

Titus 1:1-9

Intro:

--Titus was a gentile and co-worker with Paul. We see him mentioned numerous times in the NT, with 9 of 12 references found in 2 Corinthians.

--We see Titus chronologically with Paul at the Jerusalem council (**Gal. 2:1-5**), on behalf of Paul in Corinth (**2 Cor. 2:1-3; 7:6-7+13-15; 8:6+16; 12:18**), here in Crete (**Titus 1:4**), and ultimately in the area of Dalmatia (**2 Tim. 4:10**). *Interestingly he is an integral part of the work of God happening in the book of Acts without being mentioned!*

--Titus was a faithful man who could handle difficult situations, and that is why Paul left him in Crete (**1:5**), a beautiful island in the Mediterranean Sea. This letter was likely brought by Apollos or Zenas (**3:13**), and the focus is organization (**1:5**) and behavior (**3:8**) as opposed to dealing with false doctrine as seen in **1 Timothy**.

--The emphasis of good works is clearly seen in: **1:1; 2:6, 10, 14; 3:1, 8 & 14**.

Verses 1-4: Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgement of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;

To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

--**(1) Paul, a bondservant of God.** . . Paul introduces himself as the slave of God. A familiar type of greeting (**Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:10; Phil. 1:1**).

--We are slaves of who or what we obey.

Romans 6:18+22: And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness...But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

--The slave would be regulated by his master's will and not his own will. Paul knew what it was to be the master of his own life and then surrender to the Lord: **So he, trembling and astonished, said, 'Lord, what do You want me to do?'**

--**And an apostle of Jesus Christ.** . . Paul didn't need to defend his apostleship to Titus, but establishing his authority would help to establish Titus' work.

--Paul's apostleship was not his own choice. It was the will of God the Father and God the Son. Being an apostle was his personal way of slaving for Jesus Christ publicly. And it wasn't easy!

All are servants of God. Not all are apostles. What is our personal service to Him?

--Paul's service and apostleship were according to **the faith of God's elect**. Meaning *in the interest of*. . . or *to promote*. . . the faith of God's elect.

--Our personal faith in Christ can grow, but *the faith* remains the same. You and I are simply to be found in it. Which side do we stand on?

--***And the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness.*** . . Truth that produces godliness is a major theme biblically, especially in this epistle. Our Christian faith should be true doctrinally and godly practically. Sound doctrine will produce sound living. Paul was always very big on this. He basically claims: *Truth that comes from God promotes likeness to God.*

--Any so-called Christian faith that doesn't produce holiness is bogus (**2 Tim. 3:1+5**).

--Paul knew this emphasis was needed in Crete—**1:12-13**.

--**(2)** We hold to our service, faith, and truth in the hope of eternal life. This is unashamed and unhidden hope of the Christian message. Jesus' gospel and resurrection prove it! Eternal life is God's ultimate purpose for His people. ***2 Timothy 1:8-12***

--Paul was a servant of God seeking to encourage people in the faith to know the truth, live in godliness, and hope for eternal life. He proclaimed the good news that all could join!

**Athanasius (On The Incarnation): "There is proof of this too; for men who, before they believe in Christ, think death horrible and are afraid of it, once they are converted despise it so completely that they go eagerly to meet it, and themselves become witnesses of the Savior's resurrection from it... He continues on to say the same of women and children."*

1) Jesus claimed to be the One who could give eternal life.

John 10:27-28: My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

John 17:2-3: You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

1 John 2:25: And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.

1 John 5:11-13: And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things have I written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

--Eternal life is more than duration. Duration could be hell, even on this earth. The eternal life that Jesus promises is of eternal quality. Duration is only one part of the quality. It is not the type of life *that does* last forever but *the only* type of life *you want* to last forever! The eternal life Jesus offers is really the only thing worth calling *Life!*

--Grant for one moment the reality of eternal life and everything changes! How foolish materialism becomes (What if a man gains the whole world and loses his soul?) and how many of us play the fool—me too!

--Eternal life was the goal from eternity past (**Jn. 17:24; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9**). Eternal life is God's great hope *for us* and promise *to us*.

--When everything that is seen passes away, or when I look at the blue blue sky and green green grass and close my eyes on this world, I will still be alive. . . alive to remember the galaxies as an old tale that is told.

--How can I know? Because God cannot lie!

--So we live ***in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began!***

--**(3)** The message of everlasting life was entrusted to Paul by God. That trust was always a wonder to Paul, and something that he took very seriously! ***1 Cor. 9:16; Gal. 2:7; Eph. 3:1-13; 1 Tim. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:11***

--The eternal thoughts of God were made known ***in due time***—communicated through preaching—specifically the preaching of Jesus Christ and His apostles.

--God knows what to say and when to say it. ***Acts 17:26; Rom. 5:6; Gal. 4:4; Eph. 1:10; 1 Tim. 2:6; 6:15***

--**(4)** Paul saw himself as a spiritual father to Titus.

--Children are a unique blessing from the Lord, and so are spiritual children! Neither should be ignored or ill-treated. ***Make sure you love either or both if given in God's grace!***

--Paul also prays for grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. These were so needed on Titus' mission in Crete. Of course, they still are today!

--Spiritual riches like ***grace, mercy, and peace*** are only given by ***God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior***.

Verse 5: *For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you—*

--Here we find the reason that Paul left Titus in Crete. He wanted Titus to ***set in order the things that are lacking and appoint elders in every city***.

--***Set in order the things that are lacking***. . . Gives us the idea of establishing something unfinished, more than correcting things that are wrong, though both were probably needed. Still, it seems the issues in Crete were more immaturity and ignorance than willfulness and deceit.

--I think that it is important to notice that even the churches the apostle Paul started were not all "great" or "perfect" churches. They all had their issues. Apparently, these churches had issues with: leadership, bad doctrine, ungodly behavior, and lack of true Christian focus and expectation.

--What was Titus' first order of business? ***Appoint elders in every city as I commanded you***.

--Why? Because one of the main factors in healthy or unhealthy churches is church leadership! Now, the Bible does not give us a ton of specifics on church government, other than the fact that churches should be run by elders/bishops/pastors. ***Not a pope or congregational form of church government. Both are clearly unbiblical!***

--The Greek word for **appoint** or *ordain* means to *cause to stand, or set up*.

--The process through the book of Acts was simple. The apostles went out and preached the gospel. Believers were saved and gathered in communities. Once the community was established, they would wait to see who displayed the proper character (**1 Tim. 3:6; 5:22**) and then ordained them as elders.

Acts 14:23: So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they believed.

--The key was getting the right men. Paul knew that only the Holy Spirit could gift men to be elders. He needed to find God's men and publicly recognize what God was already doing in them (**Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11**).

--As for the number of elders in each place, it seems to be one or many as the situation requires. The truth is, with the right type of godly men, just about any form of elder-run church government can work.

--The key is to know what type of men these elders are supposed to be. Why is it important for the non-pastor today to understand what the Bible says about pastors (I use the word pastor in place of elder/bishop)?

- 1) Some of you may very well be elders or pastors.
- 2) All of you will choose elders or pastors—or help your friends and family do so.
- 3) Everyone needs to recognize when a “church” has godly leadership or ungodly leadership because the church will go the way of its leadership. *By the grace of God, our fellowship has enjoyed stability for forty-five years. Please pray for these things to be true in us!*

Verses 6-9: if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

--Here (as well as in **1 Tim. 3:1-13**) we have the qualifications of a pastor or elder. The New Testament uses three Greek words to describe the same position that we call a “pastor”.

- 1) Elder (*presbyteros*—**Acts 20:17**) is used to emphasize the maturity and example of the position.
- 2) Bishop (*episkopos*—**Acts 20:28**) is used to emphasize the oversight and authority of the position.
- 3) Pastor (*poimen*—**Eph. 4:11**) is used to emphasize the shepherding and teaching work of the position.

--All three terms are used to describe the same group of men in **Acts 20**.

--Paul is publicly describing the qualifications for a Spirit-chosen and Spirit-gifted elder. *Notice there is no such thing as a worship/children's/executive/youth/vision/or community group pastor!*

--No skill, charisma, or intelligence can substitute for the character God demands. The center of what God is looking for is godly life, and no human talent can make up for a lack of Christlikeness.

--You will notice as well that there is not a lengthy job description. God knows that a godly man will do what is right with the unique situations of his own time, culture, and people.

--(6) Paul gives Titus a 17-point description:

1) ***If a man is blameless.*** . . Blamelessness is mentioned twice—7! The chief qualification and characteristic of an elder and overseer is blamelessness. It is first in both Scriptural lists of qualifications for elders.

--Blamelessness is not perfection. It means the man cannot be called to account for sinful deeds. There should be no dark mark of *true* accusation. *There was plenty of false accusation around Jesus and the apostles!*

--The public nature of the position demands a public trust and confidence in a man ***as a steward of God***. Paul leaves no doubt about it: ***A bishop must be blameless.***

--I personally believe a man cannot return to the office of pastor after having been removed. Once blamelessness is lost, it cannot be regained. *If a man can lose his life because of sin (**Acts 5; 1 Cor. 11:30; 1 John 5:16**); or his marriage because of sin (**1 Cor. 7:10-11**); why is it such a remarkable thing to believe he can lose a public position of service because of sin?*

2) ***The husband of one wife.*** . . Paul means a one-woman type of man. He has a God-honoring and God-ordained marriage. *Which would exclude polygamy, homosexual or lesbian relationships, and any type of unbiblical divorce.*

3) ***having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.*** . . I don't believe Paul is describing someone whose children are all "saved" as that is out of human control. I think Paul makes it clear what he means by *faithful children* when he says ***not accused of dissipation or insubordination***. Those words describe behavior not salvation.

--Paul is describing a man who has his own family under control. His children are not wild and unruly. How can a man be trusted to oversee God's house when he cannot even take care of his own? *God never wants kids to see one thing at home and another thing at church!*

--(7) 4) ***For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God.*** . . Stewards are the managers of someone else's estate (**1 Cor. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:10**). The church is God's house—not "The pastor's church."

--Now, Paul lists five vices which disqualify someone as a steward of God's house.

5) ***Not Self-Willed.*** . . The pastor cannot demand to have his way and interests over God's and God's people's. Self-willed people cannot work with others, are overbearing, and bull-headed. Which is the very opposite of setting the example as a servant of the Lord.

Many pastors have become focused on building their own little brands of God's kingdom.

6) **Not Quick-tempered.** . . Paul uses a unique Greek word (*orgilos*) found only here in the NT. It describes someone soon-angry, always hovering at the boiling point, an ogre. A swift temper is the natural outcome of people who want their own way and are not getting it. *Many pastors have failed because they became spiritual bullies.*

7) **Not given to wine.** . . Literally means *not one who sits alongside wine*. The pastor shouldn't sit long beside wine at home, or in drinking places/parties, or weddings!

--It is unwise and unloving for leaders to be given to wine personally, and especially to promote being given to wine publicly. *Likeable people promoting license under the guise of liberty.*

8) **Not violent.** . . Shouldn't be a brawler. I would say this is typically not the issue in our culture but was and is in many others. *How many Christians through the ages were martyred by other so-called Christians?!*

9) **Not greedy for money.** . . No one should serve God for the money. That is the very definition of being a hireling. We are not peddlers of the Word of God, nor are we to be in the money-making business—especially ill-gotten gain.

1 Timothy 6:3-5: *If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the word of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.*

--Support is much different than profiting off God's people.

--(8) 10) **but hospitable.** . . Means open and welcoming. Certainly, there was great cultural importance in that day where to be a Christian often meant the loss of family, homes, or careers. Still, the trait holds true today!

--Pastors should not be grumps or hermits. They should love people! People in our congregation should have access to us and should be able to testify of our hospitality.

11) **A Lover of what is good.** . . A pastor should love good men, good deeds, good music, and good things. He should not delight in evil men, movies, music, or things.

12) **Sober-minded.** . . Balanced as opposed to shallow or sallow. Pastors are dealing with high and lofty themes. Eternity—heaven and hell—are on the line. A sober mind will keep things in perspective. *Jesus was not a goof.*

13) **Just.** . . Upright in dealings. No prejudice or partiality. A pastor cannot be a respecter of persons—even regarding other pastors. *How many pastors cover the sin of other pastors or ministry leaders?!*

1 Timothy 5:21: *I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.*

14) **Holy**. . . Paul uses a Greek word (*hosios*) that is not the typical word translated *holy*. It carries the idea of purity.

*Bounds: (Pastor And Prayer): "The preacher's sharpest and strongest preaching should be to himself. His most difficult, delicate, laborious, and thorough work must be with himself. The training of the twelve was the great, difficult, and enduring work of Christ. Preachers are not sermon makers, but men makers and saint makers, and only the one who has made himself a man and a saint is trained for this work. God does not need great talents, great learning, or great preachers, but rather, men who are great in holiness, great in faith, great in love, and great in fidelity. He wants men who are *not arrogant, not quick to anger, not given to wine, not hurtful, not greedy of dishonest gain, but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, temperate, just, holy, gentle, holding fast the faithful word* (Titus 1:7-9). God desires men who are always preaching by holy sermons in the pulpit and by holy lives out of it. These can mold a generation for God."*

15) **Self-controlled**. . . Is another unique Greek word describing someone in control of strength. It gives us the idea of a man who does not have a place where his life is out of control—therefore out of the life of the Spirit. *Boys need others to give them rules. Men rule themselves.*

--(9) 16) **holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught**. . . A pastor should have doctrinal stability and purity. Holding God's word as God's word.

--Why? Because it is an elder's job to teach what he has been taught (**1 Tim. 3:2; 1 Peter 5:2**). Pastors are not called to preach their own message. Pastors are called to hold and teach the commands Jesus taught and gave to His apostles, who set them down in the Scriptures and then passed them on to us.

--In the Scriptures, this truth body of truth is called: ***the form of doctrine to which you were entrusted; the doctrine which you learned; the traditions you were taught, whether by word or our epistle; the faith; the truth; the deposit; and the teaching*** (Rom. 6:17; 16:17; 2 Thess. 2:15; 1 Tim. 1:10; 2:4; 3:2,9,15; 4:1,3; 6:20-21; 2 Tim. 1:12-14; 3:10).

--Teaching the Bible (Not just from the Bible) is how Shepherds are called to feed the sheep.

--17) ***that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict***.

--Elders are men who teach the truth of God in a way that builds and battles! *Like Jesus, not all corrective and not all encouraging.*

--The primary question is not: *Is this pastor entertaining, funny, or charismatic?*

--The primary question is: *Does this pastor teach the Bible in a way that is spiritually strengthening and sharpening?*

--Would a regular digestion of this doctrine make me healthy or sickly? If I lived a lifetime at this church, would I grow and become healthy or would I remain a babe in the things of God?

--If a man cannot confidently teach the Bible in a way that exhorts and convicts, he is not qualified to be a pastor. *Maybe a deacon or evangelist. . .*

--Titus was called to find these type of men—recognize their person—and ordain them in the name of Christ. He was to see Christ's call and gifting already on their life and ratify that, not give it. *The biblical process of ordaining pastors is one of the things I am most proud of with Calvary Chapels!*