

Fit for Good Work

“To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.” Titus 1:15-16.

One of the greatest ways we deceive ourselves is when we think our hearts are hidden. The truth is that we give ourselves away easily and often. A jealous and covetous heart often sees phantom jealousy and covetousness in others. The one who secretly judges and criticizes often feels secretly judged and criticized by others. A person who lies and deceives often sees conspiracy and deception in the world around them. To those who are defiled by sin, the world around them mirrors the same kind of defilement. But to those who are pure – those who hope and believe all things and who give the benefit of the doubt – the world is pure as well. This isn't to say that those who are pure are blind to the defilement in the world, but that those who are pure see purity even within defilement. Those who are pure see the tangled confusion of selfishness and selflessness and empathize. They see the goodness within the heart in spite of appearances. They see God at work in the lives of sinners.

The words of Paul to Titus are sobering: That a person who is defiled and sees defilement is unfit for *any good work*. There is not one kind of good work for which a defiled person is fit. This statement depicts something observably true: That the state of a person's heart defines a person's contribution to the world. If one's heart is defiled, one's contribution will be defiled. If one's heart is pure, one's contribution will be pure. Therefore one who is defiled is unfit for any kind of good work because one can only produce defiled work. A person who is defiled and only sees defilement will act in such a way as to produce defilement to a defiled world. Thus that person is unqualified to produce anything good in this world.

Christians are workers who produce things in this world. What we produce comes out of the state of our hearts. Let us, then, keep our hearts pure – let us love deeply, hoping and believing all things and seeing God at work in this world – so that we may produce pure things in this world. Let us run the race truly and remain fit for good work. **[DJR]**