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Christ's Peculiar People

By Bryan Hodge

"Who (Christ) gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works." (Titus 2:14)

1. Christ's people are a purchased people

He gave Himself for us. He did so to "redeem us." The word "redeem" literally means "to buy out". Vine's, "especially of purchasing a slave with a view to his freedom." Thayer, "to redeem i.e. by payment of a price to recover from the power of another."

Freedom is not free. The price to free men from the bondage of sin was high. Peter wrote, "you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver or gold... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19). Paul reminded the Christians at Corinth, "you were bought at a price" (1 Corinthians 6:20).

2. Christ's people are a purified people

He purified us "for Himself". He made us fit to be His bride. Consider Paul's words - "that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27). Adam Clark commented, "There is certainly an allusion here to the ancient method of purifying women, who were appointed to be consorts to Kings... (see Esther 2:12; also see Psalm 45:13-14; Ezekiel 16:7-14)."

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3. Christ's people are a possessed people

He owns us. We are: "His own special people" (NKJV); "a peculiar people" (KJV); "a people for his own possession" (ASV, NASB, ESV). We belong to Him. Paul exhorted, "you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:20).

Baptism is literally, "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). Ed Wharton has pointed out, "'into the name' was a common phrase for transference of ownership" (The Church of Christ, p. 47). Arndt and Gingrich remarked, "Through baptism... the one who is baptized becomes the possession of and comes under the protection of the one whose name he bears; he is under control of the effective power of the name and the one who bears the name, i.e., he is dedicated to them." Paul wrote, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

4. Christ's people are to be a productive people

He wants us to be "zealous for good works." The term "zealous" means to be hot, or on fire for something. God's people are to be workers.

Have you ever noticed how frequently "good works" are mentioned in the books of 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus?

Consider:

1. 1 Timothy 2:10 "...women professing godliness, with good works"
2. 1 Timothy 3:1 "If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work"
3. 1 Timothy 5:10 "well reported for good works..."
4. 1 Timothy 6:18 "Let them do good, that they be rich in good works..."
5. 2 Timothy 2:21 "...useful for the Master, prepared for every good work."
6. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 "...thoroughly equipped for every good work"
7. 2 Timothy 4:5 "...do the work of an evangelist..."
8. Titus 1:16 "...disqualified for every good works"
9. Titus 2:7 "in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works..."
10. Titus 2:14 "...zealous for good works"
11. Titus 3:1 "...ready for good work"
12. Titus 3:8 "...those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works"
13. Titus 3:14 "let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful"