Pay heed that you do not (24:34) do your charitable deeds (24:37) before men to be seen by them, (24:39) otherwise you have no reward (24:40) from your Father in heaven.

(24:43) Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, (24:46) do not sound the trumpet before you, (24:48) as the hypocrites do in the synagogues (24:50) and in the streets, (24:51) that they may have glory before men. (24:56) Assuredly, I say to you, (24:59) they have their reward. (25:05) Therefore, (25:08) but when you do a charitable deed, (25:12) do not let your left hand (25:14) know what your right hand is doing, (25:17) that your charitable deed may be in secret, (25:21) and your Father, (25:23) who sees in secret, (25:25) will himself reward you openly.

(25:31) God's Word emphasizes discretion (25:34) and selflessness in charitable acts, (25:37) but (25:37) it's not the pencil kind of good. (25:43) It's the virtuous good. (25:48) And finally, in Galatians 6, 9, (25:53) and let us not grow weary (25:54) while doing good, (25:56) for in due season, (25:59) we shall reap (26:00) if, (26:03) where's that if? (26:04) In there all the time.

(26:06) If we do not lose heart. (26:08) Therefore, as we have opportunity, (26:11) let us do good to all, (26:14) especially those who are of the household of faith. (26:19) So there we have it.

(26:21) Here to do good to all, (26:24) especially (26:25) to those who are of the household of faith. (26:29) To those that (26:30) could care less about me, (26:33) to care less about (26:34) being a Christian maybe. (26:37) We're to do good to them too.

(26:41) So as we leave here tonight, (26:44) I encourage us, (26:46) all of us, (26:47) to let our hearts be pure (26:49) and eager to do, (26:52) to do good in whatever capacity or ability the Lord has given us. (26:56) Thank you.