

FINAL GREETINGS

Titus 3:12-15

As we enter the final verses of this short epistle from Paul to Titus we are very briefly introduced to four more of the early Christians that were part of Paul's mission team.

1. This is the only mention of **Artemas** in the Bible. It's very likely his parents called him after the Greek goddess of the moon, Artemis, whom they probably worshipped.
2. We know more about **Tychicus**. He was with Paul during the first imprisonment and he carried the letters to the Ephesians and the Colossians,
[Eph. 6:21](#) But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, **Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord,** shall make known to you all things; [Col. 4: 7](#) All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is **a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord.**
3. All we know about **Zenas** is that he was a Christian lawyer, and his name means "gift of Zeus" (abbreviated form of Zenodoros).
4. **Apollos** was a Jew from Alexandria who came to Ephesus following Paul's first visit and was taught Christian doctrine by Priscilla and Aquila. He was an articulate and an educated man who handled the Old Testament Scriptures with forcefulness but he was aided towards a fuller understanding of the Word by Priscilla and Aquila ([Acts 18:26](#)). He became even more successful in his ministry. He went from Ephesus to Greece with the encouragement of the Asian believers and a letter of introduction ([Acts 18:27](#)). He greatly strengthened the believers by using the Scriptures to demonstrate that Jesus was the Christ ([Acts 18:28](#)). Paul considered him as one of the team, as is demonstrated in [Titus 3:13](#) where Paul asked Titus to help Apollos on his way. Even though he was a learned and gifted preacher, Apollos was willing to receive more instruction and be part of the team.

So this is a 'team of six, - Artemas, Tychicus, Zenas, Apollos, Titus and Paul, and there are some simple but important thoughts that can be taken from these final verses of the epistle. Paul has been addressing *real* issues that were affecting this church in Crete.

DETERMINATION v.12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have *determined* there to winter.

- * You get nowhere in the work of the Lord without **determination**. It is one of the key words! There are so many things that can crop up to hinder your work for the Lord.
- * **Determination** took Paul through Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, Philippi, Thessalonika, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus and a whole host of other cities, towns and villages with the message of the Gospel.
- * You say, "It was the Holy Spirit that took him to those places!" Yes, the Holy Spirit took him to those places but it was **determination** that made him obedient to the work of the Holy Spirit.
- * He could have walked through those areas and not uttered a word for Christ, - or just done it half-heartedly ... but he was **determined** that Christ saved him to serve Him.
- * Let's put it like this: The Lord has opened up a door in which He has called you and I to serve, - what like is our **determination** to serve Him? What like is our **determination** to 'put ourself out' for God?
- * For example, when Paul was in Philippi he went down to the side of the river on the Sabbath day where he met the woman (Acts 16:14 whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.) He had to find out where the meeting took place, what time it started *for he was determined to be there*. He found out all the details and the Lord blessed his **determination** in the salvation of Lydia.
- * Also in Philippi, - a different set of circumstances, - a young demon-possessed girl was released from her bondage. Some of the men of the town were living off her ability to tell the future and when Paul drove out the demon from her they were less than happy! Instead of telling future secrets this young girl was following Paul around saying, v.17 *These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation*. The men of Philippi had lost their money-making scam and Paul was so **determined** he drove out the spirit that oppressed her.
- * Again in Philippi, Paul and Silas were in the prison. It was dark. It was night time. Despite the circumstances v.25 *at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the*

prisoners heard them. ... Now what do you call that ...? Under such circumstances? Is that not **determination**!

- * **Determination** isn't stubbornness, you know. Paul shows us that **determination** is simply being driven along by our commitment to Christ that has taken over our lives.
- * ... And here is another lovely wee thought ... v. 12 tells us Paul said to Titus that he was **determined** to winter in Nicopolis. Where is Nicopolis? Nicopolis is in northwest Greece. Octavius founded the city on the campsite from which he mounted his successful battle of Actium in September 31BC, - the same Octavius that became the first Roman Emperor and was called Caesar Augustus). And do you know what 'Nicopolis' means? It means the "city of victory" ...
- * Paul said, *I have determined there to winter [in Nicopolis]* ... and where better a place for the Christian to be **determined** to remain than in the "city of victory"!

DILIGENCE

v.13 Bring Zenas the lawyer and

Apollos on their journey *diligently*, that nothing be wanting unto them.

- * It's good to be **determined** in the work of the Lord ... but our determination must be *guarded* by its 'companion' **diligence**.
- * There is a 'type' of **determination** that sometimes shows itself as stubbornness. This is a stubbornness that is counter-productive in the work of the Lord. We ought not to be carnally stubborn in God's work. I think **diligence** *guards* us from such a stubbornness.
- * You get it in areas of Christian service, - my family has done this since 'the year dot' and now it has been passed on to me to do it, - that's the kind of stubbornness God doesn't bless! **Determination** ought to have as its companion **diligence**.
- * Remember Saul of Tarsus, - a man tremendously faithful his religion of Judaism. He would let nobody say anything derogatory about it. He actively persecuted those who upheld any other religious philosophy.
 - * It was how he was brought up, it was how he was taught and he became an ardent defender of his faith.
 - * The Lord Jesus met him on the road to Damascus and confronted him, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*
 - * Saul was being driven by a stubbornness, an obstinacy, that determined him in the work of upholding the religion of Judaism.

- * What a change-around when he was not only given a new name but also a new nature ... and a **determination and diligence** instead of his old stubbornness, Phil. 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; ... 13 this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
- * You see, that's not stubbornness ... that's **diligence** in the work of the Lord. The stubbornness had been removed.
- * In this context, stubbornness is when I want to get *my way* in my life; **diligence** is when I am careful to seek out how God would want to have *His way* in my life.
- * My reason for wanting to preach the Word of God faithfully is not my stubbornness to convince you; my reason for wanting to preach the Word of God faithfully is that I want to be meticulously **diligent** in that which God has laid upon my heart.
- * **Determination ... diligence ...**

DEDICATION & DISCIPLINE v.14 And let ours also *learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.*

- * Many a person who comes to a faith in the Lord Jesus remains faithful for a time ... until the newness of the experience wears off.
- * It's a bad advertisement for true saving faith when someone seems to walk with Christ for a while and then goes back. It says nothing to the world ... except that *Christ has been a failure* because He has not succeeded in changing your life.
- * *Now, it is impossible for Christ to fail at anything! It is absolutely and completely impossible for Christ to fail at anything!*
- * So what is the reason some who start off in the faith seem to fall by the wayside? Paul answers the question, *let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.*

- * No matter what you do, - whether it be in the secular or in the spiritual, - to make it work there needs to be **dedication** and **discipline**.
- * It mightn't always come easy at the beginning and that's why Paul says to *learn to maintain good works for necessary uses ... who says becoming a Christian is easy!*
- * They tell you that being a Christian is only for wimps, - you tell your pals at school that you are a Christian, you tell your friends at work you are a Christian, - ... you'll then see how much *courage* you need! Being a Christian is not for wimps!
- * To *learn to maintain good works for necessary uses* calls for **dedication** and **discipline** ... but the dividends that are promised are good *that they be not unfruitful*.
- * The **dedication** and **discipline** in meeting with God's people for prayer and Bible Study ...
- * The **dedication** and **discipline** in meeting with God's people to worship ...
- * The **dedication** and **discipline** in seeking nothing less that for others to see Christ in you ...
- * It is a constant learning to maintain good works, - not the good works that saves you ... but the good works you do that confirms your identity as a believer.
- * Here is the process ... **determination** + **diligence** + **dedication** + **discipline** = ...

DEVOTION

v.15 All that are with me salute thee.

Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

- * This is what is needed for a believer to live close to the Lord and to be successful for Christ. This was Paul speaking from personal experience.
- * What he is teaching us here is to put our whole heart and being into living for Christ. ... And here are the areas he was covering ...
- * He was devoted to those who were labouring in the work with him, - Artemas, Tychicus, Zenas, Apollos, and others.
 - * To the church in Rome, 14:19 *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*
 - * To the church in Ephesus 4:3 *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

- * It's important – in the family of God – to go the extra mile, especially with those we find difficult to like.
- * Paul was devoted to Titus and to those who belonged to the Church on the island of Crete *for the sake of Christ*.
- * Most of all he was devoted to the God and Saviour he so faithfully served.
 - * That was the reason he travelled so extensively, preached so fervently, and served so faithfully.
- * When the Holy Spirit gifts you with the **determination** and the **diligence** and the **dedication** and the **discipline** that is granted to you by the grace of God the consequence is one of **devotion**, - **devotion** in the work of the Saviour.
- * It's not so that others get to know about all the good things you have been doing, - because you're not doing it for them, you're doing it for God ... and no-one need know because you are doing it as unto Him.
- * No-one knew all that Paul often had to face, - but the God Who he served faithfully knew.
- * The reason Paul was a Christian and writing to this church was because of the **devotion** he had in the work of the Lord. That was his motivation, incentive, drive.

CONCLUSION.

- * **Determination ... diligence ... dedication ... discipline ... devotion ...** With these things Paul desires that Titus would be occupied.
- * It is the process of sanctification which will be fully completed when we are standing round the Throne.
- * It is a process though that we need to show evidence is taking place even now ... if we at all claim to belong to Christ.
- * Remember, this was a lazy church in Crete but Paul saw that that did not allow for any special treatment.
- * God has one standard that He expects from *all* His people; it is that which brings us with thanksgiving into the practical relationship with Himself that invigorates His people to Godly **determination**, Godly **diligence**, Godly **dedication**, Godly **discipline**, Godly **devotion**.
- * ... And to this church on the island of Crete Paul completed his epistle with the final important little word, **Amen**, so be it. ... I trust that is our concluding response too.