

Sunday, January 19, 2020

The Pastoral Epistles

Titus 3:12-15 – “12 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. 13 Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. 14 And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful. 15 All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.”

As Paul wraps up his letter to Titus he has a few final, but personal details to include. We can see that Paul intends to visit with Titus, but that means someone is going to have to fill in for him so he can leave the ministry in Crete and meet Paul in Nicopolis. Paul intends to send one of two guys to do that job: Artemas, or Tychicus. We don't know much about these men, but the fact that Paul is sending them gives them substantial credibility.

Application question: Has someone's personal endorsement of you ever mattered?

In turn, Titus was to “speed (two men) on their way.” The idea is that Titus was to see to their needs as they departed. Whatever means or encouragement was required he was to supply. The fact that Zenas was a lawyer doesn't tell us a lot, but we can glean some from this. His name is Greek and therefore we would conclude that he probably is not well versed in the Jewish law. He would actually know the law of Roman cities.

Apollos is a prominent Jewish Bible teacher of this era. He is introduced in Acts 14 as a Jew, born in Alexandria, Egypt, and a mighty man of the Word of God. As great a teacher of the Bible as he was, his doctrine was somewhat out of sorts. By all given evidence, Apollos was mature, humble, and teachable enough to take instruction from Aquila and Priscilla and change his preaching.

Application questions: Have you ever been blessed by someone when you left on a major journey? Have you ever blessed someone leaving on a journey?

A final lesson that Titus was to teach, “let our people learn to devote themselves to good works.” This doctrine is vital in any church. We serve people. The *good works* mentioned here are things that we do for the benefit of others. The priority in doing good is when there are needs that are “urgent.” When there is a greater need than normal, we as believers should be the ones engaging. Some examples of these greater needs in our day might be?

Financial; rescue mission; advice; ???

The negative side of this imperative is that we would be spiritually impotent if we refuse to help those in need. To be unfruitful is to waste the grace God has imparted to us.

Application question: How available are you to meet an urgent need of a friend or family member?

The final verse of this book records the greeting sent by those in Paul's band, first to Titus, then to those of the church who would know and love the apostle Paul. And finally, he signs off with a blessing of grace that he prayerfully bestows on Titus. There is no doubt that Paul indeed wishes the best for his protégé.

Application question: When was the last time you prayed God's grace on someone?

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