

Titus 1:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

Analysis

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting—The verb ἐπιδιορθόω (epidiorthoō, to straighten further/set right) indicates ongoing correction. The Cretan church had foundational issues requiring apostolic authority. Paul's absence necessitated a duly authorized representative (Titus) to complete the organizational work.

And ordain elders in every city (καταστήσης πρεσβυτέρους, katastēsēs presbyterous)—"appoint elders," not by congregational democracy but apostolic authority. Presbyteros (elder) emphasizes maturity and experience. The phrase **in every city** shows the expectation of plural elders per congregation—biblical church polity avoids both lone-ranger leadership and leaderless egalitarianism. **As I had appointed thee**—Titus's authority derives from Paul's apostolic mandate, creating a chain of delegated authority for church order.

Historical Context

First-century Crete had multiple cities (Gortyna, Knossos, etc.) requiring gospel witness. The island's proverbial reputation for falsehood (1:12) demanded leaders of proven character. Unlike modern corporate CEOs, biblical elders were mature spiritual shepherds tested over time, meeting rigorous qualifications (1:6-9).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Does your church practice biblical plurality of elders, or does one-man ministry contradict this clear pattern?
2. What "things that are wanting" in your church community require attention—doctrine, discipline, leadership, mission?
3. How do you balance respect for pastoral authority with the biblical right to test all teaching against Scripture?

Interlinear Text

Τούτου	χάριν	κατέλιπόν	σε	ἐν	Κρήτη	ἵνα	τὰ
For this	cause	left I	thee	in	Crete	that	G3588
G5127	G5484	G2641	G4571	G1722	G2914	G2443	
λείποντα		ἐπιδιορθώση	καὶ	καταστήσης			
the things that are wanting		thou shouldest set in order	and	ordain			
G3007		G1930	G2532	G2525			
κατὰ	πόλιν	πρεσβυτέρους	ὥς	ἐγώ	σοι	διεταξάμην	
in every	city	elders	as	I	thee	had appointed	
G2596	G4172	G4245	G5613	G1473	G4671	G1299	

Additional Cross-References

Acts 14:23 (Parallel theme): And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

1 Timothy 1:3 (Parallel theme): As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

Ecclesiastes 12:9 (Parallel theme): And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.

1 Corinthians 14:40 (Parallel theme): Let all things be done decently and in order.

Isaiah 44:7 (Parallel theme): And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them.

Acts 11:30 (Parallel theme): Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 27:21 (Parallel theme): But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

Acts 27:12 (Parallel theme): And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west.

Acts 27:7 (Parallel theme): And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone;

1 Corinthians 11:34 (Parallel theme): And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.