

Titus, pt.7

Titus 3.1-11

12.7.08

A Guide To Christian Relationships

I. Dealing with the Gov't - 3.1

- a. They had to be reminded just as we do. From the writing of other historical figures it seems the Cretans were not happy with the Roman gov't.
- b. We have a love/hate relationship with the gov't. We like it when they does something beneficial to us, and we despise it when they encroach on our freedoms or rights. We want them to get the bad guys, but have no patience when they impact our lives.
- c. Rom.13.1-7 & paying taxes (13.6f). 1 Pet.2.13-17; 1 T.2.1-4
- d. Submit - very similar to 2.5 where women are to voluntarily place themselves in a role of serving another
- e. We are to be "submissive" in our attitude; "obedient" in our actions and "ready to do good" when the need arises. We move away from passivity of obeying laws to active, positive involvement in society. When an opportunity presents itself to assist the gov't, we need to be there.
 - i. Ill of Hurricane Ike recovery & the many who volunteered to assisted others. Bill Yenne comment: We can always count on the church to come together in a crisis.
 - ii. 3.1a "They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good." Am I a blessing or a drag on my local gov't? When they think about you or the church or the Christian community do they see us as an asset or a liability?
- f. We see the gov't as our servants rather than our leaders. They are to do what we want and we aren't to respect their decisions. We grow gnarly & cynical and think all they do is waste our money. We don't lift up the virtues of good governance, but are looking for the shortcomings of it. Ready to "do" & "say" good.
- g. I'm all for accountability, but with respect. We should point out shortcomings and misuses, but we shouldn't have an unChristlike attitude about it. 1 Cor.13 applies to our relationship with the gov't too!

- h. With a new administration taking over there will be many opportunities to grow critical & negative. We are to address the disagreements, but in an attitude of respect and with a readiness to work together for good.
- i. Jesus & the gov't. The gov't was very corrupt & oppressive. It was oligarchy & arbitrary. There were many injustices committed by gov't leaders and there was no recourse. He paid the temple tax (Mt.17.24-27) & told the people to give to Caesar what belonged to him (Mt.22.15-22). Jesus didn't have a critical attitude towards the political authorities
 - i. Many Christians are trying to win back America through political and societal structures. Some have become hostile & antagonistic of unbelievers, the very ones God has called them to love & reach. When Christians take upon a political spirit (divisive "I'm right & you're wrong" mentality; manipulative & conniving), sinners become the enemy rather than the mission field.
 - 1. Jim Garlow & Proposition 8 in CA.
 - ii. We need to use our rights to influence godly decisionmaking as Christian citizens of this county but also realize that no matter what happens our first citizenship is in the Kingdom of God. We are temporary citizens of earth & permanent citizens in God's Kingdom & our devotion should be foremost to Jesus the King.

II. Dealing with Disagreements - 3.2f, 9

- a. Our frustration with the gov't can leak out into other relationships.
- b. Verse 2
 - i. "slander" - abuse or speak evil
 - ii. "avoid quarreling" - being contentious & belligerent. It seems to indicate having a hostile attitude towards a person. You write people off b/c they disagree with you.
 - 1. Diff betw quarrelling & defending the faith. There isn't much, but I believe a line is crossed when you are trying to prove your point just to justify your position. You are more concerned about being right than in helping a person in error.
 - iii. "gentle" - yielding, conciliatory

iv. “show true humility” – unqualified courtesy. When you are reviled or misunderstood or persecuted you don’t rail back at your enemy. You respond, but in a way that completely disarms the protagonist. Love, courtesy, kindness & respect are the battering rams of the Spirit that destroy the arguments of the hostile.

1. Illust – Watching a pastor respond to a hostile audience with kindness, wit & tact. It placed him at a different level than the hostiles around him.
2. Appl – we get a hold of a truth & we beat everyone with it. We have no patience with those who disagree, esp in face of overwhelming odds in your favor. You are to show true humility by honestly admitting your own limited knowledge & experience. You show respect & gentleness when you don’t force a disagreement or make a person acquiesce to you. You demonstrate humility by deferring to another person’s opinion or preference.

v. How can we disagree agreeably?

1. You have to place the relationship above the issue of disagreement. You value the relationship more than being right on the topic of disagreement.
2. Is the topic a make it or break it concern? IOW, we have to see eye to eye or we won’t be able to walk forward in the relationship. Is this a belief, value or matter of integrity where you must be of one mind.
3. Is there an issue of disagreement or is it a personality clash? We often get more upset about the how a person said something rather than what they said.
4. Discern when you are defending your ego rather than seeking to understand the other person’ opinion.
5. Readily admit you don’t know everything & seek to understand the person’s background & thought process
6. Take ownership of the things you have done that might have inflamed the disagreement.
7. Realize you might not come to consensus on the disagreement. You must conclude that love covers

over a multitude of sins. If you will demonstrate love, God can bring relational healing.

8. Work, work, work towards maintaining the relationship after the disagreement. The longer you withdraw from the person or group the harder it is to reconnect relationally. You'll find yourself completely on the outside & moving further away. For some, you need to humble yourself and seek to restore the relationship with the person

c. Verse 3 – This is how we used to live in relationship to each other.

d. Verse 9

- i. “Don’t get involved” – having nothing to do with this stuff; purposely turn away from this nonsense.
- ii. Foolish discussions about genealogies. There’s nothing wrong with studying genealogy, but it mustn’t be read into as though there is some mystical power attached to them. It is viewed almost like a horoscope. Certain things are determined by your lineage.
- iii. Appl – False teacher take novel truths or trivial matters and turn them into a critical doctrine. They will emphasize something that is nominal or controversial; they will elevate it to a foundational truth.
- iv. They will make claims that you aren’t complete until you abide by these teachings. They will not listen to the plain teaching of scripture, but point to supposed hidden truths. They will claim that real knowledge and power are found by following these hidden teachings.

e. Fights about obedience to Jewish laws

- i. The Judaizers of 1.10–11. they were attempting to burden believers with the Jewish Law. They were insisting certain laws must still be followed by all believers.
- ii. Today, there are movements within American Christianity that are attempting to tell believers that they must observe the Jewish Law. I have witnessed people get swept up in these movements and fall away from simple devotion to Christ.
- iii. There’s nothing wrong with studying the historic Jewish roots of Christianity. It is profitable and helps you to

understand the significance of Jesus' work on our behalf. There are many wonderful truths deposited within the Jewish holidays, ritual expressions and ethical teachings.

- iv. It becomes problematic when you try to turn those truths into normative behavior & practice. IOW, "you must practice these things in order to be a good Christian." Prayer Shawls, menorahs & Jewish holidays can be enjoyed, but they aren't necessary in order to have an intimate relationship with God.
- v. What is the purpose of the Law? Rom.7.7f; Gal.3.19-25. The Law's purpose was to reveal sin & our need for Christ.
- vi. Our relationship to the Law today - Rom.7.1-6
- vii. Christians who try to obey the Law - Rom.14 addresses eating certain foods, observing certain days; Gal.3.1f, 6f (Abr didn't have the Law), 10f, 4.9-11; 5.1-6, 13-16 (the big argument why people reject the grace message is b/c they say it allows a person to stay in sin); Col.2.16-3.3
- viii. We have to understand that God doesn't want us back in relationship with Him like that of the Jews in the PL, but rather like that of Adam & Eve in the Garden. They had a relationship based on love & communion not on obedience to a Law.
- ix. Paul, Peter, Luke, John & Jesus never indicated that we were to embrace certain elements of Judaism in our faith journey, except what is mentioned in Acts 15. I personally believe the ones associated with sacrifices don't have any bearing on us today. It seems they were added as a stipulation so as not to be an offense to Jewish Christians.
- f. "These things are useless & a waste of time" - they do not add anything. They are useless & a waste of time - compared to what is good & beneficial for everyone (3.4-7). They do not advance the cause of Christ & a Christ like attitude. In fact, they detract from it.

III. Dealing with Divisiveness -3.10f

- a. "Divisions among you" - it's the word in the Gk that "heretic" is derived from. One who promotes divisive & destructive teaching.
- b. Prov.6.16-19 - divisiveness is one of the things God's hates. It is contrary to His nature and the prayer of Jesus. A divisive person

has the smell of hell upon them. Satan's divisive schemes divided the angels against God, mankind against God & he even tried to divide the Godhead during the temptation of Jesus.

- c. As a church, we can't tolerate divisive & destructive people who sow the seeds of dissension w/in a body of believers.
- d. Our Unity Value.
- e. "give a first and second warning. After that, have nothing to do with them." Jesus teaching in Matt.18.15-17
- f. "Have nothing to do with them" means to reject the person. Don't associate with him or invite him back into relationship until there is a change. It's a waste of time and energy. Otherwise, it gives the unrepentant person a sense of importance.
- g. "For people like that have turned away from the truth and their own sins condemn them."
 - i. "warped" - he is twisted; he's off track. Due to remaining in sin, "sinful", his spirit and mind have been twisted. They don't think straight. They either remained in a false belief or a sinful behavior and their thinking became twisted with little hope of straightening.
 - ii. One example of a person with warped belief was Jim Baker from PTL. Yet, he has come to the truth.
 - iii. "he is self condemned" NIV. Since they refused correction, the person participates in his own destruction.

IV. The Lord gives us this responsibility. Often we want God to remove a person from our lives and He's given us the responsibility to bind on earth, so that it's bound in Heaven.