

Commentary on the Book of Titus

Chapter 1

1Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness,

As usual, Paul has no reluctance in identifying himself as a slave of the Lord by choice or as a person chosen by God to serve Him as an apostle. Christ called him as an apostle not for his own desires for ministry but for the faith of those who would repent and follow Christ. God appointed Paul to be a vessel through whose preaching many would be saved. True saving faith has a proper understanding of the knowledge of Christ's person, deity, and substitutionary death. Those who come to Christ know Who it is that they are following, on what basis, and why. They are also those who have repented unto godliness. True believers are born by the preaching of the Word of God as God draws them to Himself.

2in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,

Saving faith brings with it the ability to know that we are saved (1 John 5:13). Those who indeed "work out their salvation" are those who will have no doubt that they are indeed changed from the inside out. They have hope, and hope does not disappoint because it is founded upon God's ability to finish the work of salvation which He has begun. We can have absolute assurance that God will perfect our faith because He cannot lie. When He says that He will receive us as His children, He does just that. The only firm rock upon which salvation, church, or life can be built is the Rock of God and His Word, for they are immutable. God promised this salvation in the Old Testament, and in Paul's day, it had now come to pass with the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Messiah.

3but at the proper time manifested, even His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior,

Jesus came not too early or too late but at just the right time. Though God hadn't spoken for roughly 400 years before the advent of Christ, God's timing was just right. John the Baptist came as Elijah calling for repentance from the wilderness and preparing the way for the Lord. All was right on schedule. The revelation of God's spoken word and incarnate Word in Christ were most needed. Revealing Himself to Paul on the Damascus Road, Paul too saw Christ for Who He was and was given a proclamation to be entrusted with. Like a messenger of a king going throughout the land to share the king's proclamation, Paul's calling (and ours) is to herald a message of truth to all the world. Our job is not to change or modify the message but to deliver it. We are entrusted with the Word of God, and we must faithfully preach it and teach it.

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

Titus is a spiritual son of Paul in that he has had the privilege of being mentored by Paul, serving alongside of him. Their bond is based upon their common faith in that they share a common confession and adherence to the Word of God. Paul then gives his common greeting of grace and peace to you from God and Christ. We all need more grace for each day and could use the transcendent peace of God. Both only come from God, the giver of all good gifts, and through Christ, our Savior, the One Who has made us desiring of these gifts in the first place.

5For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,

Paul assigned Titus a mission in Crete. His job was to bring order and structure to the believers there. His main duty in this was to appoint elders who would oversee and shepherd the flock, guiding it in truth and keeping it from deception. The first elders in these cities were clearly appointed with apostolic authority from Paul through Titus. It appears that the ideal progression of church leadership would always be to have godly men appoint other godly men who would appoint more godly men after them. Yet when the church becomes apostate by and large, faithful men become missionaries fighting for their lives.

Godly authority is not based upon a vote of good will but upon the characteristics that Paul is about to give to Titus. Of those who meet these qualifications, which should be more than just the elders, those who are spiritual are to determine by the Spirit's leading who should be in charge of the flock as a shepherding and teaching elder. This is done through much prayer, through screening a man by way of the characteristics Paul is about to give, and by much wisdom which only a spiritually discerning person can have. When a person meets the qualifications and those who are spiritual agree that this person should be approached, they can then ask him to take on the role of elder. He should believe God is leading him that way as well.

Thus, the spiritual leader(s) of the flock appoint other spiritual leaders. This isn't done by popular vote or just because someone signed a membership agreement or took a membership class. The spiritual must appoint (see also Acts 14:23) the spiritual, which is Paul's command to Titus. If there are none spiritual, then none should be shepherding, and they should seek godly shepherds elsewhere. Note that not every man who is spiritual should take on the role of elder. God may not lead all to do so. Furthermore, elders must be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). This is one skill that they must possess. Some godly men are not able to do this, and they ought not to be forced into a role for which God didn't design them.

6namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.

An elder is one who is above reproach. There is nothing in his life that can cause anyone to doubt or question his commitment to the Lord, his understanding of Scripture, or the

purity of his life and heart. He is married to one wife, which literally says that he is a “one-woman man.” In other words, if he is married (note that Paul was single so single men can be elders), then he must be devoted to his wife singly. He cannot be lusting and certainly not be in any adulterous relationship. Christ says in Mark 10:11-12 that any divorce and remarriage is adultery (see also Romans 7:2-3 and 1 Corinthians 7:10-11). Since the marriage bond is permanent even if man tries to separate spouses legally, a person who has remarried after a divorce is in perpetual adultery. Even if such a one repents, he is still not a one-woman man, for he has been joined to two by covenant before God. Lusting is adultery according to Christ, so a person who lusts is also not qualified to be this one-woman man. Marriage is a test of commitment, integrity, patience, and purity. Singleness is a test of purity as well. If the man cannot pass these requirements, he cannot be an elder.

Another crucial and often overlooked element is that the overseer must have children who believe. They must believe in Christ, having professed Christ as their Lord and Savior. Granted, children make their own decisions and are responsible, but the general rule with very few exceptions is that if a child is trained as he should go that he will not depart from it even when he grows old (Proverbs 22:6). Thus, God is looking for men to oversee His church who have children who follow after the Lord. A believing child may rebel, and the man must deal with that appropriately. But the issue is whether or not the children profess faith. Must the aspiring elder have children at all? If they do not have children, one should ask why since children are a heritage from the Lord (Psalm 127:3). If it was because they were unable, that is one thing. In such cases, there should be some evidence of spiritual children as Titus was to Paul. Yet, if a couple chooses to not have children for reasons that amount to selfishness, that should be a red flag. How a couple raises their children is highly indicative of their faith, commitment, Biblical maturity, and ability to disciple.

7For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,

The overseer again is above reproach. The idea is emphasized by Paul that an elder cannot have issues of character or family that will cause those under his care to disrespect him. He must be clean as a whistle. This does not mean that he may not have failed in the past in some things. It means that he does, however, have a track record of faithfulness for an extended period of time. He must understand that he is God’s steward. He is not a professional, a contractor, an orator, or a salesperson. He is a servant of the Most High God who will be accountable for how he cares for God’s people. God’s takes this position seriously, for those who are teachers will receive a stricter judgment (James 3:1). He is not self-interested in any way, seeking always the welfare of others over his own. He is not quick-tempered, easily angered, impatient, and judgmental. He is long-suffering with others, not looking to argue or fight, and always doing what he can to be at peace with all people. He is not addicted to wine, not controlled by any mind-altering substance, and only filled and controlled by the leading of the Spirit. When trouble comes, he turns to God, not any sort of worldly comfort. He is not pugnacious, seeking a fight, battle, or war. He is not out to compete for people, musicians, or money. He is

interested only in the kingdom of God. He seeks to build relationships rather than steal market territory. He does not try to force his agenda down the throats of others or lead by power plays. He wants peace, community, communion, and unity, and he trusts God to bring it to pass. He is not interested in the things that warm the soul of the carnal man such as outward results, man-pleasing successes, and showboating. He understands that the work of an overseer is not about him but about God and pointing others to God. He understands that he is but a jar of clay and that the main event is Christ.

8but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,

The overseer is one who enjoys the company and fellowship of others. He is not a CEO who isolates himself, but he is among the faithful teaching them the Word of God and praying with them. He is also one who opens his heart and home to the needy physically and spiritually. He loves what is good and hates what is evil. He is very set in his ways about God and honoring Him. His heart rejoices in the truth and when truth prevails. He is sensible, exercising good judgment and having the ability to exercise wisdom in a variety of situations. Sensible also carries the meaning of temperate or sane, implying that the overseer is well-balanced, disciplined, and of a sound mind and demeanor. He is just, fair, and honest, pursuing truth above status and sordid gain. He is devout, innocent, righteous, and holy in his conduct. He is self-controlled, which again emphasizes that he walks and lives in a position of faith, confidence in the Lord, and hope. He is not unstable or unsteady. He contends for the faith rather than with others.

9holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

He holds to sound doctrine with a vice grip. He teaches the faithful word and carries the baton of truth into his generation and the next. There is a set body of truth and teaching that must be fervently proclaimed and defended. The goal is to teach the whole counsel of God so well and sensibly that it encourages and challenges believers and clearly refutes those who have any other view. An overseer must have such a deep understanding of the Word in order to be able to do this.

10For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,

After giving the qualifications that are required for the position of overseer, Paul now contrasts what should be with what is not. If any of these characteristics are present, a person ought to be disqualified. It is common for people who desire church leadership to be rebellious in their own lives, letting their flesh have its way and compromising over and over again. Many are soft on doctrine, even creating new and false theologies that deceive others. Such men talk really well and have a great stage presence, but their content is empty because it is not founded in the Word and in many cases contrary to it. Too many churches are substituting speaking talent and appearances for truth. This is a direct violation of this directive from Paul. In Paul's time, many of the deceivers happened to be Jews. In our time, the deception is everywhere.

11who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain.

What do we do about those who speak deception and carry the name of Jesus or Christian? We must silence them. We don't do this maliciously, but by soundly declaring sound teaching that can clearly refute those who contradict (see v. 9). If we provide good enough teaching for Christians, most will not fall for the deceptions anyway. If they do, we need to be able to show them where they are deceived. Deception always causes division and hurt, upsetting families as one sheep goes astray. Deceivers operate for sordid gain, not for God's purposes but for the wallet or resume's purposes. Deceivers nearly always have their own desires in mind.

12One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."

13This testimony is true. For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith,

14not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth.

One such deceiver was quoted as saying that all Cretans are liars, evil, and gluttonous. On this matter they were actually telling the truth. Paul wanted some of the Cretans, who were professing believers, to start to live like it. Thus, they had to be reprovved and challenged to change from their current state of rebellion and deception. They had fallen for myths proclaimed by these Jews and other man-made laws and rules that lead people away from faith and grace rather than towards Christ. Deceivers, similar to the overseers, are revealed for their true selves by what they do. The overseers do good, and the deceivers do evil. It should be obvious, especially when contrasted to such "evil beasts" that an overseer is a man of God. He must be able to faithfully encourage the righteous and boldly challenge those who are in error. He must be willing to try to rescue the sheep who are following the wolves' clothing.

15To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.

Those who know God are pure in heart. They will see God (Matthew 5:8). Those who do not know God are impure in heart (Jeremiah 17:9). When we come to Christ, we see things in a new light, desiring the pure rather than the impure. The Spirit makes our conscience sensitive to sin and discerning of evil and error. To those who are lacking saving faith and in the case of believers who choose to lack faith and defile themselves, their mind and conscience become defiled. This means that they are unable to think right, their thoughts rule them rather than the Spirit, and they are no longer feeling the promptings of the Spirit when they sin. They can sin and not even care. They know they are wrong, but their mind is able to let them escape and not think reasonably on the topic. They are in great danger.

16They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

Many people profess to know God if you ask them. Deceivers often use God as their entryway to a person's mind and heart. Yet the actions show what faith really exists, if any. Faith must have works of some kind at some point to some degree (James 2:17). Evil deeds deny Christ and are evidence that a person may not even know Christ (Matthew 7:16). They could also be evidence of a mind that is so far deceived that it cannot process truth. In either case, no good fruit can come from these lives because they are corrupt, disobedient, and rebellious.

1But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.

Titus, in contrast to these defiled persons, is to speak forth that which is fitting for sound doctrine. Anything that is not clearly grounded and founded in the Bible is to be discarded and challenged. The Bible is the authority, not some open-ended storybook to which we make up the ending.

2Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance.

Paul then begins a series of specific directives as to how certain age groups and persons are to live. This is what a pastor would want to know so he can make sure things are going as they ought to go. Contemporary church philosophy demeans and discounts the elderly, divides people into groups by age and gender, and allows very little opportunity for the young to be taught by the old. What Paul is about to describe will be much different. The ideal church does not cater to the young, but it is a family of God, young and old, male and female, single and married.

The older men are to be temperate, sensible, dignified, sound in faith, love, and perseverance. They are not to become doubtful, unrighteous, lazy, retired from spiritual work, sarcastic, negatively critical, unhelpful, noncontributing, or doctrinally immature. They are to be well-balanced, beacons of spiritual strength and discernment. Unlike the elders, they may not be able to teach, but they ought to provide an example of love, faithfulness, and humility. They ought to be able to know which elder is speaking truth and which one has been led astray. We need more older men who know the Bible and have discernment. Very little saddens me more than seeing an aged man get deceived and encourage others to be deceived because he is one who should be wise and have the respect of others.

3Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good,

4so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,

5to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

The older women are to be mature, steadfast, and stable in their faith, reverent of the Lord and respectful of their husbands and those in authority. They are not to let their mouths get them into trouble by gossiping about others for the sake of making them look bad. They are not to be addicted to alcohol in any way, but they are to be led by the Spirit of God. They are to be teachers of what is good in terms of how a woman of God is to behave and speak. Their speech should be edifying, leading the younger women to become godly as they are, loving their husbands and children. Too often it seems that older men or women seem to paint a disgruntled picture of what marriage and family life is all about. Sure, it can be tough, but marriage ought to be a great joy as should be watching children grow and training them to walk in the Lord. Older women need to show by example and through verbal teaching what marriage ought to be like. They are to be sensible, not being controlled by their emotions but devoted to the Word and to prayer. They are to be pure, not even jesting about interests in other men. They are to be workers at home, which means that they are the ones who are responsible for caring for the things related to domestic life. They are those who watch over and keep the household. If a couple can live off of the husband's income, why should the wife compromise her chief calling of caring for the home and the children by working? In some cases it makes sense for the wife to work and earn an income. As long as she is able to care for the home, a little extra income is a wise use of time. Proverbs 31:16 says of the excellent wife, "She considers a field and buys it; From her earnings she plants a vineyard." This woman of God made money by doing work that was compatible with life at home. She bought some land and farmed it to make some extra money. So, a godly woman can work, but her chief calling is to the home. By kind, Scripture means that she is pleasant, happy, good-natured, and agreeable. She is easy and fun to be around rather than one who draws others down. Finally, she, for the sake of honoring the Scripture and God's design for marriage, subjects herself to her husband. She doesn't do this to men in general, but only to her husband. She is enabling the husband to initiate and lead, having the final control and decision-making power. This does not mean that her opinions matter less or that she must let herself get run over by a taskmaster husband. She will have her greatest influence and joy by enabling her husband to lead, by advising him, and by resting in his courage, strength, and ability to care for her and love her with all of His being as Christ loves the church. Submitting to Christ is the safest and greatest thing in the world if we know that He loves us and will only do good for us. When a husband loves his wife as Christ loves the church, submission in marriage won't be a frustration but a place of rest and peace.

6Likewise urge the young men to be sensible;

7in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified,

8sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

The young men have their own issues and struggles that they must deal with. Gossip isn't the tendency for the young man, but being sensible and an example of good deeds may come as a struggle. The young man is to respect his elders, know the Word of God

so that his doctrine is right and pure, and be mature and dignified, not a rebel or wild and uncontrollable. The young men should control their words and speech so that it is wholesome and edifying to the point that no one can question their character based upon a slippage of speech here or there. Wisdom should come out of their mouths to such a degree that those outside of the church marvel and have no accusation of hypocrisy to bring against the church. Men understand the temptations of being young, and to see a young man know what it took them years to learn causes them to marvel at God's grace and the wisdom in His Word.

9Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative,

10not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

Those who have chosen to stay on serving their masters need to honor them by submitting to their instruction in all things. Employees must honor the wishes of their employers, as long as their commands don't require one to violate the Word of God. Rather than complain and talk behind their backs, their wishes need to be honored for the sake of honoring God's Word. Many become argumentative, complaining and procrastinating. Wasting time while on the clock is a major sin that many do today to disrespect the authority of the boss. Rather, they should be a person that the boss takes pride in and can trust and rejoice in. They ought not to pilfer by keeping back their best effort or by stealing from the business in anyway to promote their own selfish agenda. They are to demonstrate good faith by being joyful in their work and being those who are committed to the task. Masters who have slaves who do these kinds of things will take note because it is rare. What such God-honoring behavior does is give credibility to sound doctrine, preparing the way for the truth of God to be received by the hearts of men. Sound behavior makes sound doctrine much more believable.

11For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

12instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

The grace of God has appeared visibly in human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ Who made it possible for all men to have salvation. The ransom for all was paid. The issue is whether or not a person will repent and allow the righteousness of Christ to be credited to their account by faith. The gracious gift of God must be applied and received. The message of Christ is not a simple "believe to be happy message" but to deny the flesh and anything that honors the devil rather than God. Sensible living is living free from ungodliness and worldly desires. A man of God, woman of God, or leader in the church of God must be sensible, having a life that is purified of sinful attitudes and behaviors. Though the fullness of this is a process, we are called to live righteously in the here and now. Thus, it is a cop-out to say that Christians should continue to be hypocrites because we are imperfect. We are commanded by God to live godly in this present age by His sufficient grace.

13looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

14who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

The believer is constantly looking forward in hope to the day that Christ will return and take us to be with Him. The believer understands that life with Christ as Ruler will be better than anything this world can offer. We want to see the glory of God when Christ appears because it is He who has set us free from the ways of this world and the bondage to sin and death. He has redeemed us from having to be held captive by the devil to live out every lawless deed. As believers who are His own possession, we are to be living in a way that fulfills the law of Christ, eager and passionate to do what is good.

15These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority Let no one disregard you.

Paul commands Titus to strengthen, encourage, instruct, call to action, correct, challenge, and boldly declare the truth to all in the church. He is not to sugar-coat things or avoid offending people by confronting sin issues. He is to say it like it is, being sure that the church is honoring and conforming to the Word of God and to the desires of Christ. This he is to do with a godly authority as if he is issuing a command or mandate. It might be gentle and gracious, but it must be absolutely in defense of the truth, honoring sound doctrine.

1Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,

2to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.

Titus is to remind the Christians in his locale to honor those in authority, whether in politics, work, or the church. They are to be obedient to the wishes of God and authorities ordained by God so as not to dishonor God. Walking in faith, hope, and love, they should be ready to do the will of God by doing good deeds as God leads. They ought to speak well of others as long as such speech is true, and they are never to speak degradingly of a person, though they might vehemently disagree with how they act and what they believe. Wrong beliefs should be respectfully challenged, but the person's dignity should always be honored. They should do whatever they can to be at peace with others, to seek reconciliation, to be gentle, to not seek a fight or conflict, and to always consider the interests of others as more important than their own. This mildness of disposition does not mean a lack of vitality, passion, or boldness, but merely a willingness and commitment to pursuing the welfare of others before our own self-interest.

3For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

Before we repented and turned to Christ, we were as the world is, foolish, disobedient, deceived, addicted, envious, always chasing the next person to outdo them or gain their approval, speaking ill of others, hating those who have wronged us and even those who are fair to us. We were totally selfish and sinful through and through. In light of this, we need to be gracious with others, not expecting sinners to live as saints. Rather, we ought to live as testimonies of the work of grace so that we can show them the way to freedom from sin.

**4But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,
5He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,
6whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,
7so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**

Jesus incarnated the love and kindness of God so that man could know the way and find the way to freedom, life, and love. He didn't die for us because we were righteous or loveable but because of His great and merciful love for sinners who rejected Him and didn't deserve His love. His death was merciful to us. It allowed us to be reborn as new people without an enslavement to sinful passions and to be continually renewed in our thoughts, desires, emotions, and behaviors to ways honoring the Lord as the Spirit works in our hearts. We were made righteous and reconciled to fellowship with God by the grace of God, not by our own merit or work. By grace we were made heirs with Christ to inherit the kingdom of God as His children. In this promise of eternal life, which is already partly known in that we know Christ, is great hope.

8This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men.

That we are saved by grace and made heirs with Christ is a statement and truth that Christians must hold dear and preachers must emphasize. We must remember that we operate and live by the grace of God, not by our own strength or inherent righteousness. Our hope, strength, and holiness is found only in Christ. These things we must teach and declare with great confidence, certainty, and boldness. Some advocate doubt and uncertainty, but Paul wants Titus to speak dogmatically and with conviction. The purpose of this assurance of the work of Christ on our behalf and of the certainty of our coming inheritance is essential for us to be able to engage in good deeds. That we are saved by grace and will be kept by grace is a motivator not for sin but for good works. Kindness leads to repentance (Romans 2:4). A fear of losing God's mercy and encountering His wrath does not. It is always the goodness of God that leads us toward Him. This is why it is so important that we do good deeds so that God's love is incarnated in and through us and seen by the unbeliever. Such paves the way for the truth.

9But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

Some people like to argue about meaningless debates about man-made constructions of thought, theology, philosophy, or other “ologies.” Some argue for the sake of arguing which is vain and divisive. Others discuss things for the sake of learning and for coming to a place of unity according to the truth. We must be discerning to know when a person is arguing to hear themselves speak and to cause doubt as opposed to when they are asking honest questions because they want to change, grow, and learn. Some people want to go back to the Law and try to fulfill all of the little details. The whole point of the Law was to show us that we could not keep it. To return to being under the law is to reject grace and live in frustration, defeat, and division. Thus, we must emphasize the trustworthy sayings about Christ, grace, and eternal life.

**10Reject a factious man after a first and second warning,
11knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.**

There are those who enter a fellowship for the purpose of being divisive. They enjoy the attention that it draws them, and they like making those in authority have to look as if they might not know something that they know. They are not pursuing the exaltation of God and the humble pursuit of the truth. They are pursuing their own glory and trying to get people to listen to them and reject sound authority and teaching. These men must be confronted and not allowed to carry on with their factious behavior. They must be told once, and if they do not change, they must be told again. At that point, they must be removed from the fellowship (see Matthew 18:15-17). These individuals are perverted, twisted, and sinning. Their own behavior condemns them, revealing their true nature. It should be made plain to all lest some get deceived that they are not walking with the Lord.

12When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.

Artemas and Tychicus, trusted friends and co-laborers with Paul (Tychicus had traveled with Paul in Acts 20:4 and had been a messenger for Paul in Ephesians 6:21, Colossians 4:1 and 2 Timothy 4:12), were again sent by Paul to Titus. When they arrived, they were to send Titus to Paul at Nicopolis where he was planning to spend the winter.

13Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way so that nothing is lacking for them.

Titus was to help Zenas, a lawyer, and Apollos, the great teacher of the faith (Acts 18:23-28), as they journeyed by being sure that they had what they needed.

14Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.

Just as Titus did for Zenas and Apollos, all believers, especially those who labored alongside of Paul and Titus, need to learn how they can proactively and intentionally meet pressing needs of individuals. So easy it is to let someone suffer in their time of need. How much of a lift it is to help them at that point, so that they know that they are supported. God's plan was never that we work alone; we are to be a team. If we want to be assured of bearing fruit for the kingdom, we need to come alongside others according to their needs. Our labor and good works will enable them to be fruitful as well, not succumbing to fatigue, loneliness, or any other void or need.

15All who are with me greet you Greet those who love us in the faith Grace be with you all.

Paul sends on greetings from all who are present with him to those who love Christ and them. May God's grace enable us to do good deeds and live out the call of Christ on our lives.

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