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# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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## INSTRUCTION TO LIVE AS GOOD CITIZENS Titus 3:1-8

Christians live in two spheres and the tremendous contrast between those two spheres often poses a very difficult challenge. **On the one hand, Christians are citizens of a heavenly kingdom with Christ as their Lord. On the other hand, they are called of Christ to represent Him in the midst of an age that is passing away and in a world system that is opposed to the plan and purposes of God.** They live in the world, but they are not of the world (John 15:19; 17:14, 19). As those who live in this world, they are to live as aliens and sojourners and as ambassadors for the Savior without being contaminated by the age and the world system whose god is the devil himself (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 1:17f; 2:11-12; 2 Cor. 5:20). The apostle now addresses this very issue in 3:1-11.

### Instructions to Titus

Date	Lesson	Text
07/10	Introduction	
07/17	Greetings	1:1-4
07/24	Elders	1:5-9
07/31	False Teachers	1:10-16
08/07	Various Groups	2:1-10
08/14	Godly Behavior	2:11-15
<b>08/21</b>	<b>Good Citizens</b>	<b>3:1-8</b>
08/28	Final Instructions	3:9-15
09/04	Summary and Review	

In verse 1, the apostle simply summarizes three key responsibilities—**submission, obedience, and preparation**—that promote good government and aid the work of governmental officials as keepers of law and order, which is their God-ordained task. It is right to hate the sin, to even become angry at the sinfulness that undermines the fiber of our society and that sets such a lousy example (cf. Eph. 4:26), but it is wrong for us to express this in ways that demonstrates hatefulness against the person and disrespect for the office. As verses 3-5 demonstrates, God hates our sin, but in the coming of Christ, He has shown His kindness and love toward us as sinners. This demonstration of God's love and kindness must temper our comments and attitudes toward others. Verse 3 shows that Paul is pointing to the reasons why Christians should obey the duties outlined in verses 1-2 and for living a life that is different from that of the world. The first of the two reasons given is a reminder of what we were before coming to the Savior with the second reason focusing on the kindness and love of God as the powerful source that leads to the change brought about in the Christian's life. In verses 4-7, the apostle again teaches us that the only cure for the darkness that has engulfed the world and that once engulfed us is the appearing of the Sun of Righteousness who has not only come to dispel the darkness, but has come with spiritual healing in His wings (Mal. 4:2). He shows us that it is the truth of the Lord Jesus in His life, death, and resurrection that is the foundation for the change that occurred in the life of the Cretan believers.

### Food for Thought

#### Heaven's Ambassadors

Our citizenship in heaven defines our duties here on earth. Let us go forth, as called of God, Redeemed by Jesus' precious blood; His love to show, His life to live, His message speak, His mercy give.

*Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.*

**(2 Cor 5:20 NKJV)**

*From "Our Daily Bread", June 12, 1998)*

These verses, chapter 3:1-8 have dealt with the believer's testimony in the world, a world that is divided politically, economically, religiously, culturally, racially, and domestically. In this fragmented world, God has called us to manifest His love through the gift of His Son in a way that not only brings people to a saving knowledge of Christ, but that demonstrates the power of the cross to bring people together in loving relationships.

*(Excerpt from "The Letter to Titus Commentary" by J. Hampton Keathley III)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **The Reminder to Live as Good Citizens in the World (3:1-2)**

*Good citizens are submissive (Rom 13:1-2)*

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. 2 Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves

*Good citizens are obedient (Eph 6:5-8)*

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. 6 Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. 7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, 8 because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

*Good citizens are ready to do good deeds (Gal 6:9-10)*

9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

*Good citizens don't slander (James 4:11)*

11 Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.

*Good citizens are peaceable (Rom 12:17-18)*

17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

*Good citizens are gentle (Col 3:12-14)*

12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

*Good citizens are considerate (Phil 2:3-4)*

3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

### **The Reasons for Living as Good Citizens in the World (3:3-8)**

*We have a past sinful condition (Eph 2:3)*

3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

*We have the love of God (Rom 8:38-39)*

8 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*We have been cleansed and renewed by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:11)*

11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

*We have been justified by grace (Rom 5:1-2)*

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

*We have been created to do good works (Eph 2:10)*

10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.