



Titus: God of Truth

Memory Verse: Titus 2:11-14 "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good."

Background

Titus is the 56th book of the Bible and the 17th book in the New Testament. One of the "pastoral epistles", the book of Titus was written by Paul around 63 AD. Titus was a Greek man believed to have been converted to Christianity under Paul's ministry as inferred from Paul's reference to him as "my true son in our common faith" (1:4). Titus was a faithful friend and fellow worker for the gospel, accompanying Paul on his third missionary journey. Titus spent time with Paul in Ephesus before Paul sent him to Corinth more than once to handle some troubling situations there. Paul clearly trusted Titus and had great respect for him to entrust him with this responsibility, praising him for his affection, earnestness, and ability to bring comfort to others (2 Corinthians 7:6 & 8:17). At the time of this letter, Titus was serving on the island of Crete where Paul had left him with the task of organizing the churches there (1:5). Paul's "pastoral" letter to Titus includes instructions on how to accomplish this task and appoint proper leaders.

The Short Story

Paul instructs Titus on church organization and administration and the teaching of others to live according to sound doctrine.

What's the Big Idea?

The people of Crete were known for being "liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons" (1:12) and were just as susceptible to the teachings of false leaders as any other church. Therefore, Paul knew that their churches would need strong leadership and a solid foundation in Christ. Paul instructs Titus to appoint elders that were blameless, hospitable, holy, self-disciplined, and loved what was good (1:6-8). Additionally, Paul tells Titus that an elder "...must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it." (1:9). Indeed, Paul exhorts Titus himself to "teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine" (2:1), and to be an example to others in purity and integrity (2:7). Paul gives Titus advice on the roles of specific groups of people in the church—older men, older women, young women, young men, and slaves—and concludes with practical instructions on godly conduct for all Christians. "Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone." (3:1-2).

So What? Why is this book so important? What was God's purpose for the book?

Paul mentions "sound doctrine" at least seven times in the short book of Titus. Paul knew that a church that had sound doctrine at its base had a firm foundation in Jesus Christ. Without sound doctrine, the foundation of the church and the lives of its people can easily crumble. Knowing and teaching the truth of who Jesus Christ is and what He has done, transforms lives. Paul begins his letter to Titus with this very goal in mind. "Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ *to further the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness—*" (1:1 emphasis added). God poured out His grace upon humanity by sending His son Jesus Christ to die for our sins, and redeem and purify us from all unrighteousness. This grace allows and motivates us to live holy lives as redeemed people. "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good." (2:11-14).

**Material taken from various sources.*

Teaching Text

Titus 2:11-14 “For the **grace of God has appeared** that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say ‘**No**’ to **ungodliness and worldly passions**, and to live **self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age**, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the **glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ**, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.”

Sermon-Based Discussion Questions

- What is so important about grace? What are the implications of Ephesians 2:3-9? How do you apply it?
- How are we to interpret “offers salvation to all people”? Is salvation for all or just a select few? Explain.
- What is the Biblical concept for “ungodliness and worldly passion”? How do we eradicate this from our lives?
- What is to be our attitude in living out Titus 2:13? How does this motivate you to do the right thing?
- What are we to be eager about? What is your real passion in life? What energizes you spiritually?

Practical Application

- Where do you need to apply more of God’s grace in your own life? To family? To those who are far from God?
- How hard is it to say no to temptation? What gives you the biggest challenge? Why? What do you need to do?
- Where do you need to apply more “self-control”? How can you live out Colossians 3:5-10? .
- Are you living in anticipation of Christ’s mission and return? How does it motivate you?
- Where is God asking you to make a difference with your life? What does that look like? What the next step?

Hitting the Highpoints

- 1:6-8 “An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient....he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.”
- 3:5 “he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.”
- 3:8 “This is a trustworthy saying....be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good.
- 3:14 “Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good... and not live unproductive lives.”

Bonus Features: Qualifications of Elders

“The remaining three qualities, *upright, holy and disciplined*, complete this profile of the blameless life. Uprightness was one of the cardinal virtues in Greek thought. Here “uprightness” refers to behavior in relation to people that is *holy* in the presence of God (Lk 1:75; Eph 4:24; 1 Thess 2:10). *Disciplined* (or self-controlled) here means to be in full control of oneself (one’s temper, moods, behavior and so on). This observable quality is truly a mark of the Spirit’s work in an individual (Gal 5:23). Paul’s description of the *blameless* personal life is extensive. A person’s life is capable of measurement because the characteristics of this life are observable. While Paul clearly teaches that genuine Christian conduct results from conversion (2:12), he does not shy away from presenting the church’s leaders for the approval of outsiders, as his vocabulary and concepts for behavior show. Those who would lead the church and promote its cause must be respectable in the eyes of all people.” *IVP New Testament Comm.*

Personal Takeaways and Notes