

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES: GOD'S DIRECTIVES FOR HIS UNDERSHEPHERDS

II. Titus: Church Planting Manual

F. The Basis For Biblical Civic Relationships

(Titus 3:3-8)

I. Introduction

- A. When the Gospel is proclaimed in a previously unevangelized area and people there trust in Christ, those new believers need to be organized into local churches for their nurture and for an abiding witness in their area.
- B. This task requires knowing how to plant a church, and Paul's epistle to Titus is a template for such a ministry.
- C. After calling Titus to teach Biblical civic relationships to new believers in newly planted churches (Titus 3:1-2), Paul in Titus 3:3-8 had him teach the basis for these relationships, what we view for our insight as follows:

II. The Basis For Biblical Civic Relationships, Titus 3:3-8.

- A. As we previously noted, according to even one of their own poets, Epimenides, the people of Crete were deceptive, abusive and lacking in self-discipline (Titus 1:12-13a; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, ftn. to Titus 1:12).
- B. When Paul then had Titus tell new converts to Christ on Crete to function in godly civic relationships, he needed to provide a forceful reason for urging them to live in godliness in contrast to their former way of life.
- C. Accordingly, the Apostle Paul clarified the Biblical doctrines behind godly civic relationships in Titus 3:3-7:
 1. Titus 3:3 begins with the conjunction "For" (*gar*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 742), indicating Titus 3:3 starts to explain the basis for Paul's call in Titus 3:1-2 to function in godly civic relationships.
 2. Paul then explained that in their pre-salvation state, believers on Crete were "foolish instead of sensible, disobedient instead of submissive, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures instead of self-disciplined and ready for every good work. Far from being peaceable, considerate, and humble, they were characterized by malice and envy, being hated and hating one another," the opposite of the godly civic relationships what Paul had promoted in Titus 3:1-2. (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 766; Titus 3:3)
 3. Nevertheless, Paul added that when the kindness and "love for man" (*philanthropia*) of God our Savior appeared, that former godlessness dramatically changed in their spiritual position before God, Titus 3:4a.
 4. God's salvation that so greatly changed our former unrighteous state came not by works of righteousness that we have done, but **rather** (the Greek word is *alla*, a strong adversative indicating a contrast to what precedes; Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 37-38) according to His mercy, He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. (Titus 3:5) [This is one of the clearest passages on justification by faith apart from meritorious works!]
 5. God abundantly shed on us believers this salvation through His mercy in Jesus Christ our Savior, Tit. 3:6.
 6. The purpose of this great work of divine mercy and grace to save us believers was that by being pronounced righteous by God through His unmerited favor apart from our works, we should be made heirs of God according to the hope of eternal life, Titus 3:7.
- D. These doctrines that reveal the great extent to which God went to take the believers of Crete out of their former lost condition spiritually positionally to save and give them eternal life implied a huge obligation for these believers to live lives that reflect this vast spiritually positional transformation, Titus 3:8:
 1. Paul emphasized the need for Titus to "insist, speak confidently concerning, confirm" (*diabebaioomai*, Ibid., p 180) concerning these doctrines of God's great salvation and its transformation on believers, v. 8a.
 2. The purpose of this insistence and confident speaking on these truths was to motivate Titus' believing hearers who had **permanently** believed (perfect participle, *pepisteukotes*, The Analyt. Grk. Lex., 1972, p. 316; Ibid, U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) in God to be "intent on" (*phrontizo*, Ibid., p. 874) "being concerned about" (*proistemi*, Ibid., p. 713-714) [Note the repeat emphasis on motivation!] performing good works, Tit. 3:8b.
 3. Paul thus worked hard to express that the enormity of God's grace that had been invested in Titus' listeners deeply obligated them to be highly motivated to live lives that were as transformed as was their spiritual position before God in Christ in God's salvation!

Lesson: Paul directed Titus to emphasize the doctrines of God's great salvation of his listeners on Crete to motivate them to realize their great obligation before God Who had so graciously, wonderfully saved them from their former decadent state to live completely transformed lives, including transformed living with regard to civic relationships.

Application: May we always recall the great expenditure of God's unmerited favor and work for us believers in Christ positionally to save us that obligates us to rely on the Holy Spirit to live completely transformed, godly lives.