

# “We Stand On Guard For Thee”

July 1, 2018

## OPEN

Do you think we live in an amazing country? Why or why not?

What do you appreciate most about our country?



How do followers of Jesus navigate the waters of contemporary Canadian society to live meaningful lives of faith in God? We find FOUR MANDATES for living in this way from Titus 3:1-8.

## DIG

### **ONE: Submission - vv. 1-2**

One of the things that Paul and subsequently Titus was concerned about teaching first Century believers was to be credible and authentic in society.

According to verse 1, how are Christians to conduct themselves in relationship to the government?

In verse 2 Paul taught Christians the way to act in their community. What did he command?

Would this have been an easy assignment for the Christians in Crete? See Titus 1:12 for how Paul described Cretan culture. In that verse he quoted from Epimenides, a Greek poet and priest who lived 500 years before Christ.

### **TWO: Recognition - v. 3**

What is the important recognition that Christians must make? See also I Corinthians 6:11

In Titus 3:3 how is an individual's life described *before* becoming a Christ follower?

How does baptism portray the transformation? See Romans 6:1-7

### **THREE: Transformation - vv. 4-7**

Do you think that Canada a “Christian country”? Why or why not? Can you give some examples of secularism in Canada today?

When Paul explained the transformation that God accomplished in the life of the believer, what does he say does NOT produce such a change (vv. 4-5)? Why does God transform us? What motivates Him? See verse 5

How does God transform us? See verses 5-7

What is the result of being spiritually transformed, according to verse 7?

How well is the Church in Canada is living as a transformed people? In *Overhearing the Gospel* (Chalice Press, 2002) Fred B. Craddock writes, “in a context of long tradition, common assumptions, and high predictability in messages, there is much room for the illusion of participation where little or none exists.” Craddock points to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Danish philosopher and theologian Soren Kierkegaard. “The Gospel had become, Kierkegaard lamented, ‘a piece of information.’ Passion was replaced by descriptions of passion. The net effect for the church, said Kierkegaard, could be compared with reading from a cookbook to a man who is hungry.” (18-20)

### **FOUR: Action - v. 8**

According to Philippians 2:12, authentic transformation of the soul do what?

According to Titus 3:8-9, how do we know what good deeds look like?

In Ephesians 2:8-10 we told that we are NOT saved from sin B\_\_\_\_\_ our good works – but we ARE saved from our sin F\_\_\_\_\_ good works!

## REFLECT

How has God changed you? What are the specific, strategic good works that God is calling you do?

So, what kind of citizen do you want to be? How is God calling you to live differently as a Canadian? The Canadian Coat of Arms contains a ribbon at the center which is marked *desiderantes meliorem patriam* which was added by the Queen in 1987 - “desiring a better country” taken from Hebrews 11:16.

### **For some further reading and reflection...**

Check out Preston Manning's series “[Leadership Lessons From The Public Life Of Jesus](#)”. He writes about the limitations of the rule of law and suggests that Jesus' model is “*reconciliation through non-coercive, self-sacrificial mediation...motivated by love.*”

The recent decision against TWU law school in our Supreme Court shines a spotlight on secularism-vs-religious liberty. Read a helpful [commentary](#) on this historic ruling by Bruce Clemenger, Executive Director of the EFC.

Writing in the *National Post* Bruce Parry, a Professor of Law at Queen's University, gives a great analysis of the recent TWU decision and the way that the rule of law can be mishandled. Read [The Supreme Court's TWU ruling is a cruel joke played on all Canadians](#)