

Titus 3:3-7 | Harvest Sunday

Study Questions from 06.10.2019 sermon

Introduction

- i. What is the best food or meal you've ever tasted? Share with your group!

God is generous

- ii. Grace can be described as 'God's generous love'. Read out loud Ephesians 2:4-9 and instead of reading the word 'grace' read 'generosity'. How does this make you feel?
- iii. When it comes to harvest, in what ways is God generous?

Our response to God's generosity

- iv. How should we respond to God's generosity? Read the article overleaf then discuss.
- v. How does humanity tend to respond to God's generosity?

God's response to our sin

- vi. Read Titus 3:3-7. How has God responded to our sin? What emotions does this evoke in you?
- vii. Discuss how can we keep God's gracious response to our sin uppermost at Argyle. What are tangible things we can do to elevate his generosity both in our lives individually, and at Argyle corporately?

Lighten Up, Christians: God Loves a Good Time. N.D. Wilson

We Christians are the speakers of light. We are the proclaimers of joy. Wherever we go, we are the mascots of the gospel, the imagers of the infinitely creative Father, and the younger brothers and sisters of the humbled and triumphant Word. We speak in this world on behalf of the One who made up lightning and snowflakes and eggs. Or so we say.

Saying things is easy. Meaning them—in the realm of will and emotions—is harder. Knowing what they actually mean is more difficult still. Living out who we know we are and whom we follow with total consistency is, well . . . have you ever ridden a white whale by the light of a blue moon in a leap year?

We say we want to be like God, and we feel we mean it. But we don't. Not to be harsh, but if we did really mean it, we would be having a lot more fun than we are. We aim for safety and cultural respectability instead of following our stated first principles: that we are made in God's image and should strive to imitate him.

A dolphin flipping through the sun beyond the surf, a falcon in a dive, a mutt in the back of a truck, flying his tongue like a flag of joy, all reflect the Maker more wholly than many of our endorsed thinkers, theologians, and churchgoers.

Look over our day-to-day lives. How do we parent, for example? Rules. Fears. Don'ts. Don't jump on the couch. No gluten in this house. Get down from that tree. Quiet down. Hold still. We live as if God were an infinite list of negatives. He is holiness, the rawest and richest of all purity. In our bent way of thinking, that makes him the biggest stress-out of all.

But how does God parent? He gave us one rule at the beginning: "You must not eat from that tree." Only one tree was held back. Besides, he was giving us an entire planet. A hot star. Wild animals to discover and name and tame. Animals with fangs and sinews that rippled in the sun. He gave us the Dragon to beat that beat us instead. And then he stooped down to save.

So now we have two rules—love God, love others—along with imputed righteousness, grace for our failures, and a door through the grave into eternal life. Do we act like all this is true?

Our Father wove glory and joy into every layer of this world. He wove in secrets that would tease us into centuries of risk-taking before we could unlock them—flight, glass, electricity, chocolate. He buried gold deep, but scattered sand everywhere. And from the sand came all the wealth of our own age.

Our God made things simple and funny—skin bags full of milk swinging beneath cows. And also hard: Skim the cream, add sugar from cane grass and shards of vanilla bean from faraway lands, surround with water cold enough to have expanded its molecules and become solid. Now stir. Keep stirring. Now taste. And worship.

Us: No more for you, Johnny. You've had enough.
God: Try the hot fudge...