

## Introduction: The Church in ‘Babylon’

- After the initial growth of the early church when it became clear that believers would live as a minority within the surrounding culture, they appropriated the OT imagery of exile in order to make sense of what it would mean to live faithfully in the world.

Jer. 28:4-7—<sup>4</sup> “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: <sup>5</sup> Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. <sup>6</sup> Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. <sup>7</sup> But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

1 Pet. 1:1-2; 5:13—<sup>1</sup> Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion...<sup>2</sup> according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you...<sup>13</sup> She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son.

1 Tim. 2:1-4—<sup>1</sup> First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. <sup>3</sup> This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

**Key Point:** A significant part of what it means to live faithfully in the present age has to do with how we \_\_\_\_\_ to the established authorities that we live under and to the people that we interact with daily.

## Living as the Church in the World—Titus 3:1-10

### The Structure of Titus 3:1-3

**Imperative:** <sup>1</sup> *Remind them* to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, <sup>2</sup> to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

**Grounds:** <sup>3</sup> *For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*

- Titus is commanded to *remind* the believers of Crete of some important truths that Paul had likely taught them when he was among them.

“to be submissive”—ὑποτάσσω (*hypotassō*)—To subject oneself; to arrange under.

⇒ This is a \_\_\_\_\_ term that refers to a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, and recognition of a legitimate authority. (Used in 2:5 of younger wives recognizing the authority of their husbands)

- Believers are to recognize the importance of properly relating to *the governing authorities*.

“rulers and authorities”

⇒ The early church had a clear theology of what it meant to submit to lesser authorities:

Rom. 13:1-2—<sup>1</sup> Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. <sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

⇒ The submission of believers to the authority of the state is not \_\_\_\_\_.

Acts 5:27-29—<sup>27</sup> And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, <sup>28</sup> saying, “We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us.” <sup>29</sup> But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.”

“to be obedient”—πειθαρχέω (*peitharcheō*)—To obey or listen to (a ruler or a superior).

⇒ This term is used 4 times in the NT in reference to obeying both God (Acts 5:29,32) and man (Acts 27:21; Titus 3:1).

“to be ready for every good work”

⇒ The purpose of obeying the governing authorities is so that believers can serve God \_\_\_\_\_.

1 Pet. 3:13-14—<sup>13</sup> Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled

**Key Point:** To recognize the derived authority of the government is to recognize the \_\_\_\_\_ authority of God.

- Believers are to recognize the importance of properly relating to the *unbelievers* that they encounter in life.

“to speak evil of no one”—βλασφημέω (*blasphēmēō*)—To speak in a disrespectful way that demeans, denigrates, maligns.

“to avoid quarreling”—ἄμαχος (*amachos*)—Not contentious; abstaining from fighting, peaceable.

“to be gentle”—ἐπιεικὴς (*epieikēs*)—Not insisting on every right of letter of law or custom, yielding, kind, courteous, tolerant.

“to show perfect courtesy”—πραΰτης (*praiētēs*)—The quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one’s self-importance, gentleness, humility, courtesy, considerateness, meekness

⇒ This is the statement that sums up the \_\_\_\_\_ in which believers are to conduct themselves in relation to others.

⇒ These commands regarding conduct are particularly important because of the presence of \_\_\_\_\_ among them and the stereotypes associated with Cretan culture.

- **Living *faithfully* in the present is of particular importance because all who have come to Christ were formerly characterized by their *sin* and *rebellion*.**

(1) In our unbelief, we were characterized by \_\_\_\_\_.

“foolish”

“disobedient”

“led astray”

⇒ The imagery here is related both to the wisdom literature of the OT and Greco-Roman philosophy.

Prov. 1:7—The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Ecc. 10:2-3—<sup>2</sup> A wise man's heart inclines him to the right, but a fool's heart to the left. <sup>3</sup> Even when the fool walks on the road, he lacks sense, and he says to everyone that he is a fool.

(2) In our unbelief, we were characterized by \_\_\_\_\_.

“slaves”—δουλεύω (*douleuō*)— To be enslaved; metaphorically of those enslaved to a power, to yield to, give one's self up to.

“passions and pleasures”

⇒ The imagery here is of one who is directed solely by their \_\_\_\_\_, seeking to gratify them by any means possible.

(3) Sin and rebellion has a \_\_\_\_\_ effect on how we relate to others.

“malice”

+ “envy”

= “hatred”

⇒ The use of these terms in this order shows the negative progression of the way sin in our lives leads to \_\_\_\_\_ and therefore conflict with others.

**Key Point:** The way Christians relate to others should be indicative of their new \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ rather than their former way of life in unbelief.

## Concluding Thoughts

To live *faithfully* in ‘exile’ means to live as a \_\_\_\_\_.

1 Pet. 2:11-12—<sup>11</sup> Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

⇒ We \_\_\_\_\_ *the message of the Gospel!*

⇒ We \_\_\_\_\_ *the power of the Gospel!*

*“They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers. They marry, as do all others; they beget children; but they do not destroy their offspring. They have a common table, but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives. They love all men and are persecuted by all. They are unknown and condemned; they are put to death and restored to life. They are poor yet make many rich; they are in lack of all things and yet abound in all; they are dishonored and yet in their very dishonor are glorified. They are evil spoken of and yet are justified; they are reviled and bless; they are insulted and repay the insult with honor; they do good yet are punished as evildoers. When punished, they rejoice as if quickened into life; they are assailed by the Jews as foreigners and are persecuted by the Greeks; yet those who hate them are unable to assign any reason for their hatred.*

—Mathetes, Epistle to Diognetus (Late 2nd C.)