

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES: GOD'S DIRECTIVES FOR HIS UNDERSHEPHERDS

II. Titus: Church Planting Manual

G. Crucial Commitments On Doctrine And Fellowship

(Titus 3:9-15)

I. Introduction

- A. When the Gospel is proclaimed in a previously unevangelized area and people there trust in Christ, those new believers need to be organized into local churches for their nurture and for an abiding witness in their area.
- B. This task requires knowing how to plant a church, and Paul's epistle to Titus is a template for such a ministry.
- C. After calling Titus to teach the Biblical basis for civic relationships to new believers in newly planted churches (Titus 3:3-8), Paul in Titus 3:9-15 had him teach the great need for crucial commitments to upright doctrine and fellowship so important for newly planted churches. We view this passage for insight as follows:

II. Crucial Commitments On Doctrine And Fellowship, Titus 3:9-15.

- A. Paul directed Titus to **resist** problem doctrines and fellowships in Titus 3:9-11 (as follows):
 1. The Apostle Paul ordered Titus to resist problem doctrines of ungodly ministries, Titus 3:9:
 - a. Paul noted that Titus faced the problems of "foolish" (*moros*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 533) "questions" (*zetesis*, Ibid., p. 339-340), genealogies, "quarrels, strife" (*eris*, Ibid., p. 309) and "disputes" (*mache*, Ibid., p. 497) about the Law, Titus 3:9a.
 - b. Regarding such foolish questions, genealogies, quarrels, strife and disputes, Titus was to "avoid, shun, go around so as to avoid" them for his own benefit (middle voice of *periistemi*, Ibid., p. 653), Titus 3:9b.
 - c. Paul's reason for this negative action toward these doctrines and ungodly ministries marked by them was that they were "useless" (*anopheles*, Ibid., p. 76-77) and "empty, fruitless" (*mataios*, Ibid., p. 496), v. 9c.
 2. The Apostle Paul ordered Titus to resist problem fellowships with ungodly ministers, Titus 3:10-11:
 - a. A man who was "factious, causing divisions" (*hairetikos*, Ibid., p. 23) by promoting errant actions in ministry was to be admonished twice, and after that "rejected, avoided" (*paraiteomai*, Ibid., p. 621-622), an evident reference to having church discipline administered against him in accord with Christ's teaching in Matthew 18:15-17; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 767; Titus 3:10.
 - b. Paul's claim that such a guilty man is "warped and sinful . . . self-condemned" (Titus 3:11 ESV, NIV) signals such a party was to be removed from fellowship by church discipline and not just admonished and allowed to remain in the local church as in the case of the wayward believers in 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15.
- B. Paul directed Titus to **cleave** to godly doctrines and fellowships in Titus 3:12-15 ESV (as follows):
 1. The Apostle Paul ordered Titus to cleave to godly fellowships with godly ministers, Titus 3:12:
 - a. Paul added that whenever he would send Artemas or Tychicus unto Titus at Crete, Titus was to do his best to travel to Paul at Nicopolis on the western, Adriatic coast of Greece, for Paul had decided to winter there, and he needed Titus' company for mutual edification and/or ministry, Titus 3:12; Ibid.
 - b. The apostle likely wanted either Artemas or Tychicus to replace Titus on Crete to minister to believers there, but he then needed Titus to travel to be with him during the coming winter there.
 - c. In both places, be it Crete or Nicopolis, believers needed each other's fellowship, so Paul affirmed it.
 2. The Apostle Paul ordered Titus to cleave to godly doctrines in godly ministries, Titus 3:13-15:
 - a. Paul told Titus to make every effort to enable Zenos the expert in the Jewish Law and gifted speaker Apollos (cf. Acts 18:26-28) to travel to their respective destinations of ministry, to see that they lacked nothing of material need in making their respective journeys, Titus 3:13.
 - b. The apostle expressed concern in regard to this directive that believers on Crete who would be asked to meet the material needs of these traveling evangelists learn to devote themselves to such good works of easing their burdens that Crete's believers not remain unfruitful in God's estimation, Titus 3:14.
 3. Heeding his own teaching on fellowship, Paul graciously closed his epistle, telling Titus that all those with him sent greetings and urging Titus to greet those who loved Paul and his associates in the faith, Tit. 3:15.

Lesson: Paul told Titus to resist godless doctrines and fellowships and to cleave to godly doctrines and fellowships for his own welfare and for the welfare of the new believers in newly planted churches to whom he ministered.

Application: (1) May we heed Paul's call to resist ungodly doctrines and fellowships and cleave to godly doctrines and fellowships for our own welfare and for the welfare of those we disciple. (2) May we realize that righteousness and sin cannot mix in the Christian walk, that we then draw a line between them and stick to righteousness.