

Title: A Farewell to Titus

Scripture: Titus 3:8-15

Series: The Pastoral Epistles

1. Introduction:

- a. The epistle of Titus has been an incredible blessing to our church and today we finish it.
- b. Throughout this epistle, we have seen the difference the new birth creates.
- c. Former gluttons, liars, and brutish people are transformed into those that seek God and endeavor, by the grace of God the Holy Spirit, to live in such a way as to demonstrate the authenticity of the Gospel.

2. Verse 8: What must be remembered: 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.

- a. Our passage begins with, **“The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things.”**
 - i. According to our previous passage, ministers must insist that their congregation know and believe the following four truths.
 1. The kindness of the Father and his love toward man;

- a. **Titus 3:4-5A** But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, (5) he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy...
2. The work of the Holy Spirit in regenerating and renewing man;
 - a. **Titus 3:5B** ...by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,
3. The grace of Jesus Christ is the cause of our justification
 - a. **Titus 3:6** whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,
4. The purpose of the work of the triune God. God's purpose in salvation is to make us **heirs of God.**
 - a. **Titus 3:7** so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
 - b. Because the saving grace of God, in whom we have mutually believed, has so radically changed the believer, Titus must stress these truths so that those who have their faith fixed on God may be **careful to devote themselves to good works.**
 - i. Beloved, Paul stresses here the place of good works and not the merits of good works.

1. Good works do not merit salvation. The Bible clearly teaches that there is none good, not one.
 2. **Titus 3:5A** he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy...
 - ii. Paul is saying that the work of salvation is so radical (and we call it the New Birth) that the nature of the recipient of grace is altered forever.
 1. No longer do we live only for ourselves, but now in gratitude and love, we live for Christ.
 - a. **Philippians 1:21A** For to me to live is Christ...
 2. And because we live for Christ, we live new and transformed lives, from which flows the goodness of God toward our fellow man. Paul states that **these things are excellent and profitable for people.**
 3. As Christians, we concentrate on good works that demonstrate gratitude, devoting ourselves with diligence to their performance and making this one of our principal aims.
3. Verse 9: What must be avoided: But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

- a. Titus must insist that the people of God remember what God has done and be thankful for saving grace, but here he is told to **avoid** those things that remove the focus away from the grace of God. We are to avoid anything that moves us away from salvation through grace. A Christian's eyes must never be moved away from Jesus Christ.
- i. As Christians, we are to **avoid** anything that would impede or destroy our dependency upon God for salvation in the finished work of Christ.
 - ii. Paul was speaking of Judaizers. These were a faction of the Jewish Christians who regarded the Levitical laws of the Old Testament as binding all Christians. They believed that authentic Christianity included Jesus plus the Law. Anytime we add anything to the work of Christ, we have left the realm of grace, and we no longer rely on the finished work of Jesus Christ. We enter the realm of works.
 1. Therefore, this is not the first time the Apostle Paul has given such a command. Speaking about the Judaizers, he warns in **Titus 1:9-10** He (the minister) must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it. (10) For there are many who

are insubordinate, empty talkers, and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party.

- b. **But avoid:** This word means to turn away from something or someone purposely. Titus, the other elders, and the congregation in Crete were to turn away from morally and spiritually destructive false teachers, who not only corrupted the church with their sinful and sordid lifestyles but hindered the credibility of the Gospel.
- i. **Foolish controversies:** Christians are not to become involved in futile arguments about matters of philosophy, or even theology, that are based on human reason and imagination rather than God's word.
 - ii. **Genealogies:** The tracing of one's family to prove oneself as being better than another Christian.
 - iii. **Dissensions:** Self-centered rivalries and conflict about the truth
 - iv. **and quarrels about the law:** We are not to dispute the law because the law has been settled once and for all in Jesus Christ. Arguing theology, doctrine, or morality with those who distort or disregard God's word is hopelessly fruitless. Paul is referring to discussions with

false teachers and false believers who have no desire to accept divine truth.

1. **Titus 1:14** not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.

c. Instead of wasting time on things that do not profit, we are to invest our time in seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness. We are to preach the gospel and reach out to the lost. We are to live lives that evidence the transforming grace of Jesus Christ in our lives. Beloved, do not waste your time.

4. Verses 10-11: Who must be removed: As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, (11) knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

a. Instead of entertaining such individuals, we are to rebuke them and try to seek their conversion. We are to lovingly confront them with the truth. If they refuse, after having been warned several times, we are to reject such individuals for the benefit of the church. This rejection is the official step of ex-communication.

- i. Paul and the church practiced ex-communication when warranted. We read in **1 Timothy 1:19-20** holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, (20) among whom are Hymenaeus and

Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

- b. Therefore, a divisive person is here a person who, without justification, creates division and not only creates division but also, after repeated warnings, persists in this practice.
 - i. After being warned, the apostle demands that such a person be **rejected**. There is a correlation here to Matthew 18:15-17.
 - 1. What does it mean to **avoid** this person?
 - c. The reason for which we are to avoid this type of person is given immediately. We know this person to be **warped, sinful, and self-condemned**. Such a person is not living and seeing straight. He is mentally and morally turned or twisted.
 - i. What makes his sin very bad is that he knows that he is sinning. If his conscience has not already made it clear, the church has by way of multiple rebukes. This person has been warned repeatedly and yet will not repent.
 - d. Beloved, I hope that you can see the importance of doctrinal purity within the Church; the bride of Christ must be free from error.
5. Verse 12: The sheep must have a shepherd: When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.

- a. With the closing of the epistle, we get a further glimpse of the heart of Paul for the people of God. He wants Titus to come to him and minister on behalf of the church in Crete. However, Titus must not come until an appropriately ordained minister is sent to replace him. The people of God should never be without God's word.
6. Verse 13: Meet the ministers' needs: Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing.
- a. Along with Titus' replacement, the church would be briefly visited. It would be the duty of Titus to ensure that these men would go forward in the work of God with all the necessary provisions and monetary help that would be required. Above our physical comfort and wealth, the gospel must take precedence. If we genuinely believe that only the gospel will save the dead and the dying, then we will ensure that those who preach the gospel do so without any hindrance.
 - i. **Matthew 10:42** And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

7. Verse 14: The Fruitfulness of Good Works: And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful.
- a. Taking care of the needs of those who will go off and preach the gospel is one way for the church to learn to devote themselves to Good Works. It is the work of the church to take care of those urgent needs that arise within the church. That means the church itself must be willing to sacrifice all so that the people of God doing the work of God would go forward.
8. Verse 15: Christian mutual love: All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.
- a. Our beautiful epistle closes with an example of the mutual love that evidences the new birth.
 - b. **All who are with me send greetings to you.** The Christians with Paul send their greetings to the church in Crete. This is the warmth of brotherly love. That we would love the people of God even though they might be unknown and unseen by us speaks of proper gospel understanding. It demonstrates the efficacious nature of the blood of Jesus Christ. He who is covered with the same blood of Christ that covers Us must be then our family and our dearly beloved.
 - c. **Greet those who love us in the faith.** How can we love all the people of God with true and righteous

love? We love them because they are of the same faith as we. They, like us, half-cast themselves believingly upon the everlasting arms of Jesus Christ. It is good that we love each other in the faith.

i. **1 John 2:10** Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.

ii. **1 John 3:16-18** By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. (17) But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? (18) Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

d. **Grace, be with you all.** Our epistle ends just as it began, with a prayer that the grace of God would continuously operate in the life of Titus and the church.

i. **Titus 1:4** To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

ii. It should be our desire as a family of God to see God's grace continuously operate in the life of all our fellow believers. It should be our constant prayer that the grace of God would guide every one of us. By Desiring and praying for God's

grace to continuously guide the life of the believers, we demonstrate the type of love that should mark the community of God.

iii. May God bless the book of Titus to our souls!

9. Benediction

- a. **Romans 12:10** Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.

Public Reading of Scripture

Romans 12:9-21