



FOR GOSPEL-ADVANCEMENT.

“PAUL, A SERVANT OF GOD AND AN APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST, FOR THE SAKE OF THE FAITH OF GOD’S ELECT AND THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH, WHICH ACCORDS WITH GODLINESS...”

TITUS 1:1

FAST FACTS ON TITUS:

- **Author:** Paul
- **Recipient:** The Church at Crete

Titus 1:12 – “One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, ‘Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.’”

“Money is so highly valued among them, that its possession is not only thought to be necessary but in the highest degree creditable. And in fact greed and avarice are so native to the soil in Crete, that they are the only people in the world among whom no stigma attaches to any sort of gain whatever . . . Cretans by their ingrained avarice are engaged in countless public and private seditions, murders and civil wars . . . I will now address myself to showing that the Cretan constitution deserves neither praise nor imitation . . . Now, with few exceptions, you could find no habits prevailing in private life more steeped in treachery than those in Crete, and no public policy more inequitable.”¹ – Polybius on the Cretan People

- **Pastor of the Cretan Church:** Titus
- **Purpose:** Encourage faithfulness to God. That God’s people and church would be marked by purity that keeps it distinct from the world around it.

OUR FOUNDATION:

- The gospel.
 - “Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

OUR IDENTITY:

- Servants of God (v. 1)
 - This is Paul’s chosen desire.
 - *Doulos* = bond-servant
 - Slavery in Israel was never a permanent thing. It was for a specific purpose like paying off a debt, and at the end of the servitude or if he paid his debt early, the slave was free to go. BUT there was a provision for someone who decided on their own volition, “I want to serve you always.” That person to willingly served his master was called a bond-servant.

“Paul begins this letter by saying “I am a bond-servant of God.” In other words, he is saying he is willingly self-committed to permanent service of the Lord.”² – **J. Ligon Duncan**

- Messengers of Jesus Christ (v. 1)
 - (A)postle = given special authority by Jesus himself.
 - Qualifications (Acts 1:21-22)
 - Missions (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8)
 - For Paul – came face to face with Jesus in Acts 9

“In its more restricted and common New Testament usage, *apostle* refers to “an apostle of Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 1:1). Those apostles included the original twelve (with the deletion of Judas and the addition of

¹ Polybius 6.46-47. Quote retrieved from <https://www.lillenas.com/vcmedia/2414/2414925.pdf>

² Duncan, J. Ligon. “What an Apostle Is For.” *First Presbyterian Church: Jackson, MS*, 21 November 2004, Retrieved from <https://www.fpcjackson.org/resource-library/sermons/what-an-apostle-is-for>

Matthias after Judas's defection) and Paul... these men were commissioned by Christ Himself. They were chosen by Him (cf. Luke 6:13; Acts 9:15) and learned the gospel from Him, not other men (cf. Galatians 1:11-12)."³ – **John MacArthur**

- apostle = in a general sense, commissioned by God along with the rest of believers.

2 Cor. 5:17-21 - "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

- What this means for us:
 - We willingly serve God by taking the message of the gospel to the places we live, work, and play.
 - Serving God doesn't rob us of our plans. He gives our plans a purpose.

FAITHFUL GOSPEL-ADVANCEMENT REQUIRES:

Faithful messengers who desire to see...

1. People trust in the gospel (v. 1)

- "For the sake of the faith of God's elect."
 - This means that there are people at FGCU who God has said, "You're mine." But those people have not yet trusted in Jesus Christ, and God has also said to you, "You're the one who is going to carry the gospel to them, so they will believe."
 - God ordains the means as well as the ends.

Q: Who in your life are you asking God to save?

2. People grow in the knowledge of the truth, which leads to godliness (v. 1)

"The sequence of these three significant terms Paul used in this first verse—faith, knowledge, godliness—suggests a pattern of true Christian growth. Saving faith that opens one's eyes to the knowledge of the truth should result in a transformed life characterized by godliness. All too often, in our evangelistic efforts to produce faith, we have neglected the hard work of encouraging the knowledge of the truth. Because the results of our evangelism are easily measured by recording decisions and baptisms, we may become content with our "success" as reflected by statistical data."⁴ – Thomas D. Lea

- This means that we cannot be content with merely having large numbers of people here on a Tuesday nights, or merely doing evangelism on campus, but we must study the Word of God and grow in our knowledge of the truth. The Holy Spirit uses that truth to transform the lives of believers so that we will grow in godliness.
 - Christ-like.

Q: What are you reading in Scripture? Who are you reading studying Scripture with? What areas of our life are you trusting God to transform?

³ MacArthur, John. "Marks of a True Apostle: Appointed by Jesus." *Grace to You*, 3 December 2013, Retrieved from <https://www.gty.org/library/blog/B131203>

⁴ Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, vol. 34, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 266.