

# Things That Need Constant Affirmation

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Titus 3:8

Titus is one of the “pastoral epistles” along with 1 & 2 Timothy. Paul wrote these letters to two of his “preacher boys” regarding the office and work of a pastor.

Our text (3:8) is another “*faithful saying*” of Paul contained in the pastoral epistles. “A *faithful saying*” is a statement that is reliable in all situations (cf. 1 Tim. 1:15; 4:8-9; 2 Tim. 2:11).

“*These things I will that thou AFFIRM CONSTANTLY...*” The word “*affirm*” means “to make firm; to assert strongly and publicly; to uphold or defend.” There are some things that a pastor must constantly emphasize and preach about. [WHY? Because they are important, and there is a danger of forgetting them.] **ILLUS: Flashing seat-belt light!**

“*These things are GOOD and PROFITABLE...*” **What things?**

**I. A good WAY to live** — “...*they which have believed in God...*”

➡ You will be known by what you believe. Your actions are the product of your beliefs.

A. **Saved by faith** (Rom 10:9-10).

1. Salvation is Not of works (Titus 3:5).
2. Salvation is By grace (Titus 3:7).

B. **Live by faith** after you are saved (“...*they which have BELIEVED...*”). Some people live by sight! They must have it all figured out.

➡ Believing in God is better than WORRYING! **ILLUS - Acts 27:25**

- What are you going to do if your friends or family turns against you? Believe in God
- What are you going to do if you get cancer? Believe in God.
- What are you going to do if there is no God? Believe God anyway!

**“HAVE FAITH IN GOD.”**

C. Do you have this testimony? “...*they which have believed in God...*”— Then live like you believe God!

## II. A good WORK to maintain — “...*be careful to maintain good works...*”

➡ Salvation is only the beginning. Good works should follow believing in God (Eph. 2:8-10; 1 Tim. 6:18; Heb. 10:24)!

➡ Good works are to be MAINTAINED (see 2:7; 3:1; 3:14).

I read of a university study of the most important words in the English language. Among the most important words was the word “**maintenance.**” [Another very important word is “discipline.”]

A. **Requirement** of maintenance. Everything in the human realm requires maintenance— Without maintenance, it will fall apart!

➡ **ILLUS**— Maintenance of the Temple (1 Chron. 26:26-27).

➡ God supplied the initial fire on the altar. Thereafter the priest had to MAINTAIN the fire—“...*the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning*” (Lev. 6:12).

The scientific law of entropy and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Law of Thermodynamics: Everything is constantly becoming more disorderly. “*The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away*” (1 Pet. 1:25).

- You can clean up a room, but left to itself, it becomes a mess again without doing anything. It becomes dusty and musty.
- Do nothing and everything deteriorates, collapses, breaks down, wears out.
- Clocks run down; mattresses begin to sag; knives become dull; book bindings fall apart; light bulbs burn out, wood stoves go out. “*Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out*” (Prov. 26:20).

➡ **Murphy’s Law** states the law of entropy this way:

- “Any thing that can go wrong will go wrong.”
- “Anything that cannot go wrong will go wrong.”

- “Nothing is ever so bad that it cannot get worse.”
- “Any time something goes right, it goes right so it can eventually go wrong.”
- “Any horizontal surface is soon piled up.”
- “Any clean tie will attract mustard, ketchup, or salsa.”
- “Dirt is inevitable—In order for something to become clean, something else must become dirty.”
- “It is possible to get everything dirty without anything getting clean.”

➡ **DARWIN WAS WRONG**— Things are not getting better. Things are getting worse.

1. Our Body
  2. Our house- *“By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through”* (Eccl. 10:18).
  3. A garden- *“I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction...”* (Prov. 24:30-32).
  4. Our automobiles
  5. Our relationships
- B. Responsibility** to maintain—Our spiritual walk with the Lord must also be maintained (text).
1. *“BE CAREFUL”* shows that this is something we need to be attentive to. Carelessness will lead to the weeds of sin cropping up in your life.
  2. The opposite of maintenance is **NEGLECT**. Fallow ground (plowed but unseeded) becomes hard through **NEGLECT**.
- C. Reminder** to maintain— **The PREACHER’S JOB — KEEP AFFIRMING YOUR NEED TO MAINTAIN...**
1. Good work of **STUDY**— Keep reading and studying your Bible!

2. Good work of SOUL WINNING— Keep passing out tracts, serving in G.R.O.W., and telling people about Jesus!
3. Good work of STEWARDSHIP— Keep tithing... giving to debt retirement... giving to missions!
4. Good work of SERVICE— Keep serving the Lord: Keep teaching that S.S. class... singing in the choir... working in the nursery... ushering; etc.

➡ “...*be careful to maintain good works...*”— Has your good works developed weeds due to lack of maintenance.

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Cf. 3:14—When we fail to maintain things they...

- Lose their attractiveness
  - Lose their value and cost more to maintain
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### III. **A good WITNESS to exhibit** — *“These things are good and PROFITABLE unto men...”*

- A. It is profitable for men to witness your belief in God backed up by good works to lead them to do the same (Mt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:12, 15; James 2:18-20).
- B. *“These things are good and PROFITABLE unto men...”* – How profitable is your behavior to those who observe your “good works?”

#### **SUMMATION: Two kinds of maintenance:**

1. Preventive maintenance - taking care of problems before they occur.
2. Corrective maintenance - taking care of problems after they occur.

#### **Remember them this way:**

1. Preventive maintenance - REPEAT YOUR GOOD ACTIONS
2. Corrective maintenance - REPAIR YOUR BAD ACTIONS

Proper automobile maintenance will help prevent a breakdown on the highway—Spiritual maintenance will also prevent a spiritual breakdown on the highway of life!

I see **Christian breakdowns** all the time. They are almost always a result of neglecting to maintain their walk with God.

*“How shall we escape if we NEGLECT so great salvation?”*