

heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

d) John called Christians "fellowhelpers" who were hospitable and helpful to preachers.

✠ (3 John 1:8) "We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth."

b. Each of us may be fruitful if we maintain these good works

1) When we get involved in the work of the Lord (witnessing, praying, helping) with a right attitude and right motive, our lives can be fruitful for the Lord. I mentioned our attitudes and motives because the Lord knows not only what we do but also exactly why we do it. If we are careless and do not prepare properly, or proud of our abilities, or grumpy when we serve the Lord, He will not bless our service.

✠ (Hebrews 4:12) "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

2) We can also be fruitful if we give cheerfully and sacrificially to support the work of the Lord.

✠ (2 Corinthians 9:7) "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

✠ *Paul closed the epistle with a greeting (v.15)*

Conclusion: This evening we have focussed our attention on supporting God's work. Each of us can support God's work by encouraging preachers, by giving sacrificially to the Lord's work, and by getting involved in serving the Lord with a godly attitude. If you have not been doing what you should to support God's work in our local church, I encourage you to begin tonight. Kent Crocket reminds us that, "Giving our money to the Lord is one of the ways we die to self."

Song: Take My Life and Let - 393

Supporting God's Work

14 December 2014 pm - Titus 3:12-15 - Tit 14 - Scott Childs

Introduction: As I worked on this message entitled "Supporting God's Work", I read these words of the preacher George Mueller. He said, "God judges what we give by what we keep."

As we will see this evening, supporting God's work is not financial giving, but that certainly is a significant part of it.

Transition: In Paul's closing words to Titus, we find three ways that we can support God's work.

1. Support by Personal Encouragement

a. Paul asked Titus to visit him (v.12)

- 1) Paul planned to send Artemas or Tychicus to Crete to relieve Titus.
 - a) We know nothing about Artemas except that he must have been a faithful preacher that was capable of taking over where Titus left off in the work of strengthening the churches in Crete.
 - b) Tychicus was a Christian of Asia who accompanied Paul on his last trip to Jerusalem (Ac 20:4). During Paul's imprisonment in Rome, Tychicus carried the letters of Ephesians and Colossians to their churches. In them, Paul describes his character.
✠ (Colossians 4:7) "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord:"
- 2) He asked Titus to be diligent or not waste any time in coming to see him at Nicopolis. He wanted him to come before winter. There are two cities with the name Nicopolis, but this one is probably the one located in Greece, across from the heel of Italy.
- 3) Paul did not state the reason for his request.
 - a) Perhaps Paul had another mission for Titus.
 - b) Maybe he just wanted a firsthand report of the work on Crete.
 - c) It could be that Paul needed his help.

- d) Whatever the reason, Titus' trip to see Paul would be an encouragement to the Apostle.

b. You too can be an encourager

- 1) God's servants (preachers, missionaries, evangelists) are humans just like you. They often get weary and sometimes discouraged. They appreciate encouragement.
- 2) You can encourage them with words of appreciation and thanks, and by letting them know you are praying for them.
- 3) You can encourage them with emails or letters.
- 4) You can encourage them with personal visits.

2. Support by Personal Giving

a. Titus was to bring Zenas and Apollos on their journey.

- 1) The only thing we know about Zenas is that Paul called him a lawyer. If he was a Jewish lawyer, then he was a Scribe and teacher of the Jewish law. If he was a Roman lawyer, then he was a civil lawyer. He was on Crete, evidently working with the preacher Apollos.
- 2) Apollos, on the other hand was a Jew of Alexandria, a learned and eloquent man, who became a Christian and preacher (Acts 18:24). Aquila and Priscilla instructed him more perfectly in "the way of God".
- 3) The word translated "bring ... on their journey" means to provide things needed for their journey.
- 4) Evidently, Paul was asking Titus to provide for these men personally so they would have the necessary supplies for their trip. By doing this, they would have nothing wanting or lacking as they travelled.

b. Giving is God's plan for funding His work

- 1) This was true throughout the Old Testament.
✠ (Proverbs 3:9-10) "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."
✠ (Malachi 3:10) "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse,

that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*"

- 2) Giving is God's plan for Christians in our age as well.
✠ (2 Corinthians 9:6) "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."
✠ (1 Corinthians 9:14) "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."

3. Support by Personal Involvement

a. Individuals were to learn to maintain good works

- 1) When Paul said, "let ours also learn", he was probably talking about "our fellow Christians". This would apply to the believers in Crete. All Christians are to maintain (give attention to) good works.
- 2) This is the fourth time in this book that Paul mentions "good works".
 - a) Back in verse 8, we pointed out that good works include our words, conduct, appearance, dress, morals, attitudes, friendliness, honesty, faithfulness, hard work, reputation, witness, service for Christ, helpfulness, choice of friends, etc.
 - b) Here the good works are more specific.
 - (1) They may refer to hard work at an honest job to provide the necessities of life and to support the work of the Lord financially.
 - (2) They may refer to the Crete Christians sacrificing to meet the necessities of the preachers (Zenas and Apollos) who are about to travel.
 - c) By giving attention to good works in this manner, would enable them to be fruitful. In other words, doing God-honouring activities that invest in the work of the Lord will produce spiritual fruit. This is similar to what Jesus said.
✠ (Matthew 6:20) "But lay up for yourselves treasures in