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Titus – Making Things Right

Chapter 3 - (vs. 12)

Well, we come to the book of Titus. Of course, the book is about setting things in order. The question is, where do you begin? How do you start? Fundamentally, you have to start with an absolute; you have to start with something that's an anchor for your soul; something that is a truth that doesn't change. Of course, that's God. As he starts off in the beginning of chapter 1, he starts off with God. Paul is an apostle of Christ; he's an apostle of God, and he's an apostle of this one true God that doesn't lie. That's one of the things that he states in the beginning because there are a lot of people that are liars on the island of Crete. So, who can you trust? That really is the world that we live in, whether it's politics or anything else, who can you trust? The answer is, well, all men are liars, basically, but God is true. So, you start with God, His authority, and His standards. As he says in Titus 1:1, "truth according to godliness." "Godliness" is talking about the fact that you're submitting to God. It is a sense of awe and respect for God, and you're willing to do whatever He says. If in fact you don't start off with that fundamental premise, you're not going to go anywhere. If you perceive that whatever God says is an option and He really doesn't know what He's talking about then you're not going to go anywhere. There's not going to be order because only when you do things according to what God says will things be orderly. Our God is not a God of confusion, as Paul would say, but a God of order.

So, where do you start? You have to start with God's word and what He says. He's the one that brings order. That's why sound doctrine is going to be a big issue in this particular epistle. You're going to see, "You need to stay true." Same thing is true when Paul writes to Timothy as the pastor. He goes, "You've got to stick with this sound doctrine." So, that's going to be an emphasis as we look at this. So, you start off with truth; you start off with God which obviously is truth, who cannot lie. Then, you submit to whatever He has to say. By virtue of that, you then establish the authority that is aligning with that. You want to find those that are overseers that will submit to whatever God says. That's the goal in this. As he says, "Titus, when you go to Crete, you need to put certain men in office."

The way that it's put in Titus 1:5, "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city..."

His point is "You're going to establish authority within those churches." One of the things that we're going to be looking at tonight is "Why do you have authority?" I hate to say it, I

remember thinking it, “Why do you need pastors?” I’m sure everybody at one time or another probably wrestled with that. Why do we have pastors? Why do we have overseers? Why do we have leaders in the church? Especially in this day and age where everybody fundamentally does what is right in their own eyes.

So, why have this leadership? Why is it so important? I like Ephesians 5. It says, “I don’t want you to be ignorant about what the will of the Lord is. Here it is: Be filled with the Spirit.” So, I just tell people, “Be filled with the Spirit.” I walk away, and everything’s ok. Well, obviously, that doesn’t seem to be the case in Crete. So, we see the authority being established and the necessity of that authority.

When you look in verse 10, “For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers... (Titus 1:11) who must be silenced...”

This is pretty strong language, and “You’ve got to do something about this, Titus.”

I was thinking about Titus, and who is this guy? Probably one of the first places that we have him introduced as far as his background is concerned is Galatians. What we know about Titus, according to Galatians 2:3 is that he was a Greek; which immediately puts him in a different realm. Why would Paul choose to have this guy go to Crete where things are in disarray and chaos? Why would he be the guy that would put things in order? The more you begin to understand who this guy is, that is to say, Titus, he’s not only a Greek and would be well versed in the habits of those in Crete, but he aligns with Paul’s thinking. It’s one of the things that you see about him, as well as having a stick-to-itiveness; a boldness that maybe Timothy wouldn’t have for instance.

One of the things that you read in 1 Corinthians 16 is when Paul’s talking to the Corinthians, and he goes, “Ok, Now, Timothy is heading over to see you guys.” I’m going to put my own vernacular in it, “Be nice to him because quite frankly, you guys scare him.” Read it with me, and let’s see if I misjudged that particular passage,

(1 Corinthians 16:10) “Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without cause to be afraid, for he is doing the Lord’s work, as I also am.

(1 Corinthians 16:11) So let no one despise him...”

There’s obviously a real concern for him. Now, when you get to 2 Corinthians 8, Paul goes, “Ok, I’ve sent Titus.” So, you feel like “Ok, things didn’t really work out well with Timothy.” Then, he says, “I’ve sent Titus and he’s going to finish it.” So, he finishes the work.

To me, the best description of Titus is found in 2 Corinthians 12. In very few words, it gives a description of this guy that we now understand why Paul will send him.

(2 Corinthians 12:18) “I urged Titus to go, and I sent the brother with him. Titus did not take any advantage of you, did he? Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit and walk in the same steps?”

I think what he’s actually saying about Titus is “He thinks a lot like me.” Now, he might be a Greek and Paul may be a Jew, but Titus thinks like him. When you think about the fact that Paul was having to deal with the Corinthians, in some cases, in an abrupt way. One of the statements that he makes is “You guys have to grow up. You’re acting like big babies. Do I have to bring a stick, or can I come in love?” Paul was always wanting to come in love, but the fact remains that oftentimes he would have to get after them pretty hard. In some cases, they would say, “We read his letters, and they seem pretty austere, but he comes in person and he’s not threatening at all. I think in a way Paul’s answer is fundamentally, “Look, I’m coming to you in love and everything I’m telling you is love.” Sometimes, when you write a letter laying down truth, the perception is “Ok, he’s really a mean guy.” Then, when they finally see him, they realize, “No, he really loves us and cares.” As well as the fact that his appearance wasn’t such that was too impressive to them, and they were probably expecting somebody taller and maybe stronger or whatever. As he writes to them, you realize that he comes in with very clear, concise things to do, and he’s directing them. Of course, he needs somebody that thinks that way and wouldn’t back away from doing the right thing; this seems to be Titus. He walks in the same steps. He does the same thing. He realizes when going to Crete, he can’t have somebody that would shrink back. He has to have somebody that will just do the right thing. This is Titus.

By the time we come to the end of this book, we come to a place in which Paul is going to ask Titus to come and see him. That’s this verse that we’re looking at and we’re going to spend a little bit of time on. Paul is going to ask Titus to come back and see him for some reason, and we’ll talk about that as we go on. Then, he’s going to say, “...and I’m going to send someone back.” Now, I have that “why?” in here because of the fact that I’m saying, “Well, I mean, you chose overseers, you chose elders; everything should run fairly smoothly.” The point is you still have to have that authority in there. Here again, it comes back to that question, “Why?” Why does there have to be authority in the church? Why not just trust in the Spirit of God? I mean, Galatians talk about the Spirit of God; it gives us freedom. Yet, interestingly enough, in Galatians 5, you could possibly take that freedom and use it to devour one another even when in the Spirit.

The interesting thing about the dynamics of the Spirit of God and doctrine is that the Spirit of God always pushes you in the right direction. Now, the problem is if you don’t have the doctrine, you don’t go on the straight and narrow. Therefore, the Spirit moves you in the right direction, but the doctrine keeps you on the straight path. Let me give you an example of this, and a passage that will solidify this even more. Look with me in John 16. John 14, John 15, and

John 16 are going to talk about the Spirit of God that Christ sends. This verse in John 16 begins to talk about what the Spirit of God specifically will do.

(John 16:13) “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes...”

Watch the phrase here:

“... He will guide you...”

Do you feel the pushing? “Spirit” in the Greek is *“pneuma”* which means “the wind driving you; the motivation that’s moving you.”

I think it’s to be noted that when you come into the book of Titus, he starts off with the fundamental principle that God is truth. He then homes in on you need to put authority in there. Then, he emphasizes doctrine, but it’s not till the end of chapter 2 and the beginning of chapter 3 that you really hear motivation. The interesting thing about that is he doesn’t talk about the Holy Spirit and focus on it specifically, but clearly, we see it in the sense of “The reason why you’re doing this is because Christ died on the cross for you, and He saved you for this purpose.” Then, he goes into chapter 3, and he goes into this kind of empathy, “You have to remember you once too were like this; you once too did these things, but the kindness of God and His love for mankind appeared.” The order in which he brings it in is interesting. Here again, fundamentally, what has to begin is you have to start with truth. Then, if you look in the passage, it is the truth that the Spirit of God guides you or leads you into. He’s called the Spirit of truth because He’ll lead you into all truth. Now, the Spirit of God without the directive of truth can oftentimes lead astray. When you consider the fact that according to 1 Corinthians 12, it is the Spirit of God that gives us spiritual gifts. It’s one of the reasons why we call them “spiritual gifts” because the Spirit of God gives them to us.

As you read in chapter 12, it says specifically that the Spirit of God gives to each man just as He wills. Right? That’s the Spirit of God. Now, according to 1 Corinthians 1, he turns to the church of Corinth, and he says, “You all have all the spiritual gifts.” So, what do we know about the Corinthians? First, they must be saved because you can’t confess Jesus as Lord except by the Spirit. Then, they’ve been given gifts by the Spirit of God. So, that solidifies it. However, as you read through the book of Corinthians, they’re misusing their spiritual gifts. Their spiritual gifts are endowed by the Spirit; the Spirit of God is pushing them in the right direction, but without that clarity of truth. That’s why you read through the pages of 1 and 2 Corinthians, and what is it talking about? Doctrine, doctrine, doctrine, doctrine. Paul is writing, “This is what you need to do.” Now, the Spirit of God begins to move and prod, but without the doctrine. Now, if you take the doctrine, and you don’t have the Spirit of God, you just have legalism. So, that’s not going to work. You’re seeing all of these factors come in. Unfortunately, I think sometimes people set aside one or the other. I think that’s where the confusion comes in sometimes. It’s either all

Spirit or all doctrine, and everybody that messes up is going on one side or the other, but they work in harmony with one another. That's the fundamental point of John 16,

"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative..."

What is that saying? The Spirit of God won't take you away from truth; that's you taking yourself away from it.

One of the great concerns Paul had for the Corinthians is they were self-aggrandizing themselves with their spiritual gifts. So, that means they saw this as a platform to be superior to the others. Of course, Corinthians starts off with, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas..." There was almost a competitiveness of the Spirit which is bizarre because the goal of the Spirit of God is to unite the body. That's why Ephesians 4 will say, "Be careful to preserve the unity of the body." The Spirit is building the body up; not dividing the body up. So, if anything is dividing the body, that's not the Spirit moving. However, man begins to move in a certain direction. After a while, he begins to take it from there because he doesn't align himself with the doctrine of truth. This is now where authority comes in. God has ordained authority, in particular in the church. Ephesians 4 will say that God gave the church men as gifts. Now, that's different than 1 Corinthians 12 which talks about spiritual gifts that are given to men. Ephesians 4 talks about men that are given as gifts. So, he then goes over the list: "Some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers ... to the building up of the body." (Ephesians 4:11-12) So, "for the equipping of the saints." He's talking about those that God has ordained to direct the body. Now, it's interesting that the thrust of Titus is going to be the evidence of somebody that is submitting to God. You go, "well, how do I know that I'm submitting to God?" You submit to His authority which is fundamentally what he's going to be talking about.

In fact, if you drop down into Titus 2, he says that you need to speak things in accordance with "sound doctrine". That's how he starts off in verse 1. Then, he starts with the older men; he then goes to the older women teaching the younger women. Just to make sure that we're all on the same page, look in chapter 2,

(Titus 2:4) "... encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,

(Titus 2:5) to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject..."

So, they're subjecting themselves to what? Authority.

If you look in Titus 3:1, "Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient..."

In other words, that is the sign that somebody is walking in the truth of the Spirit of God. We can all get pushed in the right direction and then find ourselves going our own way; not listening to the truth. So, to know that you're in the truth, what will you do? There's always this sense of humility and being willing to subject. The same is true with the men by the way.

(Titus 2:6) "Likewise urge the young men to be sensible;

(Titus 2:7) in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified,

(Titus 2:8) sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

(Titus 2:9) Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters..."

Here again, it's not saying that your masters are super wonderful people. If you back up into verse 5, why are the young women to be workers at home, kind, and subject to their own husbands? "So that the word of God will not be dishonored."

Young men,

(Titus 2:7) "in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with [fn]purity in doctrine, dignified".

(Titus 2:10) "not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God..."

So, what is he saying? This is the teaching of God. Why should I listen to authority? It's what God told you to do. Submit to the authority; be subject to the authority. It shows that heart and attitude that is willing to submit to godliness. Once again, "godliness" is submitting to what is God's way. So, you're submitting to God's way. When you begin to submit to the authority that God has ordained, you're submitting to God's way.

Now, as you go into this, it starts off in Titus 3, "Remind them to be subject to authority." Once again, repeating the point. Then, the problem that Paul seems to be having according to Titus 3:10 is what? Factious people that are dividing and separating. A factious person is someone that's not willing to submit to authority but has their own way of doing things.

(Titus 3:11) "knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned."

Now, once again, it's interesting that he leaves it at that. We talked about this last week, and ended with this in the sense that it is not the churches responsibility nor has God ever called the church to punish people. He has told the church to take a stand, and, in some cases, you shun a person, but that's not giving them what they deserve. If you look in the Old Testament,

you take them out and stone them and that's how you take care of them. Many of these sins are literally capital punishment; that's what you should do, but that's not what the church is called to do. The church steps back, and it goes, "Ok, you're now in the hands of the world. You're not in the hands of the church anymore." So, the church literally is backing off; not attacking, but saying, "We don't agree with this, and we're letting you know," but that's as far as the church can go. Once again, you have all these crusades, that's not biblical. It was never the job of the church to self-subjugate people to do the right thing. You can't make people do the right thing. It's not the responsibility of the church. It is the responsibility of the church to take a stand and back away from somebody that's doing the wrong thing and let them know that they're not going to do it there, but they can't go beyond that realm. Why? Because the church is walking in the realm of faith. That is to say, the church believes that God will handle this from here. The church cannot in their own mind even have animosity towards them. The goal is always restoration; the heart is always restoration. Now, they're looking for truth in the restoration, but that's the goal of the church.

I've always been really thankful for this, but God literally takes the church out of that position of being the harsh one. It's also important to understand that when the church gets involved in any cases of dealing with people, the responsibility isn't necessarily to always tell them what to do. Now, let me see if I can clarify that. You have the Ten Commandments. So, if somebody walked up to me, and they said, "Pastor, should I steal?" I would say something like, "Thou shalt not steal." So, I would be very clear on that. "Well, should I commit adultery?" "Thou shalt not commit adultery." See, because the Bible is very clear on these things. However, if somebody came up to me, and they said, "Shall I wear a mask?" What am I going to say? I'm not going to say, "Thou shalt not wear a mask." I'll tell you what I will say. I'll say, "You know, Psalm 91 says that we can put our trust in God no matter what the problems are." Now, what have I just done? I've laid down doctrine, and that's the responsibility of the church. It's not the responsibility nor is it the job of the church to run people's lives. They should never even think that way. Of course, I barely have enough time to take care of myself, let alone everybody else, but I can give you sound doctrine. Are there times that somebody may make a decision, and I go, "I wouldn't have made that one"? Yeah, there are times that's true, but a pastor has to step away, and go, "Ok, but I gave him sound doctrine. So, let the doctrine do the work." I think it becomes inappropriate if we hound people to do something that we feel like they should do, but we can give sound doctrine and then trust the Spirit of God to push them in the right direction. So, oftentimes you'll hear me keep laying specific doctrine down. I'll try to make it as clear as possible. At the end of the day, that's it. I don't have anymore. We've given you sound doctrine.

I was talking to Connie today about things in my life, and I'm wondering, "Why is it taking me so long to learn this?" I know what the word of God says. Yet, our old stubborn selves are fighting

with it, and we're wrestling with it. It really has to be the Spirit of God that moves us in the direction. I always feel bad if I feel like somebody is making a bad decision for themselves, but not to the point of me meddling. However, where I do step in is when somebody's teaching bad doctrine because it's the sound doctrine that keeps people on the right path. If I feel like somebody is propagating something that is taking somebody off of that clear path, then I'm going to say something. I'm going to first hit it really hard at the pulpit. Then, I'm going to maybe hit it hard with the person. The point is that you have the ability to decide what you're going to do. Are you going to do the right thing? Quite frankly, in every circumstance, I don't necessarily know what the right thing is for you. I do know what sound doctrine is and I will take a stand on sound doctrine. As far as the decisions that you make, you make those decisions. Romans 14 is pretty clear that you and I have to make a decision based on the convictions of our heart, but there's a caveat in that; you can't make a brother stumble. Fundamentally, a person here again, may ask me, "Should I make my kids go to church?" Have you ever heard people ask that? I'll say something like, "Well, Ephesians 6 says that you should bring your kids up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Deuteronomy 6 says that you should teach them all the time." So, I'm not going to tell them what to do. I am going to tell them, "This is what Scripture says." My belief is that the word of God works on people's hearts. I've seen God work in people's life and change their lives far better than if I just tell them, "Yes, take your kids to church every day!" People ask, "Should I do this, or should I do that?" and "Should I parent my children after they're grown?" Scripture says, "Leave and cleave." So, the fundamental doctrine is there. Sometimes, it's so blatant that it almost hurts, but the clarity of the doctrine is there if you'll accept it. I think this is why Jesus says, "He who has an ear let him hear." If you're willing to listen, the truth is there; the truth will set you free. In other words, "If you abide in My word; if your desire is to have a relationship with Me and to do the right thing, then that truth will become a part of you. Here again, the Spirit of God and truth are inseparable. That's why it's so important to have leaders because leaders keep setting you back on the right path. A good leader will not have an agenda. This is what I want somebody to do. For instance, if I want somebody to mow the lawn, it would not be a good idea for me to go, "You need to go mow the lawn." Now, like Paul says when he's talking to Philemon, "I'm an apostle. So, I could tell you what to do," but you don't want to operate in that realm. It doesn't change the heart of the person. So, you might say, "We have this need. We trust that the Lord will lead you in the right way, and you'll listen to Him." Look, it may be that the person is not going to mow the lawn that day. I'm out of it at that point. You let the need be let known; you give them the fundamental Scripture and you walk away. People make their own decisions, and you want them to make their decisions because they love the Lord. That's what the church is about. You still have to have that established authority to keep the doctrine straight because I have found that when people start going off course, they then want to teach it as "ok". That's when it becomes a hindrance to the body.

So, in this particular passage, it's interesting in verse 12 that he was going to send either Artemas or Tychicus to them. Then, he turns to Titus, and he says, "make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis..."

Nicopolis is actually in Greece, but it's on the western side. So, it seems to be conveying that Paul is heading towards Rome. Now, we believe it to be true that this epistle, Titus, was written about the time of in-between 1 and 2 Timothy. We know that 2 Timothy was his last letter. His statement in 2 Timothy 4,

(2 Timothy 4:6) "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come."

"I know that God will bring me safely home."

He says all those things in chapter 4, and we know that he's passing the baton over to Timothy. Titus is in the in-between. So, he's not yet in Rome, but because he's at Nicopolis he's on his way to Rome. Nicopolis is facing Rome from the side of Greece that's on the western side. So, that's where we believe him to be heading. Well, it's interesting that he seems to really want Titus to come. The question is: Why do you need Titus to come? If you need Titus to come, why not just tell him to leave? However, he's not going to leave the church without authority.

"Don't leave yet. I'm going to send somebody. As soon as that person comes, you can leave." So, there's clearly a need and a sense of urgency. Actually, when it says, "Make every effort," can be translated "make haste to come". So, it's not like Paul was saying, "Whenever you get around to it"; he has a great need for him to come.

If you look in 2 Timothy 4, in a way we actually see why he wants him to come. In the passage, he deals with Demas who "having loved this present world" has deserted him. (2 Timothy 4:10)

"For Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia."

We know that Dalmatia is actually a Slavic region. The people that were there at that particular region is sometimes referred to in Romans 15 as "Illyricum" as the same area and place.

When he goes there, what do we know about this place? It's a very unruly place like Crete which is pretty interesting. The Romans had to continue sending more soldiers in this area because of it. In fact, they actually called them "pirates" as well, and they were in the Adriatic Sea. So, this is basically where Dalmatia is. We see that Paul has another job for Titus to move in again. It's almost like Paul is saying, "You have one more job" or "I'm going to give you one more assignment, then I'm out of here."

If you look at the passage, it says in verse 12, “When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me...”

So, it was one or the other. We don't know hardly anything about Artemas. In fact, the only thing we know about him is in the history books; which tradition tells us that he actually became the bishop or the pastor in Lystra. The interesting thing about Lystra in Acts 16 is that's where Timothy is from. I've oftentimes thought it was interesting in this sense that Timothy was a pastor at Ephesus; you would think he would be a pastor at Lystra unless Jesus was correct in saying that prophet is not welcome in his own hometown. So, obviously He is correct. So, that's what we see. Even at that Timothy was having a rough go at it in Ephesus which was also in Asia Minor. I believe the point is that Artemas ultimately doesn't go and Tychicus goes. The first time that we see him is in Acts 20. Just take a gander with me. Here again, I have to be careful because there's certain things that I say, and I'm going to say, “Don't quote me” because it's just my thought. Sometimes, I just feel constrained to pull the ties together. This is an interesting passage because Paul is in certain places, and he comes to Greece, and they spend 3 months there. (Acts 20:3) Then, they went to Syria and Macedonia which is still in Greece.

So, it gives a list in verse 4 of the people that accompanied him. If you look towards the end of the list, it says, “and Timothy, and Tychicus...” So, he's there. Now, we see him at this early state. It's bizarre that they go on, they sail, and it's this entourage. We know that Timothy, at this juncture, is a young man. I personally believe that Timothy and Tychicus are basically the same age. They're young men that have come from wherever. Of course, we know that Timothy is from Lystra, but they're an entourage that have gone together.

They finally come to Troas in verse 6, if you look at the end, and they stayed 7 days.

(Acts 20:7) “On the first day of the week...” By the way, another reason we meet on the first day of the week is because Scripture is telling us that's when they're meeting.

“On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.”

That's something to be thankful for; that your pastor doesn't go that far.

“There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together.

(Act 20:9) And there was a young man...”

See the phrase there, “a young man”? Now, this individual, that is the young man, his name was Eutychus, right? Well, in the passage, he falls asleep.

“... sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor...”

It seemed to be a mortal thing; he was dead.

(Acts 20:10) “But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, ‘Do not be troubled, for his life is in him.’”

(Acts 20:11) When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left.

(Acts 20:12) They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted.”

The word that is used here for “boy;” the thought is basically that it is diminutive, but the word that’s used actually means “servant.” So, it can mean the servant of a master. It’s used in Matthew a number of times where Jesus talks about a servant going and doing something for a master, or even the ruler that comes and says, “One of my servants...”, it will use this particular word. So, it’s not always translated “boy.”

The reason why I emphasize that, if you back up to verse 9, the phrase here is translated, “And there was a young man...”

Now, the word that is used is not the same word that is used for “servant” or “boy.” The word that’s used here is only for young men to age 40; which is telling us that what is probably intended is not “boy” in verse 12, but “servant.” Of course, the emphasis is that it was probably a young man that fell. Now, this is where I’m getting a little bit into conjecture. Here again, I’m not necessarily saying that you have to believe this, but I think it’s interesting that you literally have two people with fundamentally the same name. If you back up, Tychicus is the same name as Eutyclus. The only difference is the word “good” in front. Here again, I personally believe that the word “good” is interjected because the word “Tychicus” means “fortunate” or “luck.” So, the guy falls out of the window, and Paul’s there, and you’ve got to say, “This was good luck or good fortune,” or that something good had happened. Is it the same guy? I don’t know, but the point is that somewhere along the line whether it was just that Tychicus witnessed this or whatever, he not only becomes privy to these things, but he begins to be used to encourage people and strengthen them. So, once again I think he was sent because he was an encourager and a strengthener.

He’s described in Ephesians 2. I know that if you read the passage there in Acts, it says that Paul and they took off and probably what happened was Tychicus joined them later. Here again, I’m not going to push it anymore whether it was him or not. It’s not going to be the bigger issue.

If you look with me in Ephesians 6:21, we see him mentioned again.

“But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you.

(Ephesians 6:22) I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts.”

Here again, the very fact that he was there, at least in that particular incident, he saw the power of the resurrection of God, and would be a witness of that. I think there are times where people feel like they have gone too far or whatever. Look, God moves, and Titus goes, “We’re not bending here. This is the truth. We’re not yielding.” It’s good to have a Tychicus that will come in and be of comfort and let people know there is such a thing as resurrection; there is a power of God that goes far beyond this.

You see this in Colossians if you look there with me. In Colossians 4, Tychicus is described this way in verse 7,

“As to all my affairs, Tychicus, our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant...”

Which seems to convey that he had been imprisoned for his faith as well.

“... in the Lord, will bring you information.

(Colossians 4:8) For I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts.”

God has ordained authority to keep people on that straight path. He has ordained authority to strengthen and encourage; help them. Clearly, it’s not authority’s job, in the church, that God has ordained to run your lives; it never has been. It’s not our job. We don’t want it. I would say, if anybody was a true leader, they wouldn’t want it. However, it is their responsibility to shepherd and to make sure that those sheep are going the right way. The sheep are going to feed in different areas, and some are going to have more benefit than others by doing certain things; we understand that, but you want to keep them going to the still waters. So, when people ask questions, “Should I do this?” or “Should I do that?”, what is the responsibility of a pastor? You have to lay sound doctrine down. That is what I would always want to do for all of you.

Look, I’ve always had as a standing joke that probably 90% of the people I talk to don’t do what I tell them to do, but that shouldn’t in any way cause us a rift. You have the choice to make. I should always be clear and unapologetic about the doctrine, but never be angry with anybody in the sense that our hope is that you be encouraged to do the right thing; whatever the right thing to do is. Here again, I’m not always going to know what the right thing for you is. I am

going to give clear doctrine. I know what doctrine is and where the line is. I think this is where sometimes those that haven't been in the ministry long enough, or haven't been thinking this way long enough, may steer off a little bit to the side one way or the other. Give them time to work it out, but this is our goal. So, from time to time, we want you to ask questions, but just rest assured, we're going to say a number of things; we're going to say, "What does it say?"; we're going to direct you in the truth. Then we're going to encourage you to listen to the Spirit of God to guide you into that truth. Now, I just want to clarify this, the Spirit of God will never take you away from truth because He is the Spirit of truth. So, sometimes I hear, "Well, the Spirit of God told me to do this. The Spirit of God told me to divorce my husband." "Ok, sorry, but that's not what the Spirit of God told you." So, I can be clear about that because I know what the doctrine is. There are things that people do, and people rationalize; they do what they do because it makes them feel good or they might believe in their own heart that's what they need to do. However, they need to be careful about making sure that they're not teaching what they may feel constrained to do themselves. They certainly have the freedom to make those decisions for themselves; they just can't teach it. Hopefully, we'll all stick to the doctrine, and allow the Spirit of God to work in our hearts. We're going to fail; we're going to fall; we're going to mess up every single day. I mess up every day. Let me just say this, you want to keep in that attitude. You don't want to protect yourselves from the church; you don't want to protect yourselves from doctrine; you don't want to protect yourselves from the leaders. If in fact they are godly leaders, they'll direct you into truth. So, I think it's a very interesting passage; not a big passage that we're looking at tonight, but the fact that he still feels it necessary to put authority there. Yet, authority is going to have these roles; not only to proclaim truth, but to encourage.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your word and Your direction in our lives. Lord, we just pray this church will always lay that doctrine down. We believe that it is that doctrine, that truth that the Spirit of God uses in people's lives and in their hearts; He guides them. Without that doctrine, there is no guidance. Oftentimes, people go into disarray. So, Lord, help us to be clear, but help us to speak the truth always in love. We ask these things in Your name. Amen.