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Scripture

Titus 1:1-16

1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that is in accordance with godliness, 2 in the hope of eternal life that God, who never lies, promised before the ages began— 3 in due time he revealed his word through the proclamation with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior,

4 To Titus, my loyal child in the faith we share: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

5 I left you behind in Crete for this reason, so that you should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint elders in every town, as I directed you: 6 someone who is blameless, married only once, whose children are believers, not accused of debauchery and not rebellious. 7 For a bishop, as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or addicted to wine or violent or greedy for gain; 8 but he must be hospitable, a lover of goodness, prudent, upright, devout, and self-controlled. 9 He must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.

10 There are also many rebellious people, idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision; 11 they must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for sordid gain what it is not right to teach. 12 It was one of them, their very own prophet, who said, "Cretans are always liars, vicious brutes, lazy gluttons."

13 That testimony is true. For this reason rebuke them sharply, so that they may become sound in the faith, 14 not paying attention to Jewish myths or to commandments of those who reject the truth. 15 To the pure all things are pure, but to the corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure. Their very minds and consciences are corrupted. 16 They profess to know God, but they deny him by their actions. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

Devotional

Paul provides elaborate directions to Titus about what he is to accomplish in Crete. Many of Paul's instructions can be summed up in his reason for leaving Titus, "put in order what remain(s) to be done." This strikes me to the core since most of my days, at home and at work, involve putting things in order and making lists of what remains to be done. I am sure many of you have similar experiences. And, if you are like me, there are one or two things pushed repeatedly to the end of the list.

Rather than dreading those items day after day, perhaps we can reorder our lists. Try bumping the remains of yesterday to the top of today's list and then taking care of it. I know getting things done sounds simpler than it is but the reward is joy, fulfillment, and relief(!). Go for it!

Prayer

Three in One, even as there is order in your creation, continue to reveal to us not only what remains for us to do but also the manner that you would have us do it in. Be with us as we have courage to change. Amen.

