

Sermon Title: “What is the Church in Community?”

Primary Text: Titus 3:12-15

Pastor Zach used several illustrations to help us understand how God is using Paul’s final greetings to Titus and the church in Crete in the first century to challenge us in our local context in the 21st Century. While the four men listed in **Titus 3:12-13** are part of the Church, they aren’t part of the *local* church in Crete. In the same way, in local churches today we must encourage and support fellow members of the Universal church – even if they aren’t members of our local body.

As a closing statement Paul isn’t just leaving a final command, he’s reminding us that for the believer we are part of a broader community built on the saving work of the Cross – the “Grace” that Paul uses as a common closing statement. This commonality informs and encourages us – to **join** in ministry by serving, to **encourage** the ministry through *spiritual* and *material* support, and even to **Go** where there is a ministry need. While never at the expense of the *local* church, Christians should rejoice and celebrate where a church finds success. We are **one** Church, existing for the sake of the proclamation of the **GOSPEL**!

Beyond our main text, Pastor Zach referenced these passages:

Matthew 9:37 Acts 18 1 Corinthians 1, 3

Questions to Consider this week:

- **Tribalism** is fairly common in all facets of life. Think of areas that you may be think of the church in “camps” rather than “community.” Intentionally pray for a different “camp” this week, including a prayer for your own heart to be softened towards fellow Christians who aren’t in our local church.
- Pastor’s illustration from Tolkien’s “Lord of the Rings” scene compared the gathering of diverse characters with a singular purpose to how the **Church** gathers with a common purpose of the Gospel. Think of a way you can show the “Fellowship of the King” in your relationships with those who are followers of Christ that are not part of your *local* fellowship this week.
- The message ended with a call to **Serve, Support, or Go**. Think and pray over three ways this week you could do each of those things, then **tell** someone of one thing you can commit to doing.
- Think of one person you know serving in a ministry (not necessarily at Faith Fall Creek). Commit to sending them a short note, text, or phone call to let them know you are praying for them.
- How can you commit to the Good Works of supporting gospel ministry this week?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the community of communities that is the Church. This week, guide my thoughts and prayers so that I am consciously aware of how the Gospel is being celebrated and proclaimed by those around me. Give me courage to speak up and encourage my brothers and sisters as they seek to honor you, even as I pray all of my “good works” will do the same! -AMEN

Song for Personal Worship

“Take My life” (Norton Hall Band)

<https://youtu.be/idXARg1urGA?si=8sjiTh30smhm11Jf>