

**Small Group
Preparation and Discussion
Coram Deo- Regenesi of the Spirit**

Goals of Coram Deo Study

- ❖ The Coram Deo Study has one main goal—to learn to live with God again. Three sub-goals act as supports. Think of a stool. Living with God is the top of the stool and the three truths below are the legs.
 - Learning about God from His own mouth.
 - Guarding ourselves and other from being ashamed of the gospel.
 - Be proud enough of God to defend Him intelligently in a skeptical culture.

Preparation

- ❖ The fifth lesson covers the re-genesi of the Spirit. To prepare for this lesson please do the following:
 - Read the passage
 - Listen to the sermon on our website or SermonAudio while looking at the Bible study outline below. Take notes and figure out how you will guide the group to consider each aspect of the sermon.
 - Review the timeline below and determine how you want to tailor it to your group. The outline follows the order of events in each small group.

Welcome and Worship [5-10 minutes]

- ❖ Please review your fellowship manual for extensive details. Worship can be accomplished in many ways. You could read a Psalm. You could simply open with prayer. You could sing a hymn.
- ❖ Use your judgment. What kind of worship best sets the tone to connect people with the presence of God? Invoke Him into your midst.
- ❖ Possible Resources
 - Valley of Vision
 - Hymnal
 - The Psalms

Bible Study [15-30 minutes]

Below you will find the outline from the Coram Deo: The re-genesi of the Spirit sermon with questions. Remember, you are not holding a seminary class. You are seeking to bring attention to a few aspects of the Spirit. The application is included, but don't focus on that yet. The sharing time is the best place to explore the implications.

Passage:

“Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”
(Titus 3:1-7)

Coram Deo Series

Sermon

Titus 3:1-7

Re-gensis of the Spirit

Introduction to Series

The Hebrew people passed through the Red Sea. They gathered at the base of Mt. Sinai. Moses ascended Mt. Sinai to receive the law of the covenant. Yet, Moses later received another detailed description from God—the plans for a temple.

The temple foreshadowed the plan of God. The letter to the Hebrews explains this well. The different kinds of sacrifices and the different places to offer the sacrifices were typical of the reality. The sacrificial significance of the temple is obvious.

Yet, the temple has another set of details which are just as significant. The temple displays Edenic imagery. The menorah for the tree of life. Cherubim guard the holy of holies. These Edenic symbols combine with the sacrifices to present you with a timeless truth—God wants to dwell with again.

Review

This sermon series has sought to establish this fact. The Holy Spirit through Isaiah 6 taught us about the Father’s holiness, and through Genesis 3 about our sinfulness. Two weeks ago, the Holy Spirit taught you about the love of the Father, and last week about the grace of the Son. This week the Holy Spirit teaches us about himself.

Introduction to Letter

The truth about the Holy Spirit is this—He regenerates. This truth is discovered within the Apostle Paul’s teaching on Christian society. Let me orient you for a moment.

In the early 1700’s reverend Archibald Stobo set sail as a missionary from Scotland to the Carribean. Seeking supplies he harbored at John’s Island near Charleston S.C. While docked, a hurricane dismembered his boat. Archibald Stobo decided that this was God way to telling him, “You will be Church planter in South Carolina, not the Carribean.” Consequently, Stobo, first, planted St. John’s Island Presbyterian Church.

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Stobo's Presbytery in Scotland still had an interest in his work and would correspond with him. You could imagine the contents of the letter. "Dear, Reverend Stobo, we thank God for your safety and, of course your resolve. God himself has given you this work to do. We ask that you don't perform the work all by yourself. Therefore, as soon as able, establish qualified men as officers—both deacons and elders...etc."

This letter to Titus is similar. Titus is a native of the island of Crete. Paul writes to Titus giving instruction for this fledgling Church plant. Paul gives basic instructions for Titus to plant a Christian community or society on the Island of Crete:

The Formation of a Christian Society

- I. Titus to establish officers to shepherd the society.
 - A. Verse 5
 - B. List of Qualification (vv.6-9)
- II. Titus to establish congregants to maintain the society.
 - A. Older men (v.2:2)
 - B. Older women (v.3)
 - C. Younger women (v.4)
 - D. Younger men (v.6)
 - E. Employees and Business owners (v.9)

The Founders of a Christian Society

- I. God the Father
 - A. His grace/ gifts have appeared in this world. (v.11)
- II. Especially, the grace of Jesus the Christ (v.13,14)
 - A. Gave himself up for us
 1. Life
 2. Death
 - B. For a main goal of forming a new society:
 1. To remove us from every lawless deed (v.14)
 2. To purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.(v.14)

Now, Paul gave basic instructions to Titus. Yet, the final verse of chapter 2 reveals an interesting characteristic. Why does Paul say, "Let no one despise you?"

Paul is cluing us in on the fact that the Cretan Church has developed a moral sickness. A moral sickness of a Christian society. This will be the focus this morning. First, Paul defines the sickness. Then, Paul provides three antidotes. The third antidote reveals astonishing truths about the Holy Spirit.

The Sickness of a Christian Society

- I. Sickness (v.3:1)
 - A. Opposite may be presumed
 - B. Verse 2=
 1. speak evil of no one,
 2. be peaceable,
 3. gentle

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4. showing all humility
- C. The sickness of the Cretan Church was smug pride. Pride is the personal elevation we feel upon comparing ourselves with others. You look at the person next to you. You compare yourself to them, and you find yourself superior. Smug pride is your desire for the one you judged inferior to feel the pain of that inferiority and to kneel to your eminence.
- D. Pride is the look you see on a boy's face when he hits a baseball for the first time. Smug pride is when the boy teases another boy for not being able to hit a baseball. Pride is working hard to buy your first basic car. Smug pride is driving your father's red corvette to school and looking down on every other driver.

The Anti-dote of a Sick Christian Society

I. Anti-dote 1= remember your past

- A. Verse 3: "For"
- B. Verse 3: List
 1. Total enumeration of total corruption.
 - a. Corruption of mind- foolish, deceived.
 - b. Corruption of will- disobedient, serving many lusts.
 - c. Corruption of emotion- envious, hateful.
- C. Resistance to remembering past
 1. Child needs alteration between fever reducers.

II. Anti-dote 2= remember your part

- A. Verses 4 and 5
- B. Implied question: assuming you are superior to Cretan (1:12).
 1. What part did you play in your moral restoration?
- C. The only time a human's contribution is mentioned is to show they have no contribution.
 1. Not by works of righteousness which we have done. (3:5)
 2. This is more astonishing when we remember that Paul is speaking.
 - a. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: ⁵circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. (Phil. 3:4-7).
 - b. This is how Paul typically thinks: "*he who glories, let him glory in the Lord.*"
 - c. This is how the prophets before Paul thought, "Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty *man* glory in his might, Nor let the rich *man* glory in his riches; ²⁴But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me (Jeremiah 9:23-24).

III. Anti-dote 3= remember the 3rd. person.

- A. Clear away this difficulty of washing
 - 1. Is referring to baptism
 - 2. But not as a cause, but as a sign
- B. The cause is attributed to Jesus (v.6) and the Holy Spirit (v.5).
 - 1. In other words, any moral reformation in you is not your own doing but a supernatural act of Jesus through the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Show transition in series from redemption accomplished—redemption applied.
 - a. Love of Father
 - b. Grace of Son
 - c. Now- beginning the work of the Spirit
 - 2. First work, regeneration
 - a. The word is actually palagenesis.
 - a. Notice the ‘genesis’ word
 - b. A re-gensis
 - 3. Should make you think of the genesis account
 - a. ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.
 - b. So, too, now, hovering over the spiritual darkness.
 - a. Think of Nicodemus
 - c. Says, let there be light
 - d. Says, awake O sleeper and see
 - a. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound; That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found; Was blind, but now I see.
- C. Without comparison the Spirit recreates us in each corruption as seen before.
 - 1. Mind
 - 2. Will
 - 3. Emotion/ Affection
- D. *Q. 67. What is effectual calling?*
- E. *A. Effectual calling is the work of God’s almighty power and grace, whereby (out of his free and special love to his elect, and from nothing in them moving him thereunto^k) he doth, in his accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by his word and Spirit; savingly enlightening their minds,^m renewing and powerfully determining their wills, so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able freely to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein.^o*

Conclusion:

Summary:

- ❖ **Sickness**
- ❖ **Antidote 1: Remember Your Past**
- ❖ **Antidote 2: Remember Your Part**

❖ **Antidote 3: Remember the 3rd. Person**

The General Assembly debated whether or not to permit a study committee on the ordination of women to the diaconate. The Assembly was divided because of the suspicion of impure motives. Under the guise of providing valuable resources to the Church during a time where much pressure is placed upon PCA churches to ordain women, they presented the motion.

Two parties formed. Those for and those against a study committee. Those for the committee looked down upon the other party as uncaring about the women in their churches. They thought of themselves as biblically superior and were smug. Those against the committee looked down upon the other party as well. They would with a tone of insolence, “Why don’t they just read their Bibles.”

I find this interesting based upon another experience.

Recently, a student at AACC reported to me, that one of his professors rejects Christianity and especially reformed Christianity because they are arrogant, smug and insolently prideful.

A distinction needs to be made. Number 1, the study committee should have been voted against. Number 2, the non-Christian professor at AACC is wrong in her rejection of Christianity. However, even though we are right and they are wrong on both points, we have no right to have smug pride. For, we were once darkened as them. It was because of the love of God and the work of Jesus Christ that any change has taken place. In fact, it took the great regenerating work of the Holy Spirit to accomplish any progress in your souls. So, be convicted, be zealous for good works, but be humble.

Allow me to leave you with three **quotes** from the hymn writer John Newton:

“I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am”

“Whoever is truly humbled — will not be easily angry, nor harsh or critical of others. He will be compassionate and tender to the infirmities of his fellow-sinners, knowing that if there is a difference — it is grace alone which has made it! He knows that he has the seeds of every evil in his own heart.

“Although my memory's fading, I remember two things very clearly: I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior.”

Sharing [15-30 Minutes]

1. Have you ever had someone treat you with smug pride?
2. What are some points of pride in our culture? Race? Education? Religion?
3. Some say only Christianity takes away pride. Is this true?
4. Why did John Newton have humility?
5. Is re-gensis a work of the whole Trinity?

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Prayer Time [5-10 minutes]

Remember, all kinds of prayer requests may be taken, but keep a good balance. Make sure the emphasis falls on prayer for discovered needs relative to the re-generation of the Spirit.

Socialize [Up to you]

This is a time to be intentional in your relationships. God has placed you in a leadership position of some sort. Take it seriously!