

Titus 1:1-9

Good evening and thank you for joining us! We're kicking off our study in the NT book of Titus, so would you please turn to Titus 1?

Since we're kicking off a new study it's important to do a bit of an introduction to the setting of this book.

Titus is the 3rd and final installment of what are called the pastoral epistles of Paul. And it's believed that this letter to Titus was written around the year A.D. 64, between Paul's first and second letters to Timothy.

This letter to Titus was written to instruct Titus as he ministered on the island of Crete.

SHOW PIC Crete is an island in the Mediterranean 135 miles long and 30 miles wide. It's a mountainous island and even 2000 years ago was heavily populated. **CLOSE PIC**

And history tells us that Crete was an island steeped in Greek mythology. They said that Zeus was supposedly born on Mount Ida in Crete. So you can imagine how Paganism, worshiping Greek gods, was deeply rooted in the culture.

Now we don't know that much about Titus. Titus is never mentioned in the book of Acts, but we do find him in **Galatians 2 1**
Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach

among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. 3 Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.

Remember Paul had Timothy circumcised, but Titus, who was 100% gentile, Paul didn't have him get circumcised because he was ministering almost exclusively to a gentile population.

We also see Titus mentioned in 2 Corinthians 8:23 If anyone inquires about Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren are inquired about, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.

It was Titus who carried the Epistle of Second Corinthians to the Corinthian church, which Paul wrote sometime in Acts 19/20, when he's passing through Ephesus into Macedonia. Which means Titus was with Paul through those experiences also.

I mention that because there's a bunch of evidence that Titus was with Paul in many places in the book of Acts, even though his name is never mentioned there.

So evidently Paul and Titus went to the island of Crete and did ministry there. And Paul left Titus in Crete to finish the work that Paul himself didn't complete.

You know there are certain cities in America that have reputations. **SHOW PIC** Vegas has a reputation right- what

happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. So much wickedness and indulgence.

SHOW PIC Philly has a reputation. You sports fans remember they booed and threw snowballs at santa claus. **CLOSE PIC**

Crete also had quite the reputation and it wasn't a good one. They were violent and extremely immoral. It was a tough crowd, and Paul leaves Titus there to bring to order things that were left undone.

Tonight we're gonna study verses 1-9 and the title of tonight's message is Requirements for Leadership
LETS PRAY

Titus begins with a long introduction. It's one of the longest of Paul's letters. In fact he doesn't get to saying the grace and peace part until v4.

1 Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, pause here. Paul says he is a bondservant, a doulos, a slave of God.

Remember a slave was property that was owned and had no rights. The slave's complete will was submitted to the will of his master.

Notice Paul has no problem yielding all that he has and is to God. And before Paul says I'm an apostle, or a sent one of Jesus Christ, he says I'm a slave of God.

...1 according to the faith of God's elect Pause here. A lot of people get tripped up or weirded out over the doctrine of God's election. But we should be comforted by God's election because it firmly establishes the believer's eternal security.

See our assurance of salvation isn't subject to changing feelings or even times where our faith falters. Rather, the faithfulness of God in His divine election secures our salvation!

Here's the good news. The doctrine of God's election assures faithful, struggling believers that their salvation is all of God from beginning to end.

...1 and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, see the truth of God's word should affect our actions. We should be living differently than before we had heard of God's truth. Sometimes the transformation is slow, but there should be a change because of the realization of Christ in our lives.

2 in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, It's not gee, I hope this happens. That's not the kind of hope it is. Our hope of eternal life is a blessed hope, and it's immovable. It's a guarantee.

Eternal life is certain because it's come to us from a God who cannot lie.

Which means you can do something that God can't. Think about it. God who cannot lie. And He's given us His promises before time even began, before the world was formed.

3 but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior; 3 times in these three chapters Paul mentions the fact that God is our Savior, pointing to the deity of Jesus Christ.

So let's recap v1-3. Paul says I'm writing this, but it's not of my own will. I'm the slave of God. And the message I bring is not my own, it's God's and the message is in regards to the body of truth that we've all embraced as God's blood brought children and His elect.

And it's a truth that is in regards to godliness, living the right way. And that truth is built upon the blessed hope of the return of Christ, given to us by a God who cannot lie.

It's a beautiful, comforting introduction. Spend time alone drinking in v1-3.

Now he says finally who this letter is addressed to...

4 To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Pause here. Look what he says. My own son after the common faith. It's the same phrase Paul uses of Timothy. It's my genuine child.

This is a mind blower. Remember Paul's background **Philippians 3:4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone**

else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Paul was a man that for the majority of his life looked at Gentiles and thought they were worthless. **SHOW PIC** He along with other pharisees thought Gentiles were like duraflame logs-fuel for the fires of hell **CLOSE PIC**

And now such a change has taken place in Paul's life. He says of Titus that he is my own genuine child.

He can say Titus is my own genuine child in the faith because Paul knows that the regeneration that's taken place in the life of Titus is the same regeneration that was necessary in his own life, even though he was a law abiding Jew.

This beginning of v4 is a wonderful picture of the work in the heart that only God can do.

...4 Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ[fn] our Savior. Remember in the pastoral pistols Paul always sandwiches mercy between grace and peace.

Grace and peace, never peace and grace. None of us will ever have peace until we understand grace.

Paul tells us in **Romans 6 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.**

But the problem we all have is mentioned in **Galatians 5:17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.**

We need God's grace! Nobody ever gets to heaven without the grace of God. But it's also important to know that none of us are gonna have more stars on the refrigerator than the other guy when we get to heaven.

Because sometimes we're sitting and thinking, yeah I need grace, but that person really needs grace, like they need double grace or triple grace. And whenever we think that, it means we really don't understand grace at all.

This is why the Bible exhorts us **2 Peter 3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.**

Its interesting, the apostle John only mentions grace 7 times. In John First, Second and Third John and the Book of Revelation,

you read through all of those five books. You'll find the word Grace 7 times. You think John would be the grace guy?

You read Paul's letters and he uses the word grace over 120 times in his epistles.

I mention all this b/c when we get to chapter 2 we see **Titus 2:11**
For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,

Grace brought us to salvation. Grace is the thing that's teaching us now to deny ungodly lusts in this present world and grace is the only thing that could make us look forward to the coming of Jesus Christ. God's grace from beginning to end.

It's grace, so much grace, that in the ages to come we're still gonna be comprehending the measures of it.

Now verse 5, he says This is why he's written the letter.

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— There were 2 things that needed to happen. First, Titus needed to set in order, **SHOW PIC** which describes setting a broken bone or straightening out a bent limb. **CLOSE PIC**

He says you need to straighten some things out Titus. Now Titus isn't there as an apostle or the official elder of all the churches

and Crete. He's simply there as Paul's representative to finish up the things that Paul had started.

We're not told specifically what these things to set in order were, but you know, you have congregations. There are responsibilities, there are things that need to get done. There are things that need to be handled in certain ways and worked out. Titus needed to do that.

Titus' second task was to appoint elders, and verses 6 to 9 tell us what these leaders should look like. It's very much like the list given to us in First Timothy chapter 3. Paul listed 17 qualifications for an elder here.

6 if a man is blameless, First, a church leader should be blameless. That word doesn't mean they're perfect, it means nothing can stick to them.

Because anytime someone steps into a leadership role in the church, accusations will come. And look I've dealt with and been accused of things that you would not believe if I told you.

SHOW PIC It reminds me of that old comic called The Far Side. There's one where it shows a couple deer standing in a field. One of them has this bull's eye on his side, and the rest of the deer are saying, bummer of a birthmark, man. **CLOSE PIC**

Anytime someone says I want to be a servant leader, just know, you've got the bullseye. The cost of leadership is criticism. And if you're sensitive to criticism, then leading isn't for you.

But the problem is when that criticism is then spread amongst other people and it turns to unfounded accusations.

That's why Paul says in Romans 16 to mark those who cause division. And we do that. We know who they are.

You know, I understand the person who falls in sin. I don't like it but I understand it.

The person I don't understand is someone who thinks they can actually sever off a part of the bride of Christ for themselves. This is all His, this all bloodbought. We have no entitlements. We're here as doulas. We're here to serve.

So he says here the elder should be blameless. Not that he's perfect, but there should be no accusation that can stick to them that would disqualify from ministry.

...6 the husband of one wife, The husband of one wife because there were people in that culture who were the husband of more than one wife. So he says the second thing you need to know if you want to do this, you get 1 wife.

It doesn't say that an elder has to be married. He can be single.

...6 having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. Children here means children that are still at home under the covering of the father.

Cuz look, sometimes kids grow up, they move out, they decide they want to live like the world. They have free will. That's not necessarily an indictment against the parents.

V6 is speaking of the kids as they are in your house and under your covering, you should have them in order. It doesn't say they're not gonna be rascals, but the kids will be corralled. That's having your house in order. The kids shouldn't be famous for riotous or crazy living.

Now to be clear it doesn't say you won't have crazy kids. All kids are crazy. It's from the fall. But the elder has to keep their kids in line while they're under his roof.

Why does this matter? Because if you can't keep your house in order, how are you gonna lead in the larger house of God?

Warren Weirsbe was asked once about the balance between ministry and home. And he said the best thing you can do for the church is build a solid family that attends it. And the best thing you can do for your family is to build a solid church that they can attend. So he said there's no problem. They should mesh together.

7 For a bishop[fn] must be blameless, as a steward of God, We're told in 1 Corinthians 4:1 Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

A steward is somebody who doesn't own any of it. He's not the owner, he's just the manager. We are stewards in the House of God. None of it is ours. We don't have any entitlements, cuz we didn't pay for it. It's all blood bought.

The leader's responsibility is to take care of the bride of Christ until He returns for her.

The challenge in ministry sometimes is people get territorial. They start to think something's theirs. He says no. He says you are stewards of God's house, like Joseph was in Potiphar's house.

Remember Joseph was such a faithful steward that Potiphar didn't need to worry about what was going on in his house, 'cause Joseph handled everything so faithfully and wisely.

If you want to serve in the church, you realize we're stewards of somebody else's riches. Not ours.

...7 not self-willed,

The idea is arrogant. If you're going to be a doulos like Paul said in the first verse, you're a slave of God. Then of course there's no room to be arrogant

not quick-tempered,

Not soon Angry. It doesn't mean that you never get angry. And look sometimes we need to get angry.

Anger is the proper moral response. You see someone being abused, you see something that's wrong that's deadly, it's ok to

get angry over that. It's righteous anger. It's a God-given emotion.

Remember Jesus overturned the tables of the money changers. He was angry on the Sabbath when it came to a man that had a withered hand. He was angered because of their hardness of heart.

But most often the problem is we do stupid stuff when we're angry. We break things and have to glue them back together- including relationships, and reputations.

The leader shouldn't be someone who flies off the handle.

...7 not given to wine, Here at Calvary, we ask our Elders to abstain. To be clear, abstinence isn't the basis of fellowship. The Holy Spirit is.

But we don't expect our leaders here to be involved with alcohol. There's too much at stake. **Ephesians 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,**

It's so interesting cuz there's lots of young pastors today trying to prove doctrinally they can have a little bit of wine. But nobody's having the other argument. Can I have a little more of the Holy Spirit?

Our country needs leaders who are more concerned with being filled with the HS rather than a personal entitlement if they can have wine.

...7 not violent, No striker. No pastor should be pushing or punchin' people.

not greedy for money, You don't want somebody who's a hireling, they're scoping out linkedin trying to find a different better paying pastorate.

8 but hospitable, Van of 9 kids story

...8 a lover of what is good, This requirement isn't mentioned in 1 Timothy. It's a lover of good things. You love good books. We love good movies, listen to good music. Should be good stuff.

People shouldn't see a leader involved with questionable things. Remember, the Spirit that's in us is the Holy Spirit, not the culturally relevant spirit. It's the Holy Spirit.

And because of that, we should be attracted to things that are good, because God is good. We should love good things.

...8 sober-minded, It means vigilant, watchful.

just, righteous, fair

holy, Devout or set apart for God. It's willing to be separate from this world so that God may fully use the man.

...8 self-controlled, it's self-discipline. You want someone who is leading to have self-control right? If they can't handle themselves, they can't handle things for the cause of Christ. Our final verse this evening...

9 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. Verse 9 kind of wraps it up. The elder should be holding fast the faithful word-their holding onto God's word.

The leader is to be committed to God's truth and does not depart from it. No matter the political environment, no matter if the church is growing or the church is shrinking, he must be wholly given to the faithful word of God as he has been taught.

It reminds me of 2 Sam 23 9 And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo,[fn] the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David when they defied the Philistines who were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel had retreated. 10 He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to plunder.