

Sermon Discussion

31 October 2021

Read Titus 3:9-15

Dig Deeper

Whereas **the gospel** produces humility, submissiveness, gentleness, and patience, **religion** (based on human motivations) produces quarrelling, competitiveness, and division.

As to the people who are advocating these “*worthless*” things and exerting a destructive influence in the church, Paul’s instructions to Titus were direct and specific. He was to give such a person **two warnings**. If that did not work, he was to have nothing to do with him. The assumption is that a failure to respond to two warnings is a clear sign that the offender is “*warped,*” “*sinful,*” and “*self-condemned*”.

Paul’s thought here is similar to the Jesus’ instructions (see *Matthew 18:15-17*), when He taught that after giving an offender three chances to repent, he is then to be cut off (see also *2 Thessalonians 3:14-15*).

Zenas the lawyer is mentioned nowhere else in the New Testament, and nothing is known about him, not even whether he was Jewish or Roman. But **Apollos** was a familiar fellow worker. The apostle’s instructions seem to suggest that both Zenas and Apollos were in Crete and that Titus was in a position “*to see that they lack nothing.*” Servants of Christ who are called to travel from place to place have always received support from the churches (see *3 John 6-8*).

The closing greeting, “*Grace be with you all*” (v.15), is similar to that in both 1 and 2 Timothy. The plural word “*you*” indicates an awareness on Paul’s part that he was addressing a broader audience than just Titus.

1. How do you determine if a debate or dispute is “*foolish*”? What are some examples you have encountered in church?
2. Have you ever got drawn into a foolish controversy or argument? What was the impact on your Christian life and relationships with others? Is Paul outlawing all theological debate? Is there any time it might be appropriate to get involved in a debate?
3. Have you ever seen church discipline practised? Was it biblical? What issues seem to make church discipline impractical in the church today?

4. What is the main goal of dealing with” a divisive person” in the way Jesus and Paul advised? What outcome did they want to see for the person themselves and for the church? How do we respond when we are warned or rebuked?

Application & Prayer

- Ask God to protect you from the subtle draw of concerns that are unprofitable and to help you discern what to avoid and what to challenge.
- Ask God to reveal any divisiveness in your heart and mind that you need to repent of and turn away from. Pray for the leadership of the church who are responsible for warning and rebuking us at times!
- Praise and thank God that through His grace He enables us to live fruitful and productive lives that honour and glorify Him. Ask Him to grow the desire in your heart to do good and to see the opportunities for you to do good.
- Reflect on the implications of Titus 3:9-15 for your own life today. Consider what you have learned that might lead you to praise God, repent of sin, and trust in His gracious promises.