

The Pastoral Epistles

Titus 3:8-11 “⁸The 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. ⁹But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. ¹⁰As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, ¹¹knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned”

The context of this passage draws on the preceding verses and refers to the principles of the previous lesson as “these things.” Verses 1 and 2 seem particularly important to Paul’s building argument here. His desire in writing such things are “so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works.” Furthermore, he validates that they are “excellent and profitable for people.”

In the pursuit of godliness there are the things to adopt, as we saw last week, and there are also things to avoid. Titus was told, and was to tell others, to avoid:

1. Foolish controversies
2. Genealogies
3. Dissensions
4. Quarrels about the law

The reason these must be avoided is because they are both:

1. Unprofitable
2. Worthless

Next, Paul gives clear instruction on how to handle troublemakers in the church. The “person who stirs up division” is to be warned twice, probably not as much of a prescription, but an attempt to be thorough. When it is obvious that a divisive person is not going to quit sowing seeds of discord, they are to be expelled from the fellowship. The reason? He/she is

1. Warped
2. Sinful
3. Self-condemned