

# INVESTING FOR PROFIT

## Titus 3:8-11

I was introduced to the world of investments back in 1975

By historical standards, that was a good time to start!

There have been rough times during the past 40 years,  
but in general, 1975 was an excellent time to *start* investing.

By watching investors, I've learned lessons about investing –*and life!*

**Some people always seem to invest in the wrong thing.**

Uncle Harry's "sure thing." Or, what you overhear people talk  
about

**Some people invest in the right thing, at the wrong time.**

Knowing *when* to invest is as important as knowing *what!*

**Tit 3:8-11** is built around an *investment* term: **PROFITABLE**

Paul reminds us of another lesson I've learned observing  
investors:

**SOME THINGS ARE ALWAYS A GOOD INVESTMENT!**

***Looking for a sure thing?***

I'm not going to give any "hot tips" about where to invest *your*  
*money!*

Paul gives a "hot tip" about where to invest ***our time and***  
***energy!*** 3:8

Want to invest in **A SURE THING?** (Get your pencil ready!)

"In just a minute I'm going to give you our toll free number."

This is a "sure thing" you can count on! It's trustworthy.

*Believe it!*

Investment that *always* returns a profit: **3:8** "The saying is  
*trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who*  
*have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good*  
***works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.***

*Dedicate yourself to doing good!*

**Disclaimer:** You may not get return you *think* you'll get!

You may not get return you *want* to get!

But you *ALWAYS* get a *good* return on your investment!

[That brings us back to idea Paul develops throughout the book:]

Paul sent Titus to Crete, church in a **pagan society** where many profess to know God but live in a way that makes it apparent *they never knew Him*.

Pagan attitudes crept into the authentic church.

Titus is to straighten out what's bent out of shape.

How could Titus correct the problem?

**Designate leaders who by spiritual maturity and godly character teach God's people how to live godly lives.**

**Chapter 1:** prerequisites for spiritual leadership;

–contrasts those traits with lifestyle of pagan leaders in community.

**Chapter 2:** appropriate conduct for each member of God's family

Live in a way that's consistent with what we believe.

**Chapter 3:** appropriate conduct as citizens in a pagan community

Reason to live that way: God has transformed us.

Because of His mercy, He saved us. He made us new creatures!

Paul urges Titus to make that transformation his focus.

God transformed us. That should motivate God's people to live like it!

God's Word is trustworthy. God has spoken. His Word is true!

Therefore, stress these things.

If you want to invest in a sure thing, ***Dedicate yourself to doing good.***

***That's always excellent and profitable!***

[In vs 9, Paul continues to use idea of investments to issue a warning:

He tells us something else I've observed by watching investors:]

**SOME THINGS ARE ALWAYS A POOR INVESTMENT!**

**3:9**

Paul warns us about four investments we ought to stay away from:

Don't invest your energy in these! **3:9** *“Avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are **unprofitable** and **worthless**.”*

In spite of profitable message we've received, some people prefer to invest time and energy in things that aren't worth the effort.

**Four kinds of meaningless issues people focus on.**

He's dealing with **PEOPLE IN A PAGAN CULTURE.**

Don't get bogged down nitpicking *their* theology—debating about that!

**Focus on what Christ has done; live consistent life before them.**

That's how we penetrate pagan culture!  
His point also applies **WITHIN THE CHURCH.**

We've more important things than argue about meaningless issues

Focus on our central theme: **what God has done for us.**

Dedicate ourselves to **living a godly life, doing what is good.**

The list of insignificant issues people discuss isn't complete.

–It's the *kinds* of things such people focus on.

*Paul* considers such issues foolish, not worth wasting our energy on, **people who fight about them never see them as insignificant.**

**They're always significant to people who focus on them!**

## **4 KINDS OF ISSUES TO AVOID:**

### **1. Avoid foolish controversies**

Sadducees: Present case of woman married to seven brothers.

Whose wife would she be in the resurrection?

They're more interested in that kind of issue

than in preparing for eternity in light of the resurrection!

However unrealistic such discussions seem, there are plenty of discussions, of equally "great" importance, in *our* day.

Let's not waste time fighting over issues that don't really matter.

He doesn't say don't fight as long as people agree with you.

He says avoid discussions over meaningless issues.

### **2. Avoid genealogies**

Salt Lake City for 7 years => "Avoid *the genealogical library!*"

That's NOT issue he's concerned about!

Some get wrapped up in who descended from whom.

Such discussions demonstrate **Jesus' right to rule Israel.**

This isn't an insignificant issue.

Matthew and Luke think we *need* to know this.

It's not worth investing energy quibbling over details.

Also, genealogies required for priests—God established it!

**Genealogies to determine superiority.**

*"Were you born into right family?" "My family's better than yours!"*

Discussions of family heritage, racial superiority, are worthless.

Conversation at high-society party: "My ancestry goes back to Alexander the Great." She turns to 2<sup>nd</sup> person, "Who does *your* family go back to?" "I don't know. All our records were lost in the Flood."

Don't waste time and energy discussing who's better than whom!

### **3. Avoid arguments**

Some people argue to build up their own importance.

Corinthians loved such arguments!

1 Cor 2—they argued over who they wanted to teach their class.

1 Cor 12-14—arguments about worship style.

Paul says repeatedly: “*Stop the stupid arguments!*”

**Love is more important than such issues.**

#### 4. **Avoid legalistic debates**

“Quarrels about the law” = legalistic issues Judaizers campaign for.

Imposing rules to enhance standing with God—“live by *their* rules!”

What should we do about the Sabbath” (Col. 2:16)?

What about eating pork? Or drinking wine? (Rom. 14-15)

Godly living isn’t about keeping a bunch of rules.

Don’t waste time engaging in foolish debates that produce nothing!

**Such investments are “unprofitable and useless!”**

We waste energy on things that never turn profit—empty, worthless

They don’t build people up; don’t accomplish anything significant

Warning: *Don’t use this to put down people who disagree with you!*

We’re quick to use this argument as ultimate “put down,” to dismiss *somebody else’s* concern!

“As long as church takes *my* perspective, no one should discuss such”

But let church decide against *me*; suddenly it’s important.

Consider how important the issue is from *God’s* perspective.

We live in a pagan culture; let’s stress what’s *really* important:

Good news of what Jesus has done, and living a godly life

*Don't fight over issues that aren't worth wasting energy on!*

## **WHAT DO YOU DO WITH AN INVESTMENT COUNSELOR WHO ALWAYS GIVES BAD ADVICE? 3:10-11**

*How do you deal with a "con-artist"?*

**3 kinds of "con-artists:"** –people who lead others astray:

**1. TV** has produced one kind of **con-artist:** (Financial con-artists) **Out to get our money!**

**2. Galatian con-artist:** Presents another gospel (Spiritual con-artist) **–Out to take our liberty!**

Sounds good. But they can't produce life.

You can work at it 'til you're blue in the face;

but you'll never earn enough credit to buy eternal life.

All *our* efforts do is enslave us—make it clear we're in bondage!

**3. Paul mentions a 3<sup>rd</sup> kind: "Cretan con-artist"**

Keep leading people off on to their "hobby horses!" **3:10-11**

*"As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, <sup>11</sup>knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned."*

What specifically characterizes those surrounding Titus?

Root: "divisive" => 3<sup>rd</sup> unprofitable investment in v. 9: "arguments"

***"I'm right and everybody who disagrees with me is wrong."***

Insists that people see things the way they do.

In the process, they divide the body of Christ.

**Out to prove they're right! (and you're wrong!)**

*How do you deal with such "con-artists"?*

Same way you do other con-artists: Stay away from him!

**THREE STEPS for dealing with argumentative people:**

1. **Warn them** about what they're doing.
2. Go back and **warn them again!**—Be sure they get message.
3. If they still don't respond, **have nothing to do with them!**  
—*put some distance between you!*

Similar to the procedure outlined in Matthew 18:15-17.

**Argumentative people judge themselves.**

They're "warped" and "sinful!" "off track," "derailed," "detoured."

They're self-condemned!

**WHERE SHOULD WE INVEST OUR ENERGY?**

**Some people are "accident-prone" when it comes to investments— they always seem to take bad advice!**

Some Christians always seem to follow the wrong counselors too!

We can get excited about the stupidest things!

Invest in something useful—something profitable!

**Something you can trust—investment you can count on.**

Paul says: "*Here's a trustworthy statement!*" *It's a sure thing!*

**What is this valuable investment? What should we stress?**

Goes back to central thesis we saw last week => 3:3-7

It's not about foolish things people fight over!

It's about how God has changed our lives!

## **PROFITABLE INVESTMENT**

**=> SOUND DOCTRINE + GODLY LIVING**

**What I was:** *foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved living in evil and jealousy, hated and hating everybody else!*

**What God has done in my life:** He saved me

He gave me new life and a fresh start

**What God wants me to be:** He wants me to live a different kind of life, dedicated to doing what's good.

God transformed our life, now he wants us to live like it!

Sound doctrine produces a healthy lifestyle!

God has taken an unworthy sinner and transformed him into a new creature, giving up His own rights as God to die for me.

Therefore, we lay aside our petty issues, and concentrate on how to do good for one another, encourage, build up one another.

Let's invest our lives in something profitable

*... So that together we might become all God wants us to be.*

Sir Bartel Fere served as governor of Bombay, India, in 1860s. He was known by family and acquaintances as "the helpful man." Once when returning from a long trip, his wife sent a newly hired servant to meet him. "How shall I know Sir Bartel?" asked the servant. The governor's wife responded, "Look for a tall gentleman helping somebody."

In midst of a pagan culture,

**We're NOT here to fight over meaningless issues,  
We're here to proclaim good news and to do good.**

**HOW ARE WE INVESTING OUR TIME AND ENERGY?**

Let's invest our energy in a good investment that will produce a profitable return!

***"Insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people."***