

Title: An Introduction to Titus

Scripture: Titus 1:1-3

Series: The Pastoral Epistles

1. Introduction:

- a. Today, we begin our journey through the Epistle of Titus.
- b. Titus is the second of Paul's epistles written from a jail cell. Titus stands between First Timothy and Second Timothy.
- c. After being arrested once again, Paul is now awaiting execution for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The preaching of the Gospel was considered a crime in Rome.
 - i. The early church refused to acknowledge the Roman emperor as a deity. They refused to worship according to the pagan practices of the day. Furthermore, they proclaimed that there was only one true King; Jesus Christ, the Righteous. In a paganistic and hostile society, the message of the believers was viewed as offensive and provocative.
 - ii. The insistence of the early Christians in worshipping the only true God as prescribed by Scripture brought much persecution. As a chief proponent of the Gospel and valued church leader, Paul was identified by the Roman authorities as a dissident. He was arrested and

was now standing ready to die for the truth of the evangel.

- d. During his confinement, Paul wrote these three epistles to two pastors who would continue after his martyrdom. The three prison epistles have the same purpose. Each was written to strengthen a young pastor who had succeeded the apostle in difficult ministry.
 - i. Each of the three epistles emphasis God’s saving work (both God and Christ are repeatedly called Savior).
- e. In this epistle, Paul writes to Titus, the minister in Crete. Both Paul and Titus had previously ministered in the region together.
 - i. Crete had a terrible reputation. Paul mentions as much later in this chapter when he states, **Titus 1:12-13** One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” (13) This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,
 1. The Cretans, by their testimony, were untruthful, selfish, and pleasure-loving individuals.
 2. They were a society in desperate need of the Gospel.
 - a. And the church, comprised of those whom God had saved from that society,

needed to demonstrate the redemptive power of God in transforming lives.

ii. When the apostle left Crete, he left Titus behind to carry on the difficult ministry. It was now time for Titus to stand as God's appointed man and do God's work.

1. In essence, Paul had passed on the baton.

2. Titus was uniquely qualified in that Paul had mentored him for a number of years. Titus was gifted by the Holy Spirit and had proven his devotion to Paul and the Lord's work. Like Timothy in Ephesus, Titus faced incredible opposition from within the church and outside the church.

iii. Therefore, this letter is meant to instruct Titus, the other elders of Crete who ministered under Titus' leadership, and the church members as to the importance of their theology and conduct.

f. Outline:

i. Chapter 1: This chapter focuses on the qualifications of church leadership. We are to take a close look at the theology and the personal conduct of those who would appear to be called into the eldership.

ii. Chapter 2: This chapter focuses on the character and conduct of church members among themselves. How they treat one another will testify abundantly as to the genuineness of their conversion.

- iii. Chapter 3: This chapter focuses and the conduct of both leaders and members before the unbelieving world. What is our witness to this unbelieving world?
- g. Ultimately, we are concerned with two things:
 - i. First, we must consider the church's strength as exemplified by the church's adherence to correct doctrine and conduct.
 - ii. Secondly, we are concerned with the effective evangelism of the unsaved.
- h. Titus, then, is an evangelistic letter.
 - i. We want to see the unconverted saved. This is why our lives must show the power of the Gospel to transform individuals. No one will be convinced of their need for Christ if the church itself is consumed with sinful living.
 - 1. **Titus 2:13-14** waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, (14) who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.
 - 2. Verse 1A: Servants of God: Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ,
 - a. We start our exposition with a simple question. How should a Christian view himself? The answer, of course, is, all Christians should view themselves as a

δούλος Θεού – a servant of God. The δούλος (servant) was the most subservient person in the home. He was the lowest of all the slaves. Paul considered himself as such a person.

- i. **Commentary**: Paul had no life that he called his own, no will of his own, purpose of his own, or plan of his own. All of his life was subject to the Lord's authority. In every thought, every breath, and every effort, Paul was under the mastery of God.
- ii. Δούλος: Beloved we have been freed from one form of slavery to another. We have been freed from our bitter bondage to sin and have been enslaved to the merciful and gracious God.
 1. **Romans 6:22-23** But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. (23) For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 - a. All men are slaves. The question is, to whom are we enslaved. Are we slaves to this world that leads to eternal condemnation, or has Christ freed us to be slaves to righteousness and inheritors of eternal life?
- iii. If we are God's slaves, then let us belong to Him entirely. It is God that paid the price to liberate

us from the bondage of sin and now brings us to Himself. Christ has ransomed us.

1. **1 Peter 1:18-19** knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, (19) but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

b. As **δούλος Θεού (Servants (slaves) of God)**, we are to serve in whatever capacity our Master might call. We are His, and He decides how best to use our lives for His glory. In Paul's case, God had called him to be an **Apostle of Jesus Christ**.

i. G652 – **ἀπόστολος** Apostolos 80x – one sent as a messenger, ambassador, or agent, the bearer of a commission.

1. **Side Note:** The office of apostle was a particular office given at the church's foundation and never intended to be continued beyond that time. The fact that we are called to ordain elders continually but never apostles proves this point.

ii. Paul was an ambassador sent with a specific message and spoke with the authority of the one who sent him; **Jesus Christ**. Paul's authority was founded not in himself but in that he spoke King Jesus' very words.

iii. Paul was a preacher of the Gospel. He was a faithful **δούλος** of God who executed his

ambassadorship with all due diligence. We are to be the same. We, too, have been commissioned in regards to gospel preaching faithfulness.

1. **Matthew 28:19A** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...
2. We are to serve in whatever capacity God might call us to, but we recognize that all Christians have been called to proclaim the good news of the Gospel.

3. Verse 1B: The Gospel is for the Elect of God: for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness,

a. As a servant of God, Paul understood that his call to be a messenger, an apostle of Jesus Christ, gave him the responsibility to first and foremost preach the Gospel by which those that God had chosen would come to saving faith. God had chosen Paul as an instrument for the saving of the elect. In his third and final prison epistle to Timothy, Paul confirms this very calling:

i. **2 Timothy 2:10** Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

1. ***The Doctrine of Unconditional Election*** is based on this singular truth. God has chosen a people before time. Paul understood that

the Gospel of Jesus Christ would never fail to produce saving faith at the appropriate time in those chosen by God.

- a. **John 15:16** You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide...
 - b. Paul understood that the appointed of God would only come through the sharing of the Gospel message.
- ii. What can we learn from Paul as a God's δούλος? We learn that we are to clearly and faithfully preach (give testimony of) the Gospel through which the Holy Spirit will sovereignly and miraculously cause the elect to believe and be saved.
- b. Paul's second responsibility was to fulfill his commitment to building up God's people in the faith. He was to edify those that believed by teaching them the whole counsel of God's Word (Sound Doctrine) so that the knowledge of the truth might sanctify them.
 - i. The word knowledge (ἐπίγνωσιν (epignōsis)) means a knowledge that lays claim to personal involvement—precise and correct knowledge of absolute truth—in our case, saving truth that is predicated upon Christ's Gospel.
 - ii. **Commentary**: Upon salvation, the believer is given an appetite for this **truth**, which causes him to desire to know more and to grow and

mature **according to godliness**. Saving **truth** leads through salvation to sanctification as it produces increasing **godliness**. **Godliness** is the manifestation of the Spirit's work.

iii. Beloved, notice then the Apostle's commitment to the Gospel's truth produced godliness in the saints. There is no way to exaggerate the importance of sound doctrine.

4. Verse 2: We have God's Promise of Eternal Life: in the hope of eternal life which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began

a. Paul's service and apostleship for the **faith of God's elect** and their knowledge of the truth that **accords with godliness** rested on the **hope of eternal life**, which **the never-lying God promised before ages began**.

i. Just as God's grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before times began, everlasting life was also promised before the ages began. Consider this beloved. Before time began, God freely gave his grace to the elect from eternity past, and the elect were given eternal life.

ii. When God decided to call a people for his possession, the fulfillment of the decree was so certain that the grace they would receive could be spoken of as already having been given to them, just as eternal life was described as having been already promised.

1. But how sure is this eternal life which God has promised?

a. **Ephesians 1:4** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

b. The certainty of eternal life is bound to the character of God. Eternal life is sure because God, who makes the promise, **never lies**. He can't do so. We call this attribute the veracity of God. In an age when the truth is often seen as entirely subjective, the Bible presents the one and only God whose truthfulness is absolute and undeniable. So the promises are sure. They are more secure than all that is tangible in this world.

i. **Hebrews 6:18** so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

5. Verse 3A: The Fullness of the Gospel has been revealed in Jesus Christ: and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching

a. God promised eternal life from ages past, but “**in the proper time,**” he revealed it. In other words, the fullness of the Gospel was hidden in times past and from the eyes of former generations.

i. **Romans 16:25** Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages

1. The Gospel was hidden in the sense that it was not fully proclaimed, nor fully realized, nor fully understood by the men of old.

ii. But now, the Gospel has been fully manifested as the ministers of God, like Paul, preach all the work of Christ.

1. **Romans 16:26** but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—

6. Verse 3B: Entrusted with the Word: with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior;

a. The fact that the proclamation of the good news concerning eternal life had been entrusted to someone like Paul should delight our souls. The same God that had transformed a vile sinner to be a faithful servant is working and accomplishing the very same thing in our lives.

b. We have, like Paul, been **entrusted by the command of God our Savior** in preaching the evangel to this world so that those whom God has chosen will come to saving faith.

- i. Do not gloss over this truth, beloved. We, too, have been appointed to God's service.
- ii. **1 Timothy 1:12-17** I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, (13) though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, (14) and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. (15) The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. (16) But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. (17) To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

7. Benediction:

- a. **2 Corinthians 6:4** but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities,

Public Reading of Scripture 1 Timothy 1:12-17