



Authority, Civility, & Consistency

Intro: Authority is a word that evokes all sorts of emotion in contemporary Americans. We undoubtedly have a strong aversion to the general idea of authority over us, yet we live with the constant reality of it. Christians have an even more complicated relationship to this concept, for Christians maintain a citizenship to another world as they pass through this one. All of this is enough to create the most complicated problems for someone attempting to understand his or her responsibility to relate to authority. This passage says much about authority, and there is much for us to learn about our relationship to authorities – both in the Church and in the world. Let’s trust God’s wisdom over our own, and hear what He would say to us about our obligations and privileges today.

Passage: **Titus 2:15-3:2**

Background / Set-up

- Since the 4th century AD Christians have struggled to understand what relationship the Church is to have with governing authorities. From Pentecost to the mid 4th century, the Church was clearly a subversive group (though not overtly insubordinate) in a world whose authorities were hostile to it. Prior to and during the time of the Reformation, Western civilization perceived the authority of God as being exercised through the Church and also through civic rulers (most of whom held heritable right and power). The government and Church authorities were intermingled, so that those who governed from a worldly seat of power often also held a Church office (and the other way around). Even after the Reformation was understood to be an obvious turning point in history, many still had difficulty understanding the relationship between Church and state. This message today will not answer all of the questions one might have regarding this complicated matter, but we may

indeed discover some course-plotting markers that will help us navigate these waters more productively and faithfully.

Moreover, the content we will consider here will confront us with the reality that there are God-given authorities in all of our lives. Our innate and uniquely American resistance to authority actually works to our disadvantage (in many cases). Even though it may be an allergen to us, God has assigned and entrusted various authoritative responsibilities to leaders in the world and in the Church. We shall see what authority is wielded in each sphere, and that God is the King of all. There is no secular/sacred divide in the Scriptures.

Exposition of Major Ideas in the Passage

Outline:

(1) Authority in the Church

(2) Authority in the World

(3) Being “Courteous” and “Ready to do Good”

2:15 Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. 3:1 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

1. Authority in the Church

- *“Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.” (2:15)*
 - 1) The pastor is to *“Declare”* – Continually speak
 - 2) The pastor is to declare *“these things”* – “sound doctrine” (1:9) and “what accords with sound doctrine” (2:1)
 - *exhorting* and *rebuking* will be the natural outworking of “continually speaking” about “these things”
 - *“exhort”* – *parakalei* (to come alongside to call or speak alongside) – preach, appeal, implore, admonish, comfort
 - *“rebuke”* – *elenche* (show or convince the error of another) – rebuke, reprove, expose, discipline

3) The pastor is to declare these things with “*all authority*”

- The authority of the preacher/pastor/elder is “all authority” when he speaks on the basis of and from deep roots in the ground of the Word of God.
 - MacArthur – “That is such a strong statement about authority... [The] preacher is not a storyteller. He is not really theologizing. He is not sharing insights. He's not counseling. He's not even just passing on facts. If he does what he is called to do, he is speaking with authority...in fact, with *all authority*. That is to say all authority available to him is brought to bear in the exercise of his *speaking* and *exhorting* and [*rebuking*]. And no one is allowed to justify or rationalize or evade what he says.”¹
- The word translated “authority” is *epitagēs*, and it is translated everywhere else in the New Testament as “command” or “commandment” (Rom. 6:26; 1 Cor. 7:6, 25; 2 Cor. 8:8; 1 Tim. 1:1; Titus 1:3)
 - MacArthur – “The one who speaks, Paul says here to Titus, is to speak in the tone of commanding. We're not making suggestions. We're not just giving insights. We're not [just] sharing thoughts... or passing on facts. We're not clarifying doctrine. All of those things may be components but the end effect is to command and to command really three things...that you hear, which implies to understand; that you believe; and that you obey.”

4) The pastor is to do all of this and “*Let no one disregard*” him.

- There is both a call to live upright and godly here (not giving any opponent reason for his/her opposition), and a call to remain steadfast in declaring these things to those who may not be so eager to hear them.

2. Authority in the World

- “*1 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities*” (3:1)

1) God is in charge of all “authorities” – Good and Evil ones

¹ See MacArthur's full transcript at <http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/56-22>

- [Daniel 2:20-21](#) – “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings...”
- [Psalm 75:7](#) – “it is God who executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another.”
- [1 Samuel 2:7](#) – “The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts.”
- Job cried out in his despair, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away...” (Job 1:21).
 - God calls Nebuchadnezzar “his servant” (Jer. 27:6). This is the tyrant who destroyed Jerusalem and took droves of Hebrew people captive.
 - There has never been a worse authoritative move than the decision of Pontius Pilate, yet he is said (by no less than Jesus Himself) to have authority given him “from above.”
 - [John 19:10-11](#) – “Pilate said to him [Jesus], “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?” Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above.”

2) God has delegated responsibilities to civil rulers, and He commands us to live in humble obedience to authority

- [Romans 13:1-7](#) – “1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God’s wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the

authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.”

- Paul here lists several reasons for submitting to earthly authorities, without qualification of their “good” or “bad” intentions.
 - First, ALL authority comes from God and is “instituted by God” (v1) and “appointed by God” (v2).
 - Second, resisting earthly authorities in their expression of God’s delegated authority is tantamount to resistance of God Himself, for these are “servants of God” (v4) and “ministers of God” (v6).
 - Third, resisting or disobeying earthly authorities may result in punishment, since they do “not bear the sword in vain” (v4).
 - This is indicative of the delegated authority, which God gives to earthly rulers. (1) preserve life and (2) uphold justice
 - Fourth, the establishment of secular authorities is “for your good” (v4).
 - MacArthur notes the utterly pagan society in which this command for obedience was given. He said: “There was no Christianity until [Paul] introduced it. In the Gentile world it was just blatant comprehensive paganism with all of the trappings that Satan could develop into it. It was totally and exclusively with the exception of a few Jews a Satanic system. All the existing religion, all the existing ideology, philosophy and thought, all the existing law and order, all the existing values, mores were derived from a non-Christian system. It was thoroughly pagan until Paul arrived. And the clash was so great

that it cost him and many others their lives.”²

3) The Gospel is more important than social or political issues.

*This is not to devalue social/political issues, but to properly appreciate the value of the Gospel.

- MacArthur – “You see, the church has one mission, [the church is] a nation of priests. And a priest had one simple function, to bring people to God, to usher them into His presence. It is the only thing we are in the world to do.... If [someone in our society] dies as a policeman or a prostitute without Christ, they're going to end up in the same place. Whether they die moral or immoral will make no difference in their eternity. Whether they stood on the side of the street with the pro-abortion rights group and screamed for legalizing and maintaining legal abortions, or on the other side of the street against abortion and screamed to stop the killing, if they didn't know Christ they're going to end up in the same place... [These moral and social causes are not the issue]; the issue is salvation...the issue is salvation. And the sad reality is that when the church gets a *moralizing, politicizing* bent it usually has a negative impact on its evangelization mission because then it makes [Christians] hostile to the current system and they become the enemies of the society rather than the compassionate friend.”³
- Justin Martyr argued that Christians were the best Roman citizens in the 2nd century (when Christians were most persecuted by Roman authorities). To the Roman rulers, he said: “[To] God alone we [Christians] render worship, but in other things we gladly serve you, acknowledging you as kings and rulers of men, and praying that with your kingly power you be found to possess also sound judgment. But if you pay no regard to our prayers and frank explanations, we shall suffer no loss, since we believe (or rather, indeed, are persuaded) that every man will suffer punishment in eternal fire according to the merit of his deed, and will

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render account according to the power he has received from God..."⁴

3. Be "Courteous" and "Ready to do Good"

- *"be obedient... be ready for every good work... speak evil of no one... avoid quarreling... be gentle... show perfect courtesy toward all people"*
 - *"be obedient"* – *peitharchein* – conform to advice, obey, follow
 - *"be ready for every good work"* – *hetoimous* – prepared, primed for
 - *"speak evil of no one"* – Barnes said: "The idea is, that we are not to slander, revile, or defame anyone. We are not to say anything to anyone, or of anyone, which will do him injury. We are never to utter anything which we know to be false about him or to give such a coloring to his words or conduct as to do him wrong in any way."⁵
 - *"avoid quarreling"* – simply avoiding the tussle of words or actions whenever possible
 - *"be gentle"*
 - Titus 3:2 – "always be gentle (ESV)/ kind (HCSB)/ considerate (NIV) toward everyone."
 - Philippians 4:5 – "Let your gentleness (NIV)/ reasonableness (ESV)/ moderation (KJV)/ graciousness (HCSB) be known to everyone..."
 - The idea here is not gentility in softness or gullibility, but a gracious consideration of others without first claiming position or obligation to one's self.
 - *"show perfect courtesy toward all people"*
 - This is a summary statement of all that has preceded it, and it also creates a universal application.
 - Whereas verse 1 (it may be argued) is particularly interested in one's relationship to "rulers and authorities," verse 2 makes a summary command of a courteous posture "toward all people." Christians, therefore, must show "perfect" (all, any, true)

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⁵ See Barnes' *Notes on the Bible* at <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/titus/3-2.htm>

“courtesy” (consideration, gentleness, humility)
“toward all people” everywhere.

- Such a life would, no doubt, provide peculiarity and attraction to any who encountered it. Such a life would also provide a perfect platform for powerful Gospel witness.

In 1651, in Lynn, Massachusetts, **Obediah Holmes** and several others gathered in a man’s home for a small worship service. Even though European immigrants were fleeing religious persecution by coming to North America, they still brought with them much of the established expectations of Church/state relations. Obediah and his friends were Baptists, and this put them at odds with the established Church. Their worship service was private but it was not secret, and it was illegal.

Not long into their service, constables broke in and arrested three of the men. That same day the three men were forced to attend a service in the established church of their day. The men quietly protested by keeping their hats upon their heads, but the constables knocked their hats off by force. One of the arrested men attempted to preach to the congregation, and that is when the constables took them away to prison.

When their court date arrived, even though the men capably defended their beliefs and actions, there was merely a reading of the charges and an issuing of their sentence. The three men were ordered to pay a fine or endure a severe beating at the whip-wielding hands of an executioner. 40 lashes were equal to a death sentence, and the men were threatened with 30. People raised money to pay their fines, and one man welcomed the payment immediately.

Pastor John Clarke and Obediah Holmes were led to the whipping post, and on the way there someone forced Clarke’s captors to take payment for his fine. Holmes also received compassion from those who offered to pay his fine, but he refused the payment to be made. He said that payment would be an admission of guilt, and he was not willing to admit wrongdoing of any kind.

Having his shirt removed and being tied to the post, Holmes exhorted the onlookers to cling to Christ and remain true to Him and to His Word in the face of any opposition. The flogger stopped 3 times during the beating to rest his arm for a moment and regain a better grip for maximum force. Holmes’ was beaten mercilessly, and yet he found strength to audibly thank God for being with him in his suffering as well as ask that God not lay the sin of such a scourging upon the ones inflicting it.

When all was done, Holmes' body was a mess, but his spirit was unbroken. As he was being untied from the bloody post, he said to the magistrates, "You have beaten me as with roses."

Holmes' display of *obedient subversion* (neither weakening in his convictions, nor rallying anyone to mutiny) was an exemplary call to live as a Christian witness under the authority which God has delegated. We are not revolutionaries; we are ambassadors of the true and rightful King.

Application

- What is God commanding us to BELIEVE here?
 - God has placed authorities over us in the Church and in the world
 - God does clearly command that we live as obedient servants of His
 - Our humble submission will speak louder than any overt rebellion

- What is God commanding us to DO here?
 - Live in humble submission to authority
 - Trust in God's sovereign provision rather than our own
 - Trust ourselves to His good plan, and live as witnesses to the Gospel

My Prayers

- May God draw us near to Himself
- May God help us to see with heavenly eyes
- May God grant us His grace as we seek to live in this way in our time

Pastor Marc's Commentary

- Outline of the Letter:
 - Salutation (1:1-4) **doctrinal statement #1*
 - Organizing the Churches in Crete (1:5-16)
 - Order and Qualified Elders (1:5-6)
 - Qualifications of Elders/Overseers (1:7-9)
 - Dealing with False Teachers (1:10-14)
 - Stark Distinctions and True Intimacy with God (1:15-16)
 - Instructing Various Groups (2:1-14)
 - Instructions for Titus and Others A (2:1-6)
 - Instructions for Titus and Others B (2:7-10)
 - Theology for Life (2:11-14) **doctrinal statement #2*
 - Instructing on Doing What is Good (2:15-3:11)
 - **Initial Charge (2:15-3:2)**
 - Human Depravity and the Grace of God (3:3-7) **doctrinal statement #3*
 - Final Charge (3:8-11)
- Closing and Benediction (3:12-15)

2:15 Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. 3:1 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

- *“Declare these things”* (v15)
 - Paul tells Titus to “speak,” “declare,” and “continually say” these things.
 - First, the perpetual nature of the speaking connotes the dull nature of the “things,” of which he is to speak.
 - It is not that the things in themselves are dull or uninteresting per se, but they are certainly much less exciting than many other things. No one gets excited about older women training younger women to live pure or kind lives; and no one’s heart rate increases when someone speaks of older men acting with a sober mind. Ah, but this is the rub...
 - Second, the ordinary nature of the “things” makes them no less demanding or laborious.
 - While people living lives well may not excite us, it is an admirable thing indeed to see someone live their life well before God and men. The perpetual need for “speaking” about or “declaring” “these things” arises from the reality of the arduous task “these things” prove to be.
 - Third, it is precisely because “these things” are ordinary and contrary to our natural desires that they must be continually put before our eyes and rung in our ears.
 - That the task is counterintuitive or labor-intensive does not render it unfitting or disposable. In fact, “these things” are the very soil in which spiritual life germinates and grows over time.
 - The “these things” Paul is referring to here are those things he has listed in verses 1 through 10.
 - Virtually every Christian condition is particularly addressed here. Older men, younger men, older women, younger women, servants of others, and even clergy members. All are generally instructed and similarly exhorted to live godly lives that will “adorn” and not “revile” the Gospel message, which they believe and proclaim.

- “*exhort and rebuke with all authority*” (v15)
 - exhort – *parakalei* (to come alongside to call or speak alongside) – preach, appeal, implore, admonish, comfort
 - rebuke – *elenche* (show or convince the error of another) – rebuke, reprove, expose, discipline
 - The authority of the preacher/pastor/elder is “all authority” when he speaks on the basis of and from deep roots in the ground of the Word of God.
 - MacArthur – “That is such a strong statement about authority. And the longer I thought about it and meditated on it, the stronger mandate it became to my own heart, to every preacher. The more I thought about it the more searching and the more compelling it became. And I began to think about the fact that the preacher is not a story teller. He is not really theologizing. He is not sharing insights. He's not counseling. He's not even just passing on facts. If he does what he is called to do he is speaking with authority...in fact, with all authority. That is to say all authority available to him is brought to bear in the exercise of his speaking and exhorting and reproving. And no one is allowed to justify or rationalize or evade what he says.”⁶
 - The word translated “authority” is *epitagēs*, and it is translated everywhere else in the New Testament as “command” or “commandment” (Rom. 6:26; 1 Cor. 7:6, 25; 2 Cor. 8:8; 1 Tim. 1:1; Titus 1:3)
 - MacArthur – “The one who speaks, Paul says here to Titus, is to speak in the tone of commanding. We're not making suggestions. We're not just giving insights. We're not quote/unquote sharing thoughts. We're not passing on facts. We're not clarifying doctrine. All of those things may be components but the end effect is to command and to command really three things...that you hear, which implies to understand; that you believe; and that you obey.”
 - The purpose of “adorning the Gospel” with godly lives, rather than merely railing against societal ills, even in a pagan culture, is for the sake of Gospel proliferation.
 - MacArthur – “You see, the church has one mission, [the church is] a nation of priests. And a priest had one simple function, to bring people to God, to usher them into His presence. It is the only thing we are in the world to do.... If [people in our society] die as a

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policeman or a prostitute without Christ, they're going to end up in the same place. Whether they die moral or immoral will make no difference in their eternity. Whether they stood on the side of the street with the pro-abortion rights group and screamed for legalizing and maintaining legal abortions, or on the other side of the street against abortion and screamed to stop the killing, if they didn't know Christ they're going to end up in the same place... [These moral and social causes are not the issue]; the issue is salvation...the issue is salvation. And the sad reality is that when the church gets a moralizing, politicizing bent it usually has a negative impact on its evangelization mission because then it makes the people hostile to the current system and they become the enemies of the society rather than the compassionate friend.”⁷

- *“Let no one disregard you”* (v15)
 - There seems to be both a personal challenge and a fatherly encouragement here.
 - The challenge is that Titus will live (teaching, exhorting, rebuking, training, speaking, and discipling) in such a way as to give an opponent no real reason for disregarding his teaching. Titus would so easily undermine his own entrusted authority if he lived at odds with the Master delegator of it.
 - The encouragement is that Titus will remain steadfast in his exercise of authority, and wield it in such a way as to disallow any haughty disregard of him or his office. Such an encouragement is warranted in the face of what Titus was facing in Crete.
- *“Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities”* (v1)
 - All authorities are given or placed by God, including evil authorities.
 - Daniel 2:20-21 – “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings...”
 - Psalm 75:7 – “it is God who executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another.”
 - 1 Samuel 2:7 – “The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts.”

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- Job cried out in his despair, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away...” (Job 1:21).
 - God calls Nebuchadnezzar “his servant” (Jer. 27:6). This is the tyrant who destroyed Jerusalem and took droves of Hebrew people captive.
 - There has never been a worse authoritative move than the decision of Pontius Pilate, yet he is said (by no less than Jesus Himself) to have authority given him “from above.”
 - John 19:10-11 – “Pilate said to him [Jesus], “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?” Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above.”
- Further Scriptural exhortation and example of submission to authority:
 - Matthew 22:15-22 – “15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. 16 And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone’s opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. 17 Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” 18 But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? 19 Show me the coin for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. 20 And Jesus said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” 21 They said, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” 22 When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away.”
 - Justin Martyr argues for the value of Christian citizens by citing this passage. He said, “And everywhere we, more readily than all men, endeavour to pay to those appointed by you the taxes both ordinary and extraordinary, as we have been taught by Him; for at that time some came to Him and asked Him, if one ought to pay tribute to Caesar; and He answered, ‘Tell Me, whose image does the coin bear?’ And they said, ‘Caesar's.’ And again He answered them, ‘Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.’ Whence to God alone we render

worship, but in other things we gladly serve you, acknowledging you as kings and rulers of men, and praying that with your kingly power you be found to possess also sound judgment. But if you pay no regard to our prayers and frank explanations, we shall suffer no loss, since we believe (or rather, indeed, are persuaded) that every man will suffer punishment in eternal fire according to the merit of his deed, and will render account according to the power he has received from God, as Christ intimated when He said, "To whom God has given more, of him shall more be required."⁸

- Romans 13:1-7 – “1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God’s wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.”
 - Paul here lists several reasons for submitting to secular authorities, without qualification of their “good” or “bad” intentions.
 - First, ALL authority comes from God and is “instituted by God” (v1) and “appointed by God” (v2).
 - Second, resisting secular authorities is tantamount to resistance of God Himself, for these are “servants of God” (v4) and “ministers of God” (v6).

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- Third, resisting or disobeying secular authorities may result in punishment, since they do “not bear the sword in vain” (v4).
 - Fourth, the establishment of secular authorities is “for your good” (v4).
- Such commands and examples are given to those in an utterly pagan and corrupt society.
 - MacArthur – “And never is the time more crucial for careful Christian behavior than when believers are engulfed in pagan culture. I mean, that's how it was, you understand don't you, in Paul's day? There was no cultural Christianity. There was no Christianity until he introduced it. In the Gentile world it was just blatant comprehensive paganism with all of the trappings that Satan could develop into it. It was totally and exclusively with the exception of a few Jews a Satanic system. All the existing religion, all the existing ideology, philosophy and thought, all the existing law and order, all the existing values, mores were derived from a non-Christian system. It was thoroughly pagan until Paul arrived. And the clash was so great that it cost him and many others their lives.”⁹
- “*Remind them... to be obedient, to be ready for every good work*” (v1)
 - Obedient – *peitharchein* – conform to advice, obey, follow
 - Elliot – “Least of any should we expect St. Paul to write such words, so loyal and faithful to Rome. He had found, indeed, little cause in his [difficult], troubled life to be grateful personally to the Empire; with ears too ready had Rome ever listened to the cruel “informations” laid against him by his implacable Jewish enemies; she had imprisoned him, fettered him, hindered his work, and threatened his life; and when he was writing these deathless words of his, urging upon his devoted flock a loyalty changeless and true, for him the supreme vengeance of Rome was close at hand.”¹⁰
 - Ready – *hetoimous* – prepared, standing by
 - Barnes – “To be ready to every good work - "To be prepared for" (ἑτοιμίους *hetoimous*); prompt to perform all that is good... A Christian should be always ready to do good as far as he is able. He should not need to be urged, or coaxed, or persuaded, but

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¹⁰ See *Elliot's Commentary* at <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/titus/3-1.htm>

should be so ready always to do good that he will count it a privilege to have the opportunity to do it.”¹¹

- “*Remind them... to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle*” (v2)
 - Speak evil of no one
 - Barnes – “The idea is, that we are not to slander, revile, or defame anyone. We are not to say anything to anyone, or of anyone, which will do him injury. We are never to utter anything which we know to be false about him or to give such a coloring to his words or conduct as to do him wrong in any way. We should always so speak to him and of him in such a way that he will have no reason to complain that he is an injured man. It may be necessary, when we are called to state what we know of his character, to say things which are not at all in his favor, or things which he has said or done that were wrong; but, (1) we should never do this for the purpose of doing him injury, or so as to find a pleasure in it; and, (2) where it is necessary to make the statement, it should be so as to do him no injustice.”¹²
 - Avoid quarreling
 - Do not be a fighter in word or action, but instead exhibit patience and deference toward others.
 - Gill – “[Be] no brawlers; or ‘fighters’, either by blows or words; not litigious and quarrelsome, wrangling and striving about things to no profit, and to the detriment and disturbance of civil government, churches, neighbourhood, and families; which is very unbecoming the followers of Jesus, who strove not, nor cried, nor was his voice heard in the streets. But gentle, showing all meekness to all men; yielding and giving way, rather choosing to suffer wrong than to brawl, contend, and litigate a point; taking the advice of Christ in Matthew 5:39, carrying it in a meek and humble manner to men of all ranks and degrees, whether superior or inferior, rich or poor, bond or free, Jews or Gentiles, members of the church, or men of the world.”¹³
 - Be gentle
 - Titus 3:2 – “always be gentle (ESV)/ kind (HCSB)/ considerate (NIV) toward everyone.”

¹¹ See *Barnes’ Notes on the Bible* at <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/titus/3-1.htm>

¹² See *Barnes’ Notes on the Bible* at <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/titus/3-2.htm>

¹³ See *Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible* at <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/titus/3-2.htm>

- Philippians 4:5 – “Let your gentleness (NIV)/ reasonableness (ESV)/ moderation (KJV)/ graciousness (HCSB) be known to everyone...”
 - The idea here is not gentility in softness or gullibility, but a gracious consideration of others without first claiming position or obligation to one’s self.
- *“Remind them... to show perfect courtesy toward all people”* (v2)
 - This is a summary statement of all that has preceded it, and it also creates a universal application.
 - Whereas verse 1, it may be argued, is particularly interested in one’s relationship to “rulers and authorities,” verse 2 makes a summary command of a courteous posture “toward all people.” Christians, therefore, must show “perfect” (all, any, true) “courtesy” (consideration, gentleness, humility) “toward all people” everywhere.
 - Such a life would, no doubt, provide peculiarity and attraction to any who encountered it. Such a life would also provide a perfect platform for powerful Gospel witness.

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