

Ambition!

- (Image: dartboard)
- What is your ambition, your burning desire for life?
 - what do you want to achieve before you die?
 - what impact do you want to leave on this world before you leave it?
- No idea whether what went through your head just now is worthy or not!!
 - but I do know what Paul's ambition for your life is...
 - at least, his ambition for these Christians in Crete... and we can transfer his ambition for them to us here tonight...!
 - **that we are godly**
 - from elsewhere in Paul's writings, "put on the new self, (or nature) created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:24)
- Why?
 - 1. To fulfil Christ's purpose in saving us, **Titus 2:14**
 - 2. To commend the gospel, **Titus 2:5, 2:8, 2:10**
- Aiming at commending being godly, like Christ and commending the gospel

Be subject

- (1) *Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, (2) to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men.*

- It would be easy to either **over** or **under** interpret these verses:

Over

- God's word says... so I must submit...
 - even when not allowed to gather for worship?
 - even when casual injustice is meted out, perhaps with the hope of a bribe to straighten things out?

Under

- But perhaps the more insidious danger is the reverse
 - because of the problems, allow ourselves to not heed the injunction, and think we can ignore whatever we think is a bad law or rule?
- Paul's intention is about commending the gospel - in this case to those in authority
 - do our lives commend the gospel?
 - or do we cause just as much hassle and difficulty as the rest of the populace?
 - at work as much as in respect of the government?
- *Do we live such good lives that the good news is thus commended?*

The Kindness and Love of God

- (3) *At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.*

- (4) *But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, (5) he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, (6) whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, (7) so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

- Tells again the story of our salvation:
 - we were all in the muck - none of us any different, none of us superior
 - spelling out the nature of our living, if not all the details!
 - then God took the initiative, he appeared - the first epiphany!

Titus 3:1-8 The Appearing That Makes You Humble Fintry, 27/9/2009, pm

- God's mercy is stressed
 - multiple analogies are piled up here... (v.5)
 - washing... rebirth... renewal...
 - result is that we are now in-dwelt by the Holy Spirit, poured out on us through what Jesus achieved
 - note how the Holy Spirit is poured out **generously**, unstintingly
 - another couple of images or analogies are employed in v.7...
 - **justification**, declaring justified by a court
 - and **heirs** - inheritors, members of the family, and what an inheritance!
- This is a reiteration
 - these are the grounds for the faith of God's elect that Paul writes for the purpose of encouraging (Titus 1:1,2)
 - In the flow of his argument, he has explored how different people are to live having accepted the salvation held out in Christ
 - here, the emphasis has been on being subject to rulers and authorities
 - because our ambition is to live godly lives, flowing from our salvation and commending that very salvation
 - And what is that salvation? It is that we were once foolish, disobedient, and so, but are now saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ!

Stress these things

- (8) *This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.*
- Which brings us to Paul's conclusion of this section:
 - so, Titus, **stress these things!** (v.8)
 - go over and over it, say it again and again
 - emphasise it, remind folk of it
 - revisit it often...
 - How can we make sure we revisit?
 - how can you profit from revisiting the story of your salvation?