

Daily Bible Study

“It’s About People”

Titus 3:12-15

February 9 – February 15, 2014

MONDAY – As we continue our study of **Titus**, we now take for our text, **Titus 3:12-15**. We have entitled this lesson *“It’s About People”*. In this his final words in the letter, Paul tells Titus that he will provide for the vacancy which will arise when Titus leaves Crete. The apostle is going to send either Artemas or Tychicus to replace Titus on the island. As soon as this substitute arrives, Paul wants Titus to do his best to meet Paul at Nicopolis, where the apostle has decided to spend the winter. We also see that The Apostle asks that both Titus and the Cretan believers in general do all in their power to help along on their journey the two Christian friends and helpers who were most likely the men who “carried the mail” as it were and the bearers of this letter. We meet them introduced as Zenas the lawyer, and Apollos. Paul says that “our people,” must learn to maintain good works for such occasions like this which require needs met in order that they may not be unfruitful. All who are with Paul send greetings to Titus, who, in turn, must convey the greetings of Paul and his companions to those who love us in the faith. Finally, a brief salutation concludes the letter where Paul wishes and prays grace to them all. Read our text: **Titus 3:12-15**: ¹² *When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.* ¹³ *Send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey with haste, that they may lack nothing.* ¹⁴ *And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.* ¹⁵ *All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.”*

Suggestion for Prayer: God, teach me this week from Sacred Scripture that the work of Your Kingdom is a work that concerns and involves people such as me doing what You have asked and commanded of me for Your glory and the good of others.

TUESDAY – **Titus 3:12**: ¹² *When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.”* The main portion of the letter is finished and now Paul concludes with some more specific and personal comments. Scholars believe that at this moment Paul is probably somewhere in Macedonia (Philippi?). He has *decided to spend the winter there (Nicopolis)* and apparently wants to meet Titus there to spend it with him. *Nicopolis* probably refers to the most well-known of all the “Victory Cities” in Greece. The ancient city of Nicopolis had been founded and had been constituted a Roman colony by Augustus, as a memorial to his *victory* over Antony and Cleopatra at nearby

Actium in (31 B.C.). *Nicopolis* was certainly a good meeting-place for the winter as it was centrally located between the men as well as being a fine winter-resort. Interestingly, it was also strategically located as a “base of operations” for mission-activity in Dalmatia. It seems likely that Titus did indeed reach *Nicopolis*, and performed some evangelistic work in Dalmatia, to which he returned at a later time (see **2 Timothy 4:10**). Paul desires Titus to *be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis* but at the same time it was important to Paul that Crete must not be left without a good leader. The conditions there were too serious to permit even a brief period without leadership. As soon as a replacement arrived, Titus can leave, but not before. An interesting point concerning church governing and establishment is that Paul does not say that the Cretans can easily take care of themselves during Titus’ absence for he realizes that churches need leadership spiritually and cannot “overnight” be made independent; therefore outside help is coming in as necessary. That help is in the form of either *Artemas* or *Tychicus*. Both of these men are Paul’s co-workers performing kingdom-work under his authority and supervision. The name *Artemas* is probably an abbreviation of Artemidorus, meaning “gift of Artemas,” the Greek goddess of hunting, corresponding to the Roman Diana. What is known about *Tychicus* has been summarized in **2 Timothy 4:12**. His name means “fortuitous” may be connected with that of the Greek goddess Tyche, that is, Fortune (“Fortuna”).

Suggestion for Prayer: God, help me to see the importance of Christian fellowship and companionship. And may I also see that I can’t live and “do” the Christian life on my own but that You have provided leaders and people to help me along the way.

WEDNESDAY – **Titus 3:13**: ¹³ *Send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey with haste, that they may lack nothing.”* The men who would “carry the mail”, who would be the bearers of this letter to the churches are now introduced to us in this **verse 13**. The first is *Zenas the lawyer*. What kind of *lawyer* was *Zenas*? There is some discussion concerning this where some see that before his conversion to the Christian faith, he may have been an expounder of the Law of Moses (“religious law”). Others believe he was a Roman jurist or “lawyer” such as lawyers we have today. He has a Greek name which some see as proof he was merely a lawyer in the second instance we mentioned but that is not concrete evidence. There were many Jews with Greek names. *Apollos* for instance was a Jew with a Greek name. *Apollos* is a familiar figure in the NT. He was a Jew, a native of Alexandria (**Acts 18:24**), which was the famous Egyptian library-and-university-city which had been founded by Alexander the Great 332 years before Jesus birth. *Apollos* was an orator who was well learned in the Scriptures. We know he spoke boldly in the synagogue and was taught more accurately the way of God by Priscilla and Aquila (**Acts 18:26**). He went on to the province of Achaia where he was a great blessing to believers and powerfully and publically took on the Jews showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ (**Acts 18:27, 28**). Afterward he had returned to Ephesus (**1 Corinthians 16:12**). He was a good friend of Paul as Paul

mentions him as a fellow laborer saying, “*I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase,*” **1 Corinthians 3:6**. We also see the sinfulness of men in the spirit of the Corinthian Christians where they picked sides concerning these men and other Christian leaders (“*I am of Paul,*” “*I am of Apollos,*” **1 Corinthians 1:12**). Some scholars believe that *Zenas* as well as *Apollos* who were both Jews, both good Christian men who were blessings to the church of Jesus, who by experience were experts in Jewish religious law were sent to Crete in order to counteract the major influence of those who taught Jewish myths at the expense of the true gospel. All we really know is that *Zenas*, in some sense a law-expert, and *Apollos*, were in all probability bearers of the letter and on their journey Titus is ordered to do everything possible to help them along on this trip. These men must be provided with food and lodging while in Crete, and must be aided in every way so that, *lacking nothing*, they may be able to continue their travels. When the New Testament speaks elsewhere about doing this (**Acts 15:3, Romans 15: 24, 1 Corinthians 16:6, 11, 2 Corinthians 1:16, 3 John 6–8**) the reference is to those engaging in Christian ministry. As they were travelling, teaching and preaching the gospel, Titus was to see that they had everything they needed.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me to recognize that all of us play a part in the building of your Kingdom. Some of us work “behind the scenes” as it were and some in the forefront. Help me to be faithful to do my part whatever it may be, even if it is merely praying for and taking care of those You have teaching and preaching Your gospel.

THURSDAY – Titus 3:14: ^{“14} *And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.*” Titus is called to do his part in this endeavor but he should not try to shoulder this burden alone. Titus is to not fail to encourage *our people*, that is, the believers on the island of Crete, to co-operate and work wholeheartedly in all these matters of showing Christian service and generosity. They should *learn to maintain good works* (**1 Timothy 5:4**), or *keep on learning* things like this and they should become experienced veterans if you will in well-doing just as Paul himself had *learned* to be content in whatsoever state he was (**Philippians 4:11**). This “learning through practice” is the best self-education anyone could ever desire or achieve. The people needed to learn these things by practicing them and so do we. If as we mentioned, Paul was at Philippi when he wrote this letter, he did not have far to look in order to point one brilliant example of a man such as Epaphroditus who understood this duty (**Philippians 2:25**). We also see this appeared to be true of others at Philippi (**Philippians 4:16**). This ministry of providing and helping is one in which the congregation as a whole is to engage. When there is an opportunity like this to assist fellow believers who are in engaging in the work of Christ, we are to consider it our duty and privilege to assist them. It is to be a part of the church’s ministry. The reason we are to practice these things is that we as well as those in Crete, *may not be unfruitful* (**Matthew 7:15, 13:8, 23, John 15:8, Galatians 5:22**). Paul realizes fully that though grace is the root

(**Titus 3:7, Ephesians 2:8**), noble deeds are the fruit (**Ephesians 2:10**) of the tree of salvation.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me to realize that I have a significant role to play in this life and it is not to find my happiness and joy in things, jobs, money, etc... but instead to find it in obeying you and serving the advancement of the good news through the local church and those she sends out to further the work. Help me see that I have a responsibility to learn and maintain the doing of these things so that I may not become unfruitful and unfit.

FRIDAY – Titus 3:15: ^{“15} *All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.*” Before we finish with the last verse, let’s summarize this passage so far and its thoughts concerning our responsibilities as part of the family of God. We must know that living the Christian life is done in practical ways and by them we ensure that we do not live unproductive lives but rather help advance the kingdom of God. We have different callings in life and not all of us have been called by God to serve in the same ways. Some have been called as missionaries to leave their native country, and live in a very different part of the world while others of us may have been called to remain at home. But we as true believers in Jesus are all part of the same body, the church and are all involved in the same worldwide mission to advance our Savior’s cause. And when we support our brothers in practical ways by helping to meet their necessities, we are giving tangible expression to that reality. It is then that we are playing our part along with them in the fulfillment of the Great Commission. No we read Paul’s farewell which closes our study; *All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.* All those fellow-workers who are with Paul send greetings to Titus. Titus is asked to convey the greetings of Paul and of his companions to those who *love us in the faith*, who are filled with affection for them. And upon all the believers who hear this letter when it is read to them God’s grace and favor in Christ is pronounced, although they do not deserve it. How much they needed grace and so do we. If the outstanding matters in Crete were to be addressed, the difficult situations dealt with, the truths of this letter taught, taken to heart, and lived out in their lives, they greatly needed the grace of God. If we in Salamanca are to take to heart and live out in our lives all that this letter requires us to believe and do we are in as great – need of God’s grace as the believers in Crete. What a thought that it is available in the same measure and same power.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me understand that all of life and all I have is by Your grace alone. Apart from You I am lost and hell bound but by Your grace in Jesus I am saved and made a child of Your family. Help me be concerned about and work with my brothers in Christ to serve and meet the needs of those You have doing the work of ministry. Be with our missionaries today Lord and encourage them in their labor in the gospel.