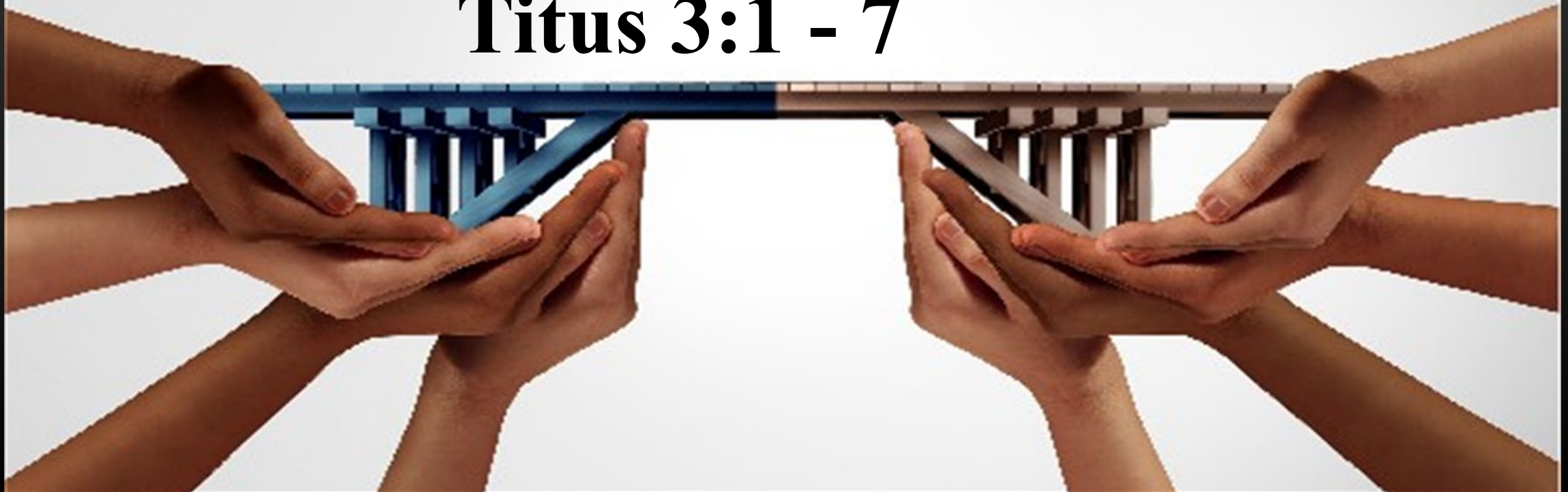


# BRIDGING THE DIVIDE

**Titus 3:1 - 7**



- **KEY POINTS.**

1. **THE DIVIDED WORLD (AND FAMILIES) DESPERATELY NEEDS THE UNIFYING POWER OF THE LOVE OF GOD.**
2. **BELIEVERS ARE CALLED TO BE “BRIDGE-BUILDERS,” SEEKING PEACE, EVERYWHERE POSSIBLE.**
3. **“LIVING IN PEACE, IF POSSIBLE,” IMPLIES THAT WE HAVE THE WISDOM TO KNOW WHEN IT IS NOT POSSIBLE.**
4. **LIGHT AND DARKNESS WILL ALWAYS DIVIDE. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE HAVE TO SIT IN OPPOSITE BLEACHERS.**

# Hate Crime Statistics – FBI

<https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime>

2020

2019

2018

## Victims - total cases

- African American % of total
- White % of total
- Asian % of total

8,263

7,287

7091

34.7%

27.1%

27.4%

10.5%

8.8%

10.5%

3.4%

2.2%

2.1%

## Percentage change Yr to Yr:

- Total victims
- African American victims
- White victims
- Asian victims

13.4%

2.8%

-3.1%

32.2%

-1.2%

-3.7%

35.1%


-13.3%

4.8%

73.0%

8.1%

16.4%




**TIT. 3:3-5** <sup>3</sup> FOR WE OURSELVES WERE ONCE FOOLISH, DISOBEDIENT, LED ASTRAY, SLAVES TO VARIOUS PASSIONS AND PLEASURES, **PASSING OUR DAYS IN MALICE AND ENVY, HATED BY OTHERS AND HATING ONE ANOTHER.** <sup>4</sup> BUT WHEN THE GOODNESS AND LOVING KINDNESS OF GOD OUR SAVIOR APPEARED, <sup>5</sup> **HE SAVED US,** NOT BECAUSE OF WORKS DONE BY US IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, BUT ACCORDING TO **HIS OWN MERCY,** BY THE **WASHING OF REGENERATION AND RENEWAL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,** (ESV)



# 1. THE DIVIDED WORLD (AND FAMILIES) **DESPERATELY NEEDS** THE **UNIFYING POWER** OF THE LOVE OF GOD.

- **TIT. 3:3** FOR WE OURSELVES **WERE ONCE** FOOLISH, DISOBEDIENT, ... SLAVES TO VARIOUS PLEASURES, ..., PASSING OUR DAYS IN **MALICE AND ENVY, HATED BY OTHERS AND HATING ONE ANOTHER.** <sup>4</sup> BUT ... OUR SAVIOR APPEARED, <sup>5</sup> **HE SAVED US, ...** (ESV)
- **MATT. 24:10** AND THEN MANY WILL **FALL AWAY** AND BETRAY ONE ANOTHER AND **HATE ONE ANOTHER.** <sup>11</sup> AND MANY **FALSE PROPHETS** WILL ARISE AND LEAD MANY ASTRAY.
- **2 COR 11:14**



## 2. BELIEVERS ARE CALLED TO BE “**BRIDGE-BUILDERS,**” SEEKING PEACE, EVERYWHERE POSSIBLE.

- **ROM. 12:18** IF POSSIBLE, **SO FAR AS IT DEPENDS ON YOU,** LIVE **PEACEABLY** WITH ALL. (ESV)
- **ROM 14:19** SO THEN WE **PURSUE THE THINGS WHICH MAKE FOR PEACE** AND THE **BUILDING UP** OF ONE ANOTHER.
- **HEB 12:14** **PURSUE PEACE WITH ALL MEN,** ....
- **MATT 5:9, JAMES 3:18, PS 34:14**

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- HOW CAN I BE A **BRIDGE-BUILDER** (MINISTER OF RECONCILIATION), IF THERE IS **NO RELATIONSHIP TO START WITH?** OR, IF IT **GOT DESTROYED** ALONG THE WAY?

**2 COR. 5:18-20** ALL THIS IS FROM GOD, WHO THROUGH CHRIST RECONCILED US TO HIMSELF AND **GAVE US THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION;**<sup>19</sup> THAT IS, IN CHRIST GOD WAS RECONCILING THE WORLD TO HIMSELF, NOT COUNTING THEIR TRESPASSES AGAINST THEM, AND **ENTRUSTING TO US THE MESSAGE OF RECONCILIATION.**<sup>20</sup> THEREFORE, WE ARE AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST, **GOD MAKING HIS APPEAL THROUGH US.** WE IMPLORE YOU ON BEHALF OF CHRIST, **BE RECONCILED TO GOD.** (ESV)

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- THE **BEST** BRIDGE-BUILDERS RECOGNIZE THAT **RELATIONSHIPS** ARE THE KEY TO **CROSSING A DIVIDE**.

**1 COR. 5:9-10** I WROTE TO YOU IN MY LETTER NOT TO ASSOCIATE WITH SEXUALLY IMMORAL PEOPLE--<sup>10</sup> **NOT AT ALL MEANING THE SEXUALLY IMMORAL OF THIS WORLD**, OR THE GREEDY AND SWINDLERS, OR IDOLATERS, SINCE **THEN YOU WOULD NEED TO GO OUT OF THE WORLD**.

**ROM. 5:10** FOR IF **WHILE WE WERE ENEMIES WE WERE RECONCILED TO GOD** BY THE DEATH OF HIS SON, MUCH MORE, NOW THAT WE ARE RECONCILED, SHALL WE BE SAVED BY HIS LIFE. (ESV)

- 1 COR 10:24-29, JOHN 17:14-15



3. “LIVING IN PEACE, **IF POSSIBLE,**” IMPLIES THAT WE MUST PRACTICE **WISDOM** WHEN IT IS **NOT POSSIBLE.**
- **PRO 20:3** **KEEPING AWAY FROM STRIFE** IS AN HONOR FOR A MAN, BUT **ANY FOOL WILL QUARREL.**
  - **PRO 26:17** LIKE ONE WHO TAKES A DOG BY THE EARS **IS HE WHO PASSES BY AND MEDDLES WITH STRIFE NOT BELONGING TO HIM.**
  - **2 TI 2:14** REMIND THEM OF THESE THINGS, AND SOLEMNLY CHARGE THEM IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD **NOT TO WRANGLE ABOUT WORDS,** WHICH IS USELESS AND **LEADS TO THE RUIN** OF THE HEARERS.



4. LIGHT AND DARKNESS **WILL ALWAYS DIVIDE**. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE HAVE TO SIT ON **THE OPPOSITE BLEACHERS**.

**JOH 8:12** THEN JESUS AGAIN SPOKE TO THEM, SAYING, "I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD; HE WHO FOLLOWS ME **WILL NOT WALK IN THE DARKNESS**, BUT WILL HAVE THE **LIGHT OF LIFE**."

**COL 1:13-14**

**TITUS 3:1-3**. **REMINDE THEM** TO BE **SUBMISSIVE** TO RULERS AND AUTHORITIES, TO BE OBEDIENT, TO BE READY FOR EVERY GOOD WORK, 2 TO **SPEAK EVIL OF NO ONE**, TO AVOID QUARRELING, TO BE GENTLE, AND TO SHOW **PERFECT COURTESY** TOWARD ALL PEOPLE.

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- **THE CLEANSING POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SOLUTION OF GOD FOR OUR BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS.**

**TIT. 3:4 – 5** BUT WHEN THE GOODNESS AND LOVING KINDNESS OF GOD OUR SAVIOR APPEARED, <sup>5</sup> **HE SAVED US**, NOT BECAUSE OF WORKS DONE BY US IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, BUT ACCORDING TO **HIS OWN MERCY**, BY THE **WASHING OF REGENERATION** AND **RENEWAL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**, (ESV)

- **NEXT STEP:**

1. **Will we allow Jesus to wash us of our contribution to the division in our homes, our schools, our churches, and our country? Let us confess our sin today...**

- **“Father, search my heart. Reveal my sin to me. Today, I confess my sin to you. Forgive me, wash me clean by your Spirit. I turn to you and away from my “cause.” Give me wisdom to be reconciled with those around me. In Jesus name. Amen.**