



**TITUS:  
THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE GRACE OF GOD  
AND THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH**

**The Key Practices and Prohibitions  
Titus 3:1-15**

**Dr. Nicolas Ellen**

**I. The Practice of the Church**

- A. Be subject to and obey rulers and authorities – line up under and follow the directives of people who have primacy of authority, as well as those who exercise administrative control over others.
- B. Be ready for every good deed – be prepared to perform every beneficial task.
- C. Do not malign anyone – do not seek to hurt the reputation of someone with harsh, demeaning words; do not speak evil of someone; do not charge someone with malicious intent where there is no proof.
- D. Be peaceable – focus on bringing harmony; do not seek to be contentious or controversial.
- E. Be gentle and show every consideration for all men – when people sin, fail or don't follow through on what they are supposed to do:
  - 1. Put up with it, without condoning or condemning them in their sin and/or failures.
  - 2. Be reasonable in your response to their sin and/or failures.
  - 3. Be honest without being harsh.
  - 4. Show a sense of courtesy in the midst of your discourse about the matter while addressing it according to God's will.

**II. The Purpose for the Practice**

- A. You understand why unbelievers act the way they do because you were once as they are:
  - 1. Foolish – acting without understanding and without embracing the standards of God; allowing your lustful desires to drive decisions.
  - 2. Disobedient – not submitting to or complying with people who are in authority over you.
  - 3. Deceived – led astray from truth; not embracing the reality of God and His will.
  - 4. Enslaved to various lusts and pleasures – dominated by various self-indulgent cravings and sensual desires.

5. Spending your life in malice – having “wickedness as an evil habit of the mind.”<sup>1</sup>
  6. Spending your life in envy – being spiteful and resentful as you see the success, accomplishments and resources of others.
  7. Spending your life being hateful – being extremely unpleasant to be around; repulsive in actions and behavior, resulting in people having an intense dislike for you.
  8. Spending your life hating others – having high disregard or dislike of and aversion to others.
- B. However, you have been rescued from sin, redeemed from sin, and regenerated into a new person and will receive all that has been promised to you that is waiting for you in Heaven.
- C. The soundness of the fact that you have been saved is a valuable perspective to ponder consistently. The fact that you can understand the heart and life of a sinner and the fact that you have been saved from that life need to be spoken to you with boldness so that you would be intent on engaging in the works of service that display the moral excellence of God.
- D. There should be some empathy in the way you handle unbelievers as God has granted you grace, delivering you from the sinful position, condition and way of life that you once had. You now have the power to live with empathy and to practice obedience, submission and consideration toward unbelievers and all men accordingly. Therefore, you are to treat unbelievers the way God treated you.
- E. Knowing these truths of your salvation, embracing the implications related to how you should treat unbelievers because of your salvation, and engaging in works of service that display the moral excellence of God are praiseworthy, fitting, and beneficial for all.

### **III. The Prohibitions to Practice and the People to Prohibit**

- A. The church needs to avoid nonsensical debates and speculations about the origins and descendants of persons in relation to the Mosaic Law, which are erroneously thought to have religious significance,<sup>2</sup> as well as bitter conflict and contentious battles about the Mosaic Law. These things are not beneficial nor are they helpful.

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<sup>1</sup> Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text (The New International Greek Testament Commentary Series)* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans & Carlisle, England: Paternoster Press, 1992), 353.

- B. We are to shun, avoid, keep away from, have nothing to do with,<sup>3</sup> and exclude from fellowship a person who creates division amongst the fellowship, one who seeks to divide the church with heretical ideologies or personal preferences, or one who creates dissenting groups within the congregation after a first and second correction and prohibition against the person doing this.
- C. We can reject a factious person based upon three essential unrepentant character deficiencies that are evident in a factious person, thereby making them a hindrance to the salvation, sanctification and service progression of the entire fellowship:
  - 1. Perverted – one who has turned away from what is moral, right, proper or good.
  - 2. Sinning – “one who keeps missing the mark in his relationship to God.”<sup>4</sup>
  - 3. Self-Condemed – one whose actions and behaviors demonstrate beyond a shadow of a doubt that he or she is worthy of judgement.

#### **IV. The Priority of Practicing Good Deeds**

- A. Titus is encouraged to join Paul in Nicopolis which is on the Adriatic coast of Greece<sup>5</sup> in the winter.
- B. Titus is encouraged to help Zenas and Apollos so that nothing is lacking for them. “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 (cf. 3 John 6–8).”<sup>6</sup>
- C. The congregation must learn to engage in the works of service that display the moral excellence of God to provide for people what is absolutely necessary. This will keep them from being unproductive in accomplishing the Kingdom agenda of God.
- D. Greetings and well-wishing are presented.

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<sup>3</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 450.

<sup>4</sup> Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> A. Duane Litfin, “Titus,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 767.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.