

Lesson 24

MAY 23, 2024

Titus 3:9 - But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

If sound teaching is profitable for everyone, foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the Law ... are unprofitable and useless. This is a repeated theme in the Pastorals (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 2:23; Titus 1:14). Titus was to avoid (literally to "turn away from") such things.

1 Tim 1:3-4 - As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, 4) nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.

There is much about false teachings in this letter and in the one to Titus. Whereas these were specific to the times, they throw light on certain principles which are still relevant today in dealing with some types of wrong teaching. Whatever is meant by myths and endless genealogies (4), it is clear that Paul regarded them as the very opposite of the serious content of the gospel. In view of the

fact that in Tit. 1:14 (BELOW) Paul mentions 'Jewish myths,' it is probable that he had in mind mythical histories, like the Jewish Book of Jubilees. Note the contrast between controversies and God's work. There was an unproductiveness about the false teaching which was the opposite of true faith. Paul draws attention to certain characteristics about the people who were promoting this teaching—their lack of meaning and their unsuitability to be teachers

1 Tim 6:3-5 - If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,

4) he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, 5) and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

Paul cannot leave the subject of those who are leading others astray, and he comes back to the theme here. He assumes that there will be a clear dividing mark between what is false and what is sound. Paul has no place for compromise. His description of the false teachers is specific—they are conceited, they lack understanding, they have an unhealthy interest in controversies, and they are thoroughly evil in their speech and attitudes.

Further, where godliness is seen as a means of financial gain, it will never lead to truth.

Donald Guthrie, "1 Timothy," in New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 1303.

2 Tim 2:23 - But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.

Titus 1:14 - not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth.

Titus 3:10-11 - Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, 11) knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

Factious man - Grk: αἰρετικός, "airetikos" pertains to being divisive, not united, causing quarrels.

As to the people who are advocating these useless things and thereby exerting a divisive and otherwise 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 and sinful, and self-condemned. Paul's thought here is similar to the Lord's instructions in (Matt 18:15-17), when He taught that after giving an offender three chances to repent, he is then to be cut off (2 Thes. 3:14-15).

Matt. 18:15-17 - **Jesus said** "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. 16) "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. 17) "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

2 Thes. 3:14-15 - If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame. 15) Yet do not regard him as an enemy but admonish him as a brother.

Further Instructions and Greetings (3:12-15)

Tit 3:12 - **When 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.**

Clearly Artemas or Tychicus was to replace Titus in Crete. Paul mentions his intention of wintering at Nicopolis, which is generally thought to be a city on the west coast of Greece. No reason is given for the choice of such an out of the way place.

How were letters sent?

Tit 3:13 - Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way so that nothing is lacking for them.

Zenas is not mentioned elsewhere in the NT. Apollos is known from Acts and 1 Corinthians as an associate of the apostle. Evidently in some way Titus must have been in a position to give these two men some material assistance in their travelling. 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 have everything they need. Servants of Christ who are called to travel from place to place have always received support from the churches.

APOLLOS -

Acts 18:24-28 - Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures. 25) This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John; 26) and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

27) And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him; and when he had arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace, 28) for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.



Priscilla and Aquila -

Aquila was a Jew and a native of Pontus in Asia Minor. He had been expelled from Rome, when the emperor "banished all the Jews, who were continually making disturbances by spreading the gospel. From Rome, Aquila and Priscilla went to Corinth, where Paul (on his second missionary journey) met them. Paul met Aquila and Priscilla and became lifelong friends. They both had much in common with Paul: they were visitors in Corinth; Jews by background; tentmakers by

trade; and they were probably Christians already when Paul met them. There they lived together and worked in the same trade of making tents. After such close association with Paul, they were able to instruct even the learned Apollos, a Jewish teacher who then became a Christian (Acts 18:24-28). Both were Paul's loyal friends and trusted co-workers (Rom 16:3, 4). When he left Corinth, they accompanied him and remained at Ephesus when he returned to Syria (Acts 18:18, 19). When Paul wrote the first letter to Corinth they were still at Ephesus, where their home was used as a place for Christians to gather (1 Cor 16:19). Since the decree of Claudius was temporary, Priscilla and Aquila returned to Rome when Paul wrote to the Roman Christians (Rom 16:3). When the second letter to Timothy was written, they were again in Ephesus (2 Tm 4:19).



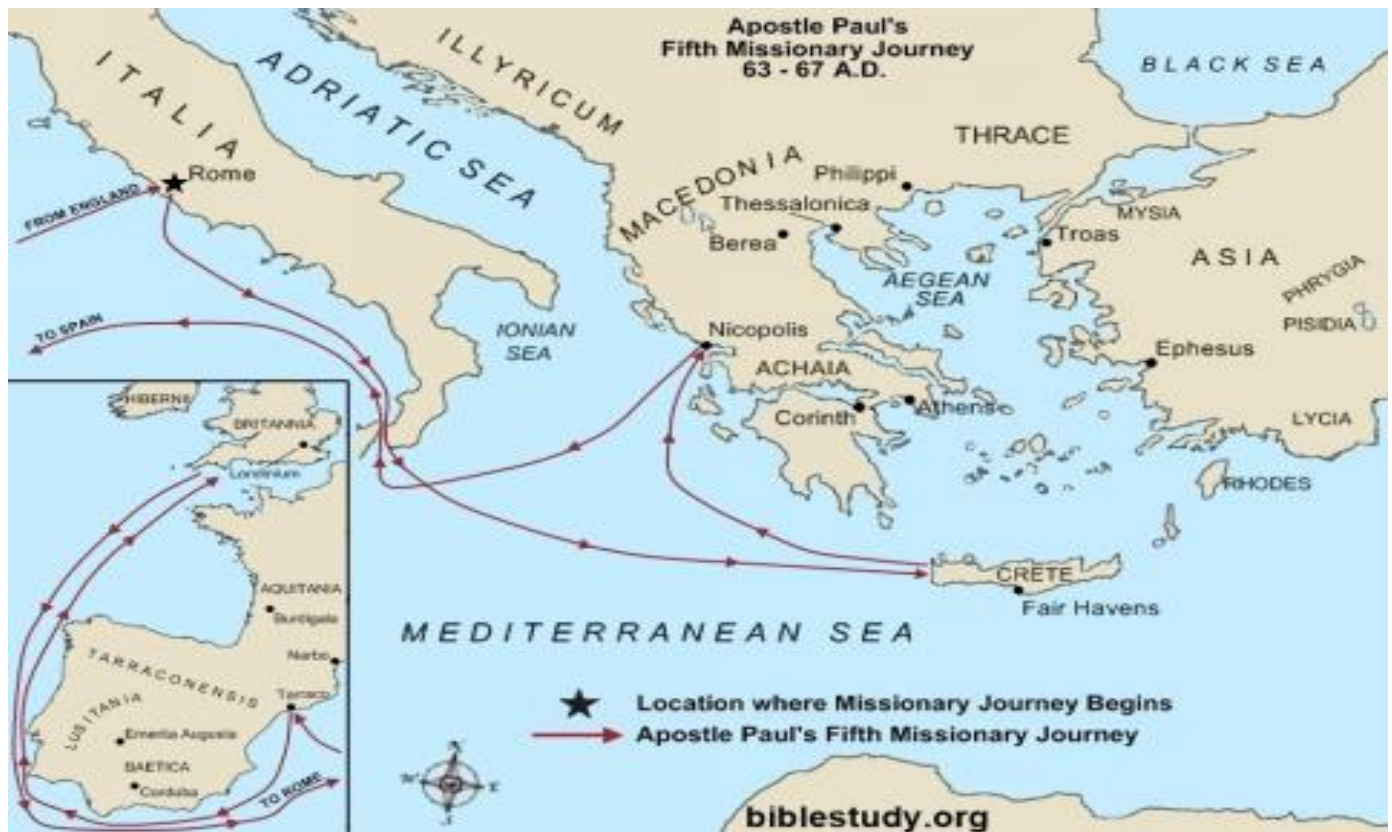
Shops in the agora (marketplace) of Corinth, like the ones in which Paul and Aquila and Priscilla worked.

Tit 3:14 - Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.

After these specific instructions to Titus, a general exhortation is added directed to our people. Clearly the Cretan Christians generally are intended, for these people are to devote themselves to doing what is good. The practical side of Christianity is here brought into vivid focus. The words for daily necessities can be understood by the providing for those traveling in missions and the needs of those Christians in their Presence.

Tit 3:15 - All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.

It is not known who all was included in the phrase everyone with me. "Those who love us in the faith" obviously excluded the false teachers who opposed Paul. The closing greeting, "grace be with you all," 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. The letter was passing along his love for the Cretan Christians.



Review of the book of Titus

Tit. 1:1-4 **The Salutation (Greeting)**

1. Written by the Apostle Paul to Titus

Tit. 1:5-16 **Qualifications of Elders**

1. Purpose for leaving Titus in Crete
2. Qualifications for Overseers
3. Instructions for false teachers

Tit. 2:1-15 **Duties of the Older and Younger**

1. Instructions for Older men

2. Instructions for Older women
3. Instructions for Young women
4. Instructions for Young men
5. Instructions for Bondslaves

Tit. 3:1-11 **Godly Living**

1. Be subject to authorities
2. What we should not do
3. A reminder of what Christ did for us
4. How we should act
5. Avoid controversies, quarrels, and genealogies of false teachers.
6. How to deal with an unruly man that rejects doctrine

Tit. 3:12-15 **Personal Concerns and concluding remarks**

1. Further Instructions for Titus' relievers
2. Helping those travelling to meet their needs
3. A reminder for the Cretan believers to practice good works
4. A closing greeting from those with Paul to those in Crete