

Bible Snapshots



Titus – Setting the church in order

Author – Paul, A.D. 63

- This epistle, written by Paul, was penned most likely after Paul's release from his first imprisonment, but before his second, which would take his life around 64 A.D, which places it before the final letter written to Timothy. Titus was a travelling company with Paul (Gal. 2:1-3) and was perhaps among those mentioned in Acts 15:2, who accompanied him to the Jerusalem council. He is nowhere mentioned, however, in the book of Acts. He was most likely a gentile whom ministered to gentiles. We find him at a later time accompanying Paul and Timothy in Ephesus. From Ephesus he is sent to Corinth to collect contributions on behalf of the poor saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:6; 12:18). He later rejoined Paul and brought him joy with the glad tidings he brought (7:6-15). After this, however, he is not mentioned again until after Paul's first imprisonment (Titus 1:5), where we are told he was left in Crete to set the church in order. The last time we hear of him is even later, during Paul's final imprisonment. He is with Paul in Rome and the sent to Dalmatia for some important missionary work. (2 Tim. 4:10). Beyond this we know little about Titus.

Themes

- Similar to 1 Timothy - appointing men to serve as elders, holding fast to sound doctrine and the teaching of it and by refusing and refuting those who would teach falsely.

Key chapters/verse – 2 – Teach sound doctrine, which orders the church / 2:11-14

Key words / phrase – Order, grace (1:4; 2:11; 3:7, 15) and faith (1:1, 4, 13; 2:10, 13; 3:15) / “good deeds” occurs six times (1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:5, 8, 14)

Outline

- I. Order in the church through leadership (1)
- II. Order in the teach of sound doctrine (2)
- III. Order in our lives as Christians, lead by sound teaching (3)

Elders in every city – One of the main charges that Paul gives Titus is that he should appoint men in every city oversee the various congregations on the Isle of Crete. He calls this “setting things in order.” The word that is use here is the same word that would be used of a doctor setting a bone that had been broken and splinting it. It means “setting straight beside.” The whole purpose of this was not to create a system of government in the church as we sometimes like to say, but to bolster he church to uphold sound doctrine, encourage good deeds among members and combat falsehood (1:10-16).

Rebuking the gainsayer (1:10-16)

The KJV refers to the “gainsayer” as the object of the elder’s rebuke and instruction. Literally, the word means “those who contradict.” Paul (v. 10) further breaks this down to include the insubordinate, empty talkers, and deceivers. These are to be “rebuked.” The KJV, due to a textual variant, adds, “Exhort,” which means to “comfort” or “encourage.” Both speak to the elder’s purpose and the needs to not only know sound teaching, but the beliefs and spiritual condition of those in the body and those who come to it.

Sound teaching and Division (3:9-11)

Division in Titus is set in opposition of both sound teaching and soundness in the church. The means of division comes in a number of ways. The first is “foolish questions,” which quite literally means “stupid questionings.” These are what we might call “issues” that people like to ride for great periods of time. Genealogies (positions), quarrels and questions about Mosaic ceremonial law are other forms. The heretic is the person who perpetrates the division. The word “heretic” means just that, “divisive” or “discordant.” Once they have been warned twice, they are to reject or shun. This is not a personal shunning, but for all (3:1). Paul says, the heretic is “warped” (turned from) and sinful and condemned.

All authority preaching – When Titus upheld and taught “sound” (healthy) teaching (2:1), then he acted with the authority of Christ (2:15). Paul then tells him to let no one “despise” him. Literally the word “despise” means “think beyond” what Titus preached from the word.