

Title: **TITUS — “*In Hope of Eternal Life*”**

Text: Titus 1:1-4

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Tape # Y-26a

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Introduction:

This Epistle was addressed to Titus, the pastor of the church at Crete. It was Titus who Paul sent to Corinth to settle the difficulties that threatened the survival of that congregation (2 Cor 2:13; 12:18; 7:6-15). This is the last of Paul’s very short, but very important and instructive Pastoral Epistles. It begins with a salutation that is more lengthy than most of Paul’s salutations. The salutation itself is very instructive (1:1-5).

ELECTION

Have you ever noticed that one of the most common names used in the New Testament referring to believers in general is “*elect*”? Divine election was, in the New Testament era such a commonly understood thing that believers were commonly addressed as “*the elect*.” In the opening verse of this epistle Paul speaks of the saints of God as “*God’s elect*.” Among the early churches election was so commonly talked about and understood that when someone wanted to speak of saved sinners, they referred to them as “*the elect*.” Our Lord declared that the elect cannot be deceived by antichrists (Matt. 24:24) and that God gathers his elect from the four corners of the earth (Matt. 24:31). God shall avenge his

own elect (Luke 18:7). Paul calls upon “*the elect of God*” to put on Christ (Col. 3:12.) Peter addressed his first epistle to God’s elect (1 Pet. 1:2). John addressed his second epistle to “*the elect lady*” (2 John 1) and spoke of her “*elect sister*” (2 John 13). In those days everyone who professed to be followers of Christ rejoiced in the electing love of God our Savior and understood the blessedness of his great grace, who declared, “*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you*” (John 15:16).

OUR FAITH

In the first verse of the epistle Paul declares himself to be God’s servant and an apostle of Christ “*according to the faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness.*” **The faith of God’s elect is one.** That is to say, all God’s elect have the same faith. In verse 4 he calls it “*the common faith.*”

- We all have our faith from **one common source.** It is the gift God’s grace (Eph. 2:8-9) and operation of God the Holy Spirit in us (Col. 2:12).
- The faith that God gives his elect **embodies and acknowledges one common truth,** “*the truth*” of the gospel: redemption, grace, and salvation by Christ substitutionary accomplishments (1 Cor. 15:1-3; Gal. 1:6-9).
- This is the faith “*which is after godliness.*” Religion will produce morality; but only the gospel of Christ will produce godliness: the worship of God.

Believing the gospel, we have “hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” (v. 2). Without Christ, we are “*without hope.*” Believing Christ, trusting his blood and righteousness, we have “*a good hope through grace*” of eternal life. We have every reason to confidently expect eternal life, because “*God, that cannot lie,*” promised it to all who are in Christ “*before the world began.*” **This promise of our salvation is a promise that was made by God the Father to God the Son as our Surety in eternity** (Ps. 2:8). The Father promised our Surety that he would give eternal life to his elect by virtue of his obedience unto death as our Substitute.

This word of promise is now made manifest by the preaching of the gospel. — “*But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour*” (v. 3; 2 Tim. 1:9-10).

(2 Timothy 1:9-10) “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

OUR SAVIOR

Titus was Paul's son in the faith. That is to say, he was one of many who were converted under the influence of Paul's ministry. We see this in verse 4. There is a combination of titles used in all three chapters in the book of Titus that must not be overlooked. Paul speaks of "*God our Savior*" and of "*Christ our Savior*" in that order in 1:3-4, in 2:10 and 13, and in 3:4 and 6. His obvious intent is to emphasize the eternal deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who is our Savior is himself the eternal God.

SET IN ORDER

Paul had left Titus in Crete "*to set in order the things that were wanting*" and to ordain elders in every city in which God raised up an assembly of believers (v. 5). His purpose in writing this epistle was to give his son in the faith instructions about setting things in order in the churches of Christ.

The first matter of order in every local church involves the man who serves as pastor. The church is only as strong as the man who leads it. Therefore, the Holy Spirit again gives us a description of the kind of man who is to be set aside for the work of the gospel ministry (vv. 5-9).

(Titus 1:5-9) "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: (6) If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having

faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. (7) For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; (8) But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; (9) Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.”

Along with all the other qualifications for a pastor, Paul asserts that he must be one who holds fast “*the faithful word.*” He must be a man who is thoroughly convinced of and committed to the gospel of God’s free and sovereign grace in Christ, “*that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*” The reason for this is clear. — He will always have plenty of “*gainsayers*” to convince (vv. 10-16).

GAINSAYERS

The man who leads God’s saints in the worship and service of Christ must never allow false teaches to go uncorrected and unrebuked. They are here called “*gainsayers*” because those who preach any other gospel oppose and speak against the gospel of Christ. Paul specifically identifies those in Crete of whom he spoke. They were men who taught that faith in Christ is not enough, that the blood of Christ is not enough, that the righteousness of Christ is not enough, that we must add to his righteousness our own righteousness, if we would really be pure in the eyes of God.

All who teach such doctrine are, in the words of inspiration “*unruly, vain talkers, deceivers, liars, and evil beasts.*” They are motivated by gain, and their “*mouths must be stopped.*” Paul specifically names those who are “*of the circumcision,*” those who seek to impose the yoke of the law upon God’s saints. Having turned from the truth, they teach “*Jewish fables and the commandments of men.*”

Do not miss what Paul here declares. — Those who attempt to make our obedience to the law of God the basis of righteousness (justification and/or sanctification), by subverting the law turn it into nothing but “*Jewish fables and the commandments of men.*” Of all such false teachers, Paul writes, — “*They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate*” (v. 16). In their works of self-righteousness (their attempts to establish their own righteousness) they deny God, his grace, and his salvation altogether.

GRACE TEACHES

In chapter 2 Paul shows us that the gospel of the grace of God, not the law of Moses, teaches all to whom it is revealed that salvation is by grace alone and teaches us how to live in this world for the glory of God. In this chapter the apostle is urging us to adorn the doctrine of the grace of God that we profess to believe by the way

we live in this world. As he does, he makes no appeal to the law, but only to grace.

In verses 1-10 he tells both the man who preaches the gospel and the people who hear and believe the gospel how to adorn the gospel. He is telling us how to behave ourselves so that we may “*adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things*” (v. 10).

This is both our personal responsibility and our privilege. I hope it is your desire and my own. We are to “*adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.*” That is to say, **We are to set forth in our lives as well as in our doctrine the beauty, glory, and attractiveness of the gospel of Christ.** If we hope to persuade men and women to believe the gospel we preach, we must show them, by our lives, the beauty of the gospel. If we would honor Christ and his gospel in the eyes of men, we must have our lives regulated and governed by the gospel.

THE PASTOR

As a pastor, as a preacher of the gospel, I am responsible to adorn the gospel by faithfully preaching it. — “*But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine*” (v. 1). **Every preacher has a mandate from God.** And the preacher’s mandate is always the same. All who are sent of God as his messengers to eternity bound men and women are sent

to preach the gospel, to constantly declare those “*things which become sound doctrine*” (2 Tim. 4:1-5).

The doctrine we preach is the doctrine of grace, which is the doctrine of Christ. And those things which become sound doctrine are those things that are consistent with and honoring to the gospel: Divine Sovereignty— Effectual, Substitutionary Redemption — Satisfaction by the Blood of Christ — Ruin by the Fall — Redemption by the Blood — Regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

Specifically, gospel preachers are responsible to pointedly apply the gospel to the daily affairs and responsibilities of men and women in this world. It is a pastor’s responsibility to faithfully teach people how to live in this world for the glory of Christ, applying the Word of God to every area of life. And it is the responsibility of God’s saints to personally obey the gospel, applying it to every area of their lives.

I realize that many people prefer to ignore this fact, but it is a fact nonetheless. — **God almighty does interfere with people’s lives.** If the God of glory is pleased to open the windows of heaven drop his saving grace into our hearts, he takes over. He insists on it! Christ will either be Lord of all or he will not receive you at all. **This is what Paul teaches in verses 2-10.** He has a word here for just about everybody.

Aged Men — *“That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience”* (v. 2).

Aged Women — *“The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children”* (vv. 3-4).

Young Women — *“To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed”* (v. 5).

Young Men — *“Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded”* (v. 6).

Pastors — *“In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you”* (vv. 7-8).

Employees — *“Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things”* (vv. 9-10).

The Holy Spirit here calls for all who believe the gospel of the grace of God to adorn it, to show forth the beauty

and grace of the gospel in all things for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). If we are indeed born of God, if we truly are believers, if we have really experienced the grace of God, we know that grace teaches us so to live.

THE WORK OF GRACE

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men” (v. 11). — As Paul uses the phrase, *“the grace of God,”* in this place, he is referring to *“the doctrine of God our Savior.”* *“The grace of God”* in this verse means *“the gospel of the grace of God.”* The gospel we preach, *“the doctrine of God our Savior,”* is *“the gospel of the grace of God.”*

The doctrine of the gospel is the message of grace, not freewill, but grace, not works, but grace, not grace and works, but grace alone! Grace is the origin of the gospel. Grace is the message of the gospel. Grace is conveyed by the gospel — *The Word of Life!*” (1 John 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:23-25). And grace is the rule of the gospel (Rom. 6:12-14; 2 Cor. 5:14-15).

This gospel, the grace of God, brings salvation. I know that salvation is by God’s operations of grace, that it is an act of free and sovereign grace, grace that is almighty and irresistible. But in this context, *“the grace of God”* is used as a synonym for *“the gospel of God.”* The Holy Spirit is telling us that the gospel is the means by which salvation is brought to and wrought in chosen, redeemed sinners. The gospel of the grace

of God shows us the way of salvation — Faith in Christ. It proclaims the person and work of Christ, who is salvation. It is the announcement of salvation accomplished by Christ. And the gospel of the grace of God is the means by which God the Holy Spirit brings salvation to elect sinners (Rom. 10:13-17).

- No Life without the Gospel!
- No Faith without the Gospel!
- No Salvation without the Gospel!

This gospel of the grace of God has appeared unto all men. Certainly, Paul does not mean for us to understand that every person in the world has heard the gospel. Obviously that is not so. There are people in this town, many of them, who have never heard the gospel. What Paul is telling us is that the gospel has been and is preached freely to all men and women, people of every rank, race, and region (Rom. 16:25-26).

- God has his elect among all people.
- It is our responsibility to preach the gospel to all men (Matt. 28:19-20).
- The gospel we preach brings salvation to all who believe. *“It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth”* (Rom. 1:16).

THE TEACHING OF GRACE

“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in

this present world’ (v. 12). — Whenever the gospel of the grace of God comes into a sinner’s heart by the life-giving, regenerating power and grace of God the Holy Spirit, it effectually teaches him some things. **It teaches us...**

- To Whom we must Look for Eternal Life (Isa. 45:22).
- What to Believe (Gal. 1:6-9).
- And How to Live in this World!

The gospel is not given for intellectual speculation, but for practical direction. It is given for our eternal salvation and for the ordering of our lives. It tells us plainly what we are to do and what we are not to do. It tells us what to follow and what to shun.

The grace of God effectually teaches saved sinners to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. The gospel teaches us to say “No” to unbelief and the neglect of God, his Word, his worship, and his will. It also teaches us to say “No” to worldly lusts, sensuality, covetousness, ambition, and the desire for recognition and praise.

The grace of God teaches people to live right.

- With respect to Ourselves—Soberly!
- With respect to Others—Righteously!
- With respect to God—Godly!
- 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
- Romans 12:1-2

THE EXPECTATION OF GRACE

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (v. 13). — Paul does not tell us to set dates or even to speculate about when the time of our Lord’s coming may be. He does not tell us to look for signs of the end time, or to even think about when the end time may be. **Grace teaches us to look for Christ himself, and to do so standing upon the tiptoe of faith and expectation. Grace gives us a good, well-grounded hope, a hope that breeds expectation, anticipation, and desire.**

There is one common and blessed hope for all believers. There is not one hope for one group and another hope for another group. We all have the same hope, upon the same grounds, a glorious, blessed hope, a hope that no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined. The basis of our hope is grace, free grace through a crucified Substitute (Eph. 1:18). The thing hoped for is glory.

It is the design of the gospel to set our hearts upon the hope laid up for us with Christ in heaven, not upon the things of this world (Matt. 6:33; Col. 3:1-4).

(Matthew 6:33) “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

(Colossians 3:1-4) “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. (4) When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

*Fade, fade each earthly joy, Jesus is mine.
Break every tender tie, Jesus is mine!
Dark is this wilderness,
Earth has no resting place
Jesus alone can bless. Jesus is mine!*

*Farewell, mortality — Jesus is mine!
Welcome, eternity — Jesus is mine!
Welcome, oh loved and blest!
Welcome sweet scenes of rest!
Welcome my Savior’s breast! Jesus is mine!*

Our hope of eternal glory with Christ, if we trust him, is a well-grounded hope.

- Our Father promised it (Tit. 1:2).
- Our Savior purchased it (Heb. 9:12).
- Our Substitute possesses it (Heb. 6:20).
- We have the earnest of it (Eph. 1:14).
- In Christ we are worthy of it (Col. 1:12).

Our blessedness will be attained when Christ, who is our hope, appears. Notice how Paul describes our Savior. He appears unable to find words worthy of him.

- Jesus Christ is “**the great God.**”
- He is the great God and “**our Savior.**”
- Soon, this great God who is our Savior “***shall appear.***”
- Then, “**we also shall appear with him in glory.**”
This is the expectation of grace (1 John 3:1-3)

(1 John 3:1-3) “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (3) And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

THE MOTIVATION OF GRACE

Give me your attention just a little longer. This is so important. Paul is calling for us, in every aspect of our lives, to “*adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.*” How will he induce us to obey his admonition? How will he persuade us? How will he motivate us? He does not threaten us with punishment or loss of reward. He does not entice us with promises of rewards, or higher degrees of glory in heaven (higher decrees of salvation!).

He induces us to love and serve our great God and Savior, to seek in all things to honor him, simply by reminding us of what he has done for us by his matchless grace. — *“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works”* (v. 14). Christ loved us and gave himself for us, that he might redeem and deliver us from all iniquity, from all sin and all the consequences of it, that he might purify us (by blood and by grace) unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

God’s saints are a peculiar people. — Loved with a Peculiar Love! — Objects of His Peculiar Delight! — Blessed with Peculiar Blessings! — Supplied with Peculiar Provisions! — Separated from the World by Peculiar Grace!

- Electing Grace!
- Redeeming Grace!
- Regenerating Grace!
- Preserving Grace!

The word “peculiar” means “distinctively excellent, valuable, and honorable.” We are Christ’s portion, the lot of his inheritance, the jewels of his crown, his fullness (Eph. 1:23), his peculiar people!

Christ’s peculiar people are made by the grace of God to be zealous of good works. God the Father ordained that we should walk in good works (Eph. 2:10).

God the Son redeemed us that we should walk in good works. And God the Holy Spirit effectually teaches every chosen, ransomed sinner to be zealous of good works. The gospel teaches us to “*maintain good works*” (3:8). Let us, therefore, “*learn to maintain good works,*” not for salvation, not for justification, not to make ourselves more holy and acceptable to God, but “*for necessary uses*” (3:14), that we may honor our great God and Savior and the gospel of his grace in all things, not being unfruitful.

This is Paul’s admonition to Titus; and this is the Word of God the Holy Spirit to me, to your pastor, and to every preacher of the gospel. — “*These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.*”

- “**These things speak**” — Both the Doctrine and the Duties of Grace!
- “**And exhort**” — Press with earnestness.
- “**And rebuke**” — Reprove all who neglect, oppose, contradict, and deny these things, these doctrines and duties of grace.
- “**With all authority**” — In God’s name! With God’s authority! With God’s Approval!
- “**Let no man Despise Thee!**” — Give no one reason to despise you. — Have no regard for the opinions of disobedient men.

Paul shows us by his own example what he means in 1 Corinthians 4:1-3. — “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. (2) Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. (3) But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.”

(Hebrews 13:7) “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation.”

(Hebrews 13:17) “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.”

A RE-ENFORCEMENT

In chapter 3 Paul gives a re-enforcement to all that he has said in chapter 2. Why? Because these things need to be constantly pressed upon our hearts. — “*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God*” (1 Cor. 10:31). In all things, Paul urges us to honor our God and the gospel of his grace, reminding us to even be gentle in our dealings with the base and the wicked, remembering that we were once exactly as they are (vv. 1-3).

(Titus 3:1-3) “Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, (2) To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *but* gentle, showing all meekness unto all men. (3) For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another.”

OUR MOTIVATION

Then, once more, he motivates us to heed these tremendous admonitions, contrary as they are to human flesh, by reminding us of what our God has done for us in Christ by his matchless grace. Always, he uses grace, not the whip of the law to motivate God’s people (vv. 4-7).

(Titus 3:4-7) “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, (5) Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; (6) Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; (7) That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

I am often asked, “If you do not preach the law, how do you get people to live right, to do what they ought to do?” My answer is, “I preach up Christ and free grace. I

know that it is the grace of God that brings salvation, and that alone, that effectually teaches all who have experienced it to say no to ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.” I know this too — If the whip the law can get you to do what the grace of God does not inspire you to do, you have simply never known the grace of God.

That makes all “*contentions and strivings about the law*” unprofitable and vain (v. 9). Those who persistently refuse to heed these things, who will not cease from legalism, who will not give up their own righteousness, trusting Christ alone as Jehovah-tsidkenu, “*THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*” (Jer. 23:6), are heretics who are condemned by their own doctrine.

There is no motive to godliness like the assurance of free salvation, complete redemption, and perfect righteousness in Christ by the grace of God (Jer. 23:6; 33:16; 50:20; 1 Cor. 6:9-11, 19-20; Tit. 3:8).

(Jeremiah 23:6) “In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

(Jeremiah 33:16) “In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.”

(Jeremiah 50:20) “In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be none*; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.”

(1 Corinthians 6:9-11) “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, (10) Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (11) And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

(1 Corinthians 6:19-20) “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (20) For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

(Titus 3:8) “*This is* a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.”