Paul's Later Letters

Fully Establishing the Churches According to Christ's Design

Paul's Later Letters

Issue: Top Priority: Appointing Elders

Why is this the top priority?

Paul's Later Letters

Issue: Top Priority: Appointing Elders

Questions:

1. Why was the top priority for Titus to appoint elders in every city?

2. What will happen to a young, emerging network of churches if an eldership is not established as the first order of business, in establishing the churches as a network? Why did Paul not do it himself before he left Titus on the island of Crete?

3. What was the profile of these very important leaders Titus was to appoint? What about their character, family, and community affairs? What about their ability to teach and think biblically?

4. Why did Paul describe the Cretans the way he did? And why was he so specific in warning about false teachers wandering around on the island?
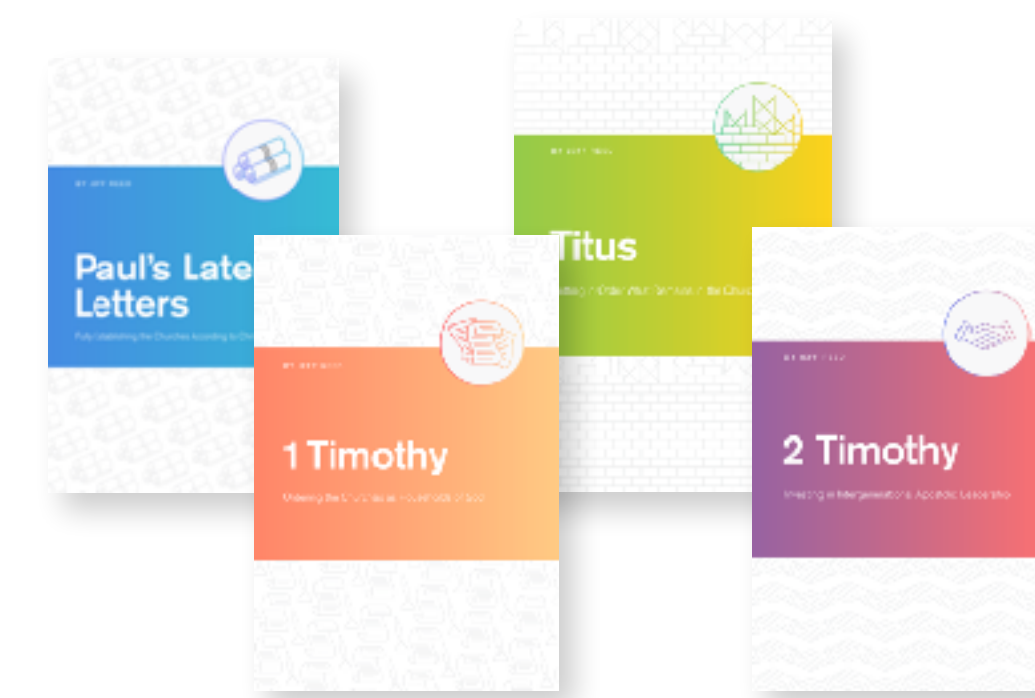
New Perspective on Paul
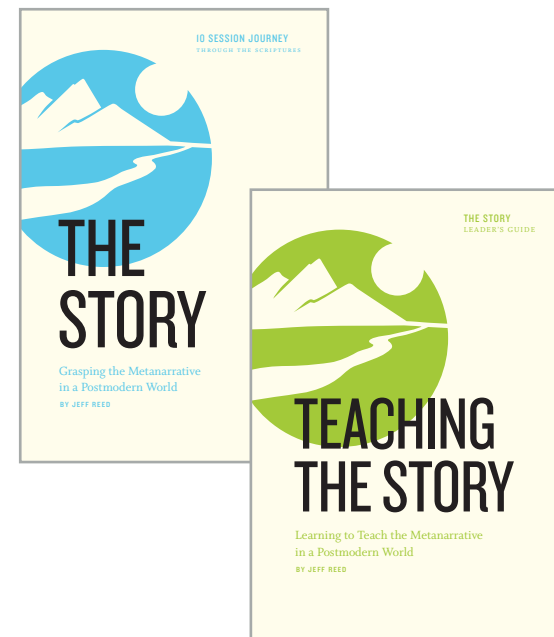
Kerygma
Early Acts
Apostles' Teaching
6 months
Paul: 3 years "night and day"

Didache
Body of Acts
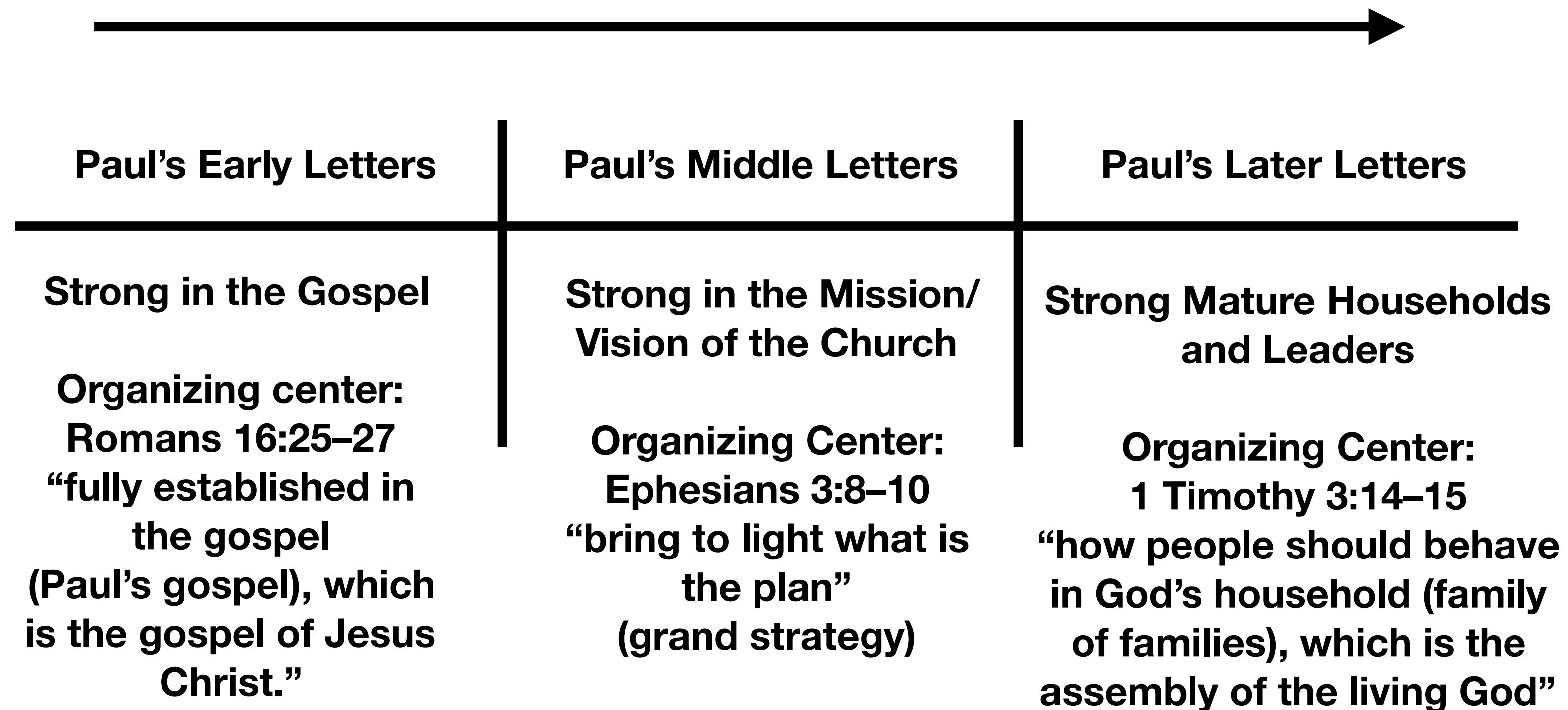**Theology of Paul**
1½ years

Full Kerygma
After Acts
Apostles' Gospels
1 year

Paul's Early, Middle, and Later Letters

The Process of Building Strong Churches

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Paul's Early Letters	Paul's Middle Letters	Paul's Later Letters
Strong in the Gospel **Organizing center: Romans 16:25–27 "fully established in the gospel (Paul's gospel), which is the gospel of Jesus Christ."**	**Strong in the Mission/ Vision of the Church** **Organizing Center: Ephesians 3:8–10 "bring to light what is the plan" (grand strategy)**	**Strong Mature Households and Leaders** **Organizing Center: 1 Timothy 3:14–15 "how people should behave in God's household (family of families), which is the assembly of the living God"**

2021

Paul's Middle Letters

Paul's Middle Letters
Fully Revealing Christ's Grand Strategy
BY JEFF REED
MASTERING THE SCRIPTURES SERIES

Ephesians
Revealing Christ's Grand Strategy—the Church
BY JEFF REED
MASTERING THE SCRIPTURES SERIES

Colossians & Philemon
Implementing the New Church Paradigm
BY JEFF REED
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Philippians
Participating with One Mind for the Progress of the Gospel
BY JEFF REED
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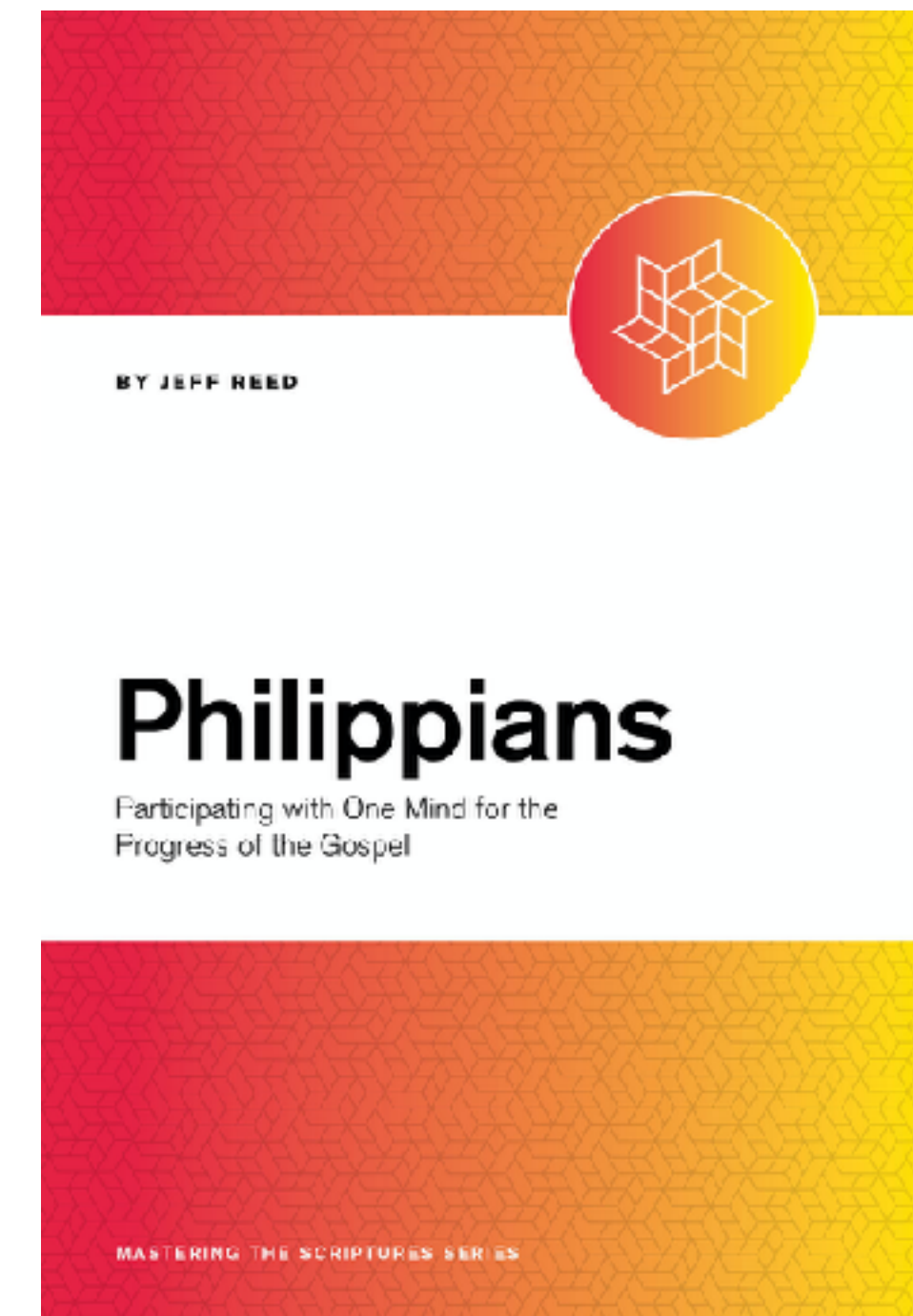
Feb. 60 to March 62   Autumn 60   Autumn 61   Spring 62

Paul's Later Letters

Paul's later letters bring us to the third and final phase of Paul's process of establishing strong, mature, multiplying churches, with solid leadership and high community impact with the gospel.

1 Timothy—written to Timothy at Ephesus, Autumn of AD 62
Titus—written to Titus who was in Crete, Summer of 66
2 Timothy—written to Timothy, Spring of 67 (shortly before Paul's death)

Middle and Later Letters

1 Timothy and Titus are similar in relationship to Ephesians and Colossians.

    Ephesians—framework
    Colossians—put into action in a cluster of churches

    1 Timothy—framework
    Titus—put into action in a small network

Ephesians is sort of the framework for Christ's grand strategy. And Colossians, written in a very similar manner and content, is an example of establishing a cluster of churches in the grand strategy revealed in Ephesians.

1 Timothy is sort of the framework for fully setting in order the churches according to Christ's design as a household of God: a "family of families." (Timothy was at Ephesus fully establishing them.) And Titus is an example of establishing a small network of churches.

Paul's Later Letters

Book 1: Paul's Later Letters: Fully Establishing the Churches According to Christ's Design

Book 2: 1 Timothy: Ordering the Churches as Households of God

Book 3: Titus: Setting in Order What Remains in the Churches

Book 4: 2 Timothy: Investing in Intergenerational Apostolic Leadership

New Perspective on Paul

Old Perspective on Paul

Paul's letters contain miscellaneous, often unrelated topics that would be useful for future believers, especially in dealing with sin, salvation, and living the Christian life. These topics are a significant part of today's ever growing systematic theologies.

New Perspective on Paul

Paul's letters form a coherent, interlocking shape, foundational for churches in any generation to fully understand Christ's grand strategy of the Church being central to His unfolding kingdom and to living in full alignment of that grand strategy.

Paul's Later Letters

Topos (common topics in one place) is a very important form of Greek rhetoric that enables you to structure an argument, including several topics, around one memorable schematic, or rubric, or literally in one place.

The organizing center (topos) of Paul's later letters is 1 Timothy 3:14–15

> 14 I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, 15 if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.

1 Timothy
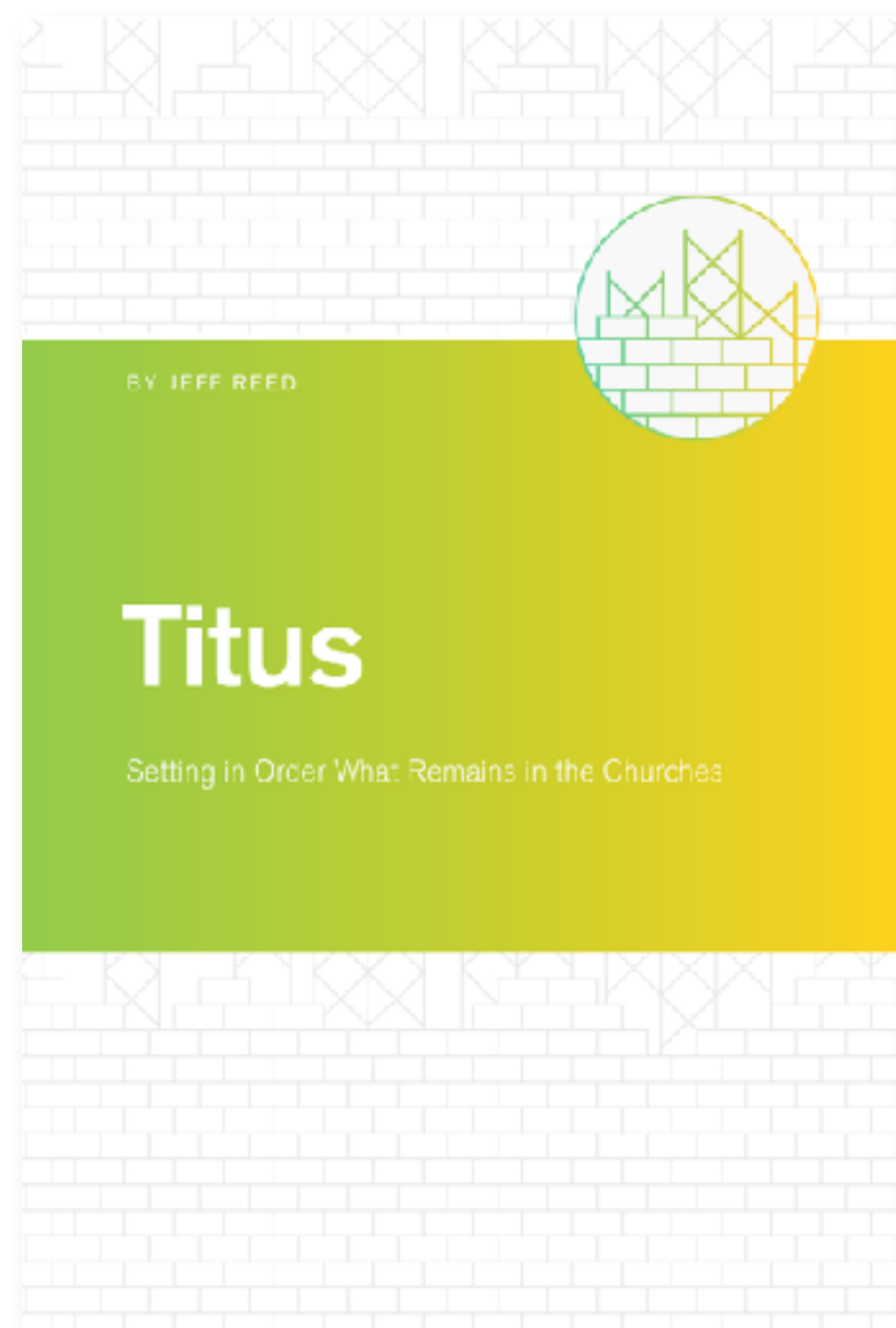
Book 3: Titus: Setting in order What Remains in the Churches

Titus

BY JEFF REED

Setting in Order What Remains in the Churches

Setting in Order What Remains

In Titus, we continue Paul's line of reasoning in what it takes his emerging young, apostolic leaders to start assuming his functions more directly.

Titus is more situational than 1 Timothy: I left you in Crete to "set in order what remains" in the churches.

Timothy was written in autumn AD 62, whereas Titus was written in the summer of AD 66, four years later.

While Paul was in Crete in the fall of AD 59 on his way to Rome, he was put under house arrest. There is no indication he had an emerging network of churches there then. The network is seen after his release from prison.

Paul was in prison from February, AD 60 to March AD 62.

Setting in Order What Remains

Situation of Titus

Paul was in prison from February AD 60 to March AD 62.

When he was released, he traveled continually for 6 years until his death in Spring of 68:
- from Rome to Ephesus and Colossae (Spring to Autumn 62)
- back to Rome (62?)
- to Macedonia (Summer to Winter 62);
- then to Asia Minor (Spring 63 to Spring 64)
- and to Spain (Spring of 64 to Spring 66).

It appears Paul was with Titus briefly on the island of Crete (early summer 66) and several churches were planted in the small cities on the island. Paul left Titus there to set these churches in order and gave him specific instructions in exactly what to do.

(Based on *Chronological Background Charts of the New Testament,* by Wayne House (1981, Zondervan)

Setting in Order What Remains

Situation of Titus

The implications are significant.

Paul wrote his first letter to Timothy from Macedonia, having sent him to Ephesus. Ephesus was a mature church with elders trained by Paul earlier. So Paul gives Timothy a more complete picture of establishing the churches of Ephesus in the household of God (household codes).

With Titus, he evidently left a completely new network of churches, probably one house church in several cities, probably planted in a couple of months (not time to multiply yet). Thus we have a snapshot of how to plant and establish a small network in a few months. This is possible, now, because the whole picture is complete.

(e.g. In North India saturation church-planting, they planted 35,000 house churches in one decade in one network.)

Setting in Order What Remains

Situation of Titus

The implications are significant.

This means I have been wrong in viewing Titus 1:5 as *senior elders* over several churches.

Rather, the Cretans were so pagan, Timothy would be lucky to find one key leader, to begin with, to train in each of these small cities or towns. But it gives us a pattern for quickly stabilizing new churches in totally pagan places.

While I'm sure Paul did not mean for this person to become the bishop of the city, as churches multiplied in each city in the future, this is what began to happen over the next generation as the churches of Paul's network began to slowly institutionalize. (See Rome in the gathering encyclical.)

Setting in Order What Remains

Situation of Titus

So a long-term key question is: How can churches be set in order, as Paul instructed, without institutionalizing—remaining a network of churches that continues to spontaneously expand?

Evidently, Ephesus had the right order, but by the time of John's letter at around AD 100, it had lost a lot of its life.

And evidence itself shows that Titus eventually became one of the bishops of a city on the island of Crete.

(An example in India again: Ponraj)

We will deal with this question later.

Setting in Order What Remains

We looked at the concept of *set in order* last session.

[5] I left you behind in Crete for this reason, so that you should put in order what remained to be done.   Titus 1:5a NRSV

Let's go back to my key question last session: How can churches be set in order, as Paul instructed, without institutionalizing—remaining a network of churches that continues to spontaneously expand?

We have to understand Paul's concept of *setting churches in order*.

set in order: "to cause matters to be ordered in the correct manner—to set right, to correct, to put into order" (LN); "set right or correct in addition (to what has already been corrected)" (BGD); "correct afterwards, to have deficiencies set right also, complete unfinished reforms" (LSJ)

Setting in Order What Remains

Paul's concept of order

Is Paul's concept of *setting in order* in Paul's early, middle, and later letters? Yes.

Order in the early letters: 1 Corinthians topos: the Gathering—order in the church meeting, amidst the spontaneous Spirit. Paul wanted order in the meetings that would allow the Spirit to freely work through everyone. He also saw the need for order in apostolic leadership—first apostles, then prophets, etc. 1 Corinthians 12

Order in the middle letters: Remember the household texts (codes); husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, slaves; Ephesians 5:22–6:9, Colossians 3:18–4:1.

Order in the later letters: Finish the process: 1 Timothy and Titus; churches as households of God; ordered according to community household codes; churches as "families of families."

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Now let's look look at the first task in setting the churches of Crete in order:

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.

Titus 1:5–9 NRSV

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Appoint elders in every city?

    Actually not city but town, for Crete was not developed enough to have anything equivalent to Greek and Roman cities of the day.

    Every town? Not senior or city elders (have to correct the appendix in *The Gathering*.)

        We cannot know the situation for sure. Most probably, just a few churches emerged in 3–4 cities, one house church in each city or town. So he probably meant appoint elders in every church. But if there were 2–3 house churches in a city, then he could have meant make sure there are elders in every city, at least one per church. We cannot know for sure.

        So back in Acts 14:23, when Paul appointed elders in every church, he could have meant he appointed elders in each city that would have probably had 3–4 house churches, and he appointed a team to oversee those churches.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Appoint elders in every city?

Appoint: "to put in charge of, to put someone in authority over" (LN)

Family of words (stasis)

kata - stasis—"develop and put in place"

akata - stasis—"disorder, political turmoil, disruption"

akata - statos—"restless, exposed to unrest, unsettled, unstable"

This adds real substance to *set in order*: *Setting in order churches* is key to making the churches stable, settled, and free from turmoil; this is done by putting these instructions in this letter in place, beginning with developing and putting elders in charge.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Elder profile

    God's steward: oikonomos, same root form as oikonomia in Ephesians 3:10:
        (Christ's plan, administration, grand strategy)
    and *a household* (limos) of God in 1 Timothy 3:14–15 and 1 Timothy 3:4: "an elder
        who manages his own household (oikos) well"

    steward (oikonomia): "one who manages a household" (LSJ)

Again, this shows the coherency of Paul's thinking and Christ's grand strategy: His grand strategy (Church administration) is a household of households (churches) stewarded by elders who lead their own households well.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Elder profile

    Character:

        not accused of debauchery, not rebellious; not arrogant or quick-tempered or addicted to wine or violent or greedy for gain (negative)

        but he must be hospitable, a lover of goodness, prudent, upright, devout, and self-controlled (positive)

It is not the same list as the profile in 1 Timothy 3:1–7. I used to think if you combined the two lists you would have a complete list. But that is actually a bad hermeneutic. Why are they not the same? The Cretan culture is not well ordered like the Greek culture. So the list is customized to the Cretan churches, but it's in the same household code schema.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Elder profile

    Family: married only once, children who believe

        What does he mean here? It's the same as 1 Timothy 3:4, where an elder needs to manage his own household well. He must have just one wife (not multiple wives, "in contrast to one" LN) and children who are well managed.

        Community—He did not include "good reputation in the community," "well thought of by outsiders," (1 Timothy 3:7), nor "not a new convert" (1 Timothy 3:6).

Again, note that the profiles for elders in 1 Timothy and Titus are not the same, but they are operating in the same "family of families" household code schema. This is another illustration (like the widow of 1 Timothy) of Paul developing a list according to the need of the situation.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Elder Profile

He must personally own the sound teaching, be competent and fit to call churches to it, and be able to examine, expose and correct those who oppose the teaching.

[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.   Titus 1:9 NRSV

Firm grasp: "to hold fast to a particular belief, with the implication of acting accordingly (LN); this term means "to have" in various senses, "to have in, on, around, over, or with," "to own," "to enjoy," "to possess." (TDNTA)

"able to teach: able: competent" (DBL); "powerful in argument, fit for service" (LN) Actual word is *parakaleo* "to call to" (LSJ); exhort, encourage; teach; the teaching (the root being didache), sound; healthy.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Elder Profile

[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.   Titus 1:9 NRSV

Refute: "bring to light, expose" (BGD)
"1. The use outside the NT is complex. In Homer *elénchō* means "to scorn," "to bring into contempt." Later senses are a. "to shame," b. "to blame," c. "to expose," "resist," d. "to interpret," "expound," and e. "to investigate." LXX meanings are "to rebuke," "to punish," "to condemn or convict," "to examine," and for the root *ykḥ* it denotes God's disciplining by teaching, admonition, testing, and correction." TDNTA

Contradict: "speak against, declare in opposition" (LSJ)

First Priority: Appoint Elders

So the elder who is fit and competent, must thoroughly own and enjoy the sound teaching, be competent and fit for service in calling churches to it, and be able to examine, expose, and correct those who oppose the teaching.

Titus 1:9 is one of the main reasons for the design of The First Principles and Mastering the Scriptures.

First Principles Process

In the last 20 years in educational development, a very helpful concept has developed called "Understanding by Design" (UbD). It answers the question: What is understanding? I love this chart in ASCD's *Understanding by Design Meets Neuroscience.*

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Indicators of *Deep Understanding* (UbD Semi-Taxonomy)

You can…
- Explain things clearly and completely.
- Teach others effectively.
- Apply your understanding flexibly in new situations (transfer).
- Analyze and evaluate information and sources.
- Justify and support your ideas/positions.
- Interpret meaning of things such as text, data, and experiences.
- Generate new questions.
- Recognize different points of view on an issue.
- Empathize with others.
- Diagnose errors and correct them.
- Self-assess and monitor your progress.
- Adjust midcourse.
- Reflect on your own learning.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Indicators of a *Little Knowledge* but not *Deep Understanding* (UbD Semi-Taxonomy)

You can …
- Give back what you were told.
- Plug in.
- Remember.
- Select the "correct" answer from given alternatives.
- Apply a skill only in the way it was learned.
- You cannot transfer your learning to a new situation.… And you are less able to do the things listed under Indicators of Deep Understanding.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Elder Development Assessment

    Firm grasp of the teaching
    Able to teach
    Refutes those who contradict
    While thinking "on their feet"

Design of The First Principles Educational Process

    Study the Scriptures—put in your own words
    Consult the Scholars—beef up your understanding
    Discuss the Issues—ability to think critically ("on your feet")
    Apply the Principles—applying to your own life, family, church, church networks
    Reshaping Our Lives—developing coherent thought

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Let's continue on in Titus:

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.

Titus 1:10–16 NRSV

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Let's continue

Two types who will upset churches?

Cretans—who have become Christians but are not qualified to be teachers; they are shaped by the culture and are unfit if they do not meet Paul's profile for being put in charge of the churches in a town.

Probably Judaizers—who follow Paul and try to influence these unqualified Cretan opportunists who are in it for personal gain. By their nature, they are not even fit for good works—the only thing that will expand the churches in this pagan Cretan culture.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Why did Paul make this cultural comment about Cretans? Was this a prejudiced statement?

Paul quotes one of their own poets, Epimenides. Actually, much was written by their own poets and philosophers, as well as other Greeks. They once had a developed culture, but over the previous 1,000 years, they had developed essentially into what we often call today a "failed state."

Paul was essentially saying: since this culture is without many of the city states (especially of the highly developed Greek city states and the developing Roman Empire), it is critical that you find and develop qualified elders as quickly as possibly.

He also finishes the paragraph stating that they are worthless for good works. It's a rarity in the Cretan culture, but it's at the very center of the outcome of churches that have been properly set in order according to the 1 Timothy and Titus letters.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Paul's guidelines for finding and appointing elders in pagan cultures having little or no previous Christian presence:

1. Find new believers who can as quickly as possible be developed as elders and put in charge of the churches in every town (which would be rare in this pagan, Cretan culture).

2. Basic profile: a solid core nuclear family; good character; not easily accused by many of the negative traits common to the pagan Cretan; but marked by universal, good citizen traits observable by all cultures.

3. In addition, Titus needs to make sure, as quickly as possible, they develop a firm grasp of the teaching, can teach in conversation in the churches, and can think quickly on their feet as problems arise in the churches.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Paul's guidelines for finding and appointing elders in pagan cultures having little or no previous Christian presence

4. Titus needs to watch out for the destructive elements of the culture: new Cretan believers becoming opportunists, with bad motives, and not even being capable of good works—which are key to the churches multiplying throughout the towns and villages,

5. Titus needs to be aware of false teachers following Paul, or who are already wandering around in the towns and villages, using the opportunity of untrained Cretans leaders to spread their false teaching.

6. Titus needs to rebuke these untrained and opportunistic, Cretan self-appointed leaders as harshly as needed, to protect the churches, until these newly developing elders are put in charge.

First Priority Today: Appoint Elders

Guidelines today for developing and appointing elders in new emerging church networks in pagan cultures with little or no previous Christian presence:

1. Today, apostolic leaders of emerging new church networks need to find new believers who can be developed and, as quickly as possible, become elders and put in charge of the churches in every town.

2. Basic profile of an elder: a solid core nuclear family; good character; not easily accused by many of negative traits; but marked by universal, good citizen traits observable by all cultures.

3. In addition, apostolic leaders need to make sure, as quickly as possible, the elders develop a firm grasp of the teaching, can teach in conversation in the churches, and can think quickly on their feet as problems arise in the churches.

First Priority Today: Appoint Elders

Guidelines for developing and appointing elders in new emerging church networks in pagan cultures with little or no previous Christian presence:

4. Apostolic leaders need to watch out for the destructive elements of the fully pagan culture: new believers becoming opportunists, with bad motives, not even capable of good works—which is key to the churches multiplying throughout the towns and villages.

5. Apostolic leaders and their teams need to be aware of false teachers following them around, or already wandering around in the towns and villages, taking opportunity with the new believers, as self-appointed leaders, to spread their false teaching.

6. Apostolic leaders and their teams need to severely rebuke these untrained and opportunistic believers, as harshly as needed, to protect the churches, until the newly developing elders are put in charge.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

What about cultures and religious leaders wandering around in villages and towns in areas of new church networks today:

Cretans…

Indians…many Indian states are filled with Hindu cultural practices that destroy cultural order; and religious priests with totally disgusting practices; and a massive destructive caste system; and they are often filled with Hindu priests and Islamic clerics.

Africans…many African countries are failed states and their cultures are filled with folk religions, animistic practices, and dead family spirit traditions.

I cannot spend the time here, but all apostolic teams should become well informed of the cultures their new churches are born within and the false teachers moving around in their areas.

First Priority: Appoint Elders

Today, the new emerging church-planting movements, especially in India and Africa, which are massive in nature (over 1 million new churches over a 40-year new paradigm period, beginning in the 1970s), must as quickly as possible, be established in "the way of Christ and His Apostles."

These movements, who have the basic gospel formula right (not Paul's full gospel, Series 1: Paul's Early Letters), desperately need the teaching of Paul's Middle and Later Letters (Series 2 and 3) to fully establish the churches, because Western parachurch church-planting organizations know nothing about Christ's vision and mission of the Church and setting churches in oder according to Christ's design.

Through our strategy, a very significant percentage of these movements, now including China (60–70 million of "the other kind" of churches}, have embraced our system of training in TWCA. Our own ADMCC network of churches needs to be self aware, and excel still more—as we just have in the last 5 weeks.

Paul's Later Letters

Issue: Top Priority: Appointing Elders Today

Questions:

1. After initially teaching the apostolic team, why was the top priority for apostolic leaders to appoint elders in every city?

2. What will happen to a young, emerging network of churches if an eldership is not established as the first order of business, before the apostolic team moves on?

3. What is the profile of these very important elders that apostolic leaders were to appoint? What about their character, family, and community affairs? What about their ability to teach and think biblically?

4. In these young emerging church-planting networks, what cultural depravity and kinds of false teaching, in the area, do the newly appointed elders need to be warned of?