



# #1 in the TITUS SERIES Doctrine and Devotion

Forest Park Church

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By Jason Corder

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When Paul wrote his letter to Titus, the church in Crete was marked by moral and doctrinal confusion.

- Paul charged Titus to set things in order by teaching sound doctrine
- and instructing the congregation in appropriate Christian character and behavior.
- Paul's encouragement to cultivate discernment and godly living is as relevant now as it was in the first century.

Background:

As the apostles of Christ fulfilled their ministry, it led to the creation of churches...

- Initially established by the preaching of the gospel **Acts 14: 1-21**
- Further established by following up - **Acts 14:21-23**

From **Acts 14:21-22**, we learn that the process of follow up involved...

- Strengthening the souls of the disciples
- Challenging them to continue in the faith
- Appointing elders in the church

The apostles did not always do the follow up themselves...

- Paul left Timothy in Ephesus - **1Ti 1:1-**
- He also left Titus on the island of Crete - **Tit 1:5**

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## I. IDENTITY

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**Titus 1:1-3**

*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*

— **2** in the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time, **3** and which now at his appointed season he has brought to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior,

## A. PAUL...

1. Known formerly as Saul of Tarsus, persecutor of the church
2. Who became known as the "apostle to the Gentiles"
3. Author of half of the books of the New Testament
4. The name "**Paul**" means little. He went from having a mighty Hebrew name (Saul) before he was converted to a name that knocked him down a few notches.

## B. HIS SELF-IDENTIFICATION...

**If we want to stand for the truth we must understand our identity.**

The very first way that Paul describes himself in this letter is, "***a servant of God.***"

- He could have pulled out his resume and referred to himself
- as a scholar,
- appealed to his religious heritage,
- his unique calling,
- his authorship of so many books of Scripture,
- of being brought up to the third heaven, but he didn't.

Paul chose a word that **literally means slave**, "***one whose will is swallowed up in the will of another.***"

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### 1. First a bondservant (slave) of God

- James described himself this way - **Jm 1:1**
- Also Peter and Jude - **2Pe 1:1; Jude 1:1**
- Paul normally identified himself as a bondservant of Christ, only here does he describe himself as bondservant of God

**The word "servant" or "bondservant" echoes back to the Old Testament.**

- According to some Hebrew tradition a person who got into debt became

the property of his creditor up until seven years.

- At the seventh year, these slaves were liberated but some decided to voluntarily remain as slaves because of the kindness of their Masters.
- Those who wanted to be slaves for life would be taken to the priest who would pierce the earlobe, thus indicating that he was marked for life to serve his master permanently

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## 2. Second “*an apostle of Jesus Christ.*”

- He is first a slave and second he is a “sent one,” which is what the word apostle literally means.
- This word was used in the first century of one who was sent with the credentials of another.

This harkens back to what Jesus said about Paul right after his conversion in

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### **Acts 9:15:**

*“This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel.”*

## **The order here is significant.**

- Paul was sent *because* he was a servant.
- As an apostle he had authority, but it was only because his will was swallowed up in the will of another that God was pleased to use him.
- His obedience as an apostle flowed from his submission as a bondservant.

Titus has much to do about Church order and development and for a church to grow on the right track it must be formed of and led by people who have embraced this order to their lives.

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# II. TRUTH

## **Titus 1:1**

8. *“to further the faith of God’s elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness”*

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## **Paul brings faith and knowledge together.**

- Sometimes I hear people say, “*Just have faith*” as if we have to disengage

our minds and believe something that isn't true.

- Other times I hear people say, "Only believe *what you understand*" as if we have to have everything figured out.

**Faith and reason belong together.**

Our faith and knowledge rest on the hope of eternal life. We can have certainty in what we believe because God is worthy of our trust.

- Faith is the superstructure on which genuine godliness is built.

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**Hebrews 11:1**

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*

**The basis for our belief is grounded in God himself.** Look at the last phrase in verse 2: "...***which God, who does not lie.***"

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**Titus 1:2**

*"in the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,"*

This truth about God is in direct contrast to the Cretan culture as spelled out in

**Titus 1:12:** "*Cretans are always liars...*"

**The Cretans were prone to see God in their image and therefore think that He is less than truthful.**

- God is free from all deceit.
- The **Greek** literally reads, "***The non-lying God.***"

**Numbers 23:19:** "*God is not a man, that he should lie.*"

**1 Samuel 15:29:** "*He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his*

*mind.”*

**Hebrews 6:18:** *“It is impossible for God to lie.”*

God is the very essence of truth. In direct opposition is the devil who is described by Jesus

**John 8:44** .... *“father of lies.”*

God’s character backs up the hope of eternal life. Because He said it, it’s true, and it will happen.

Even in eternity past God pledged with certainty what he was going to do:

*“...promised before the beginning of time.”*

God is a promise keeping God. What He has said, He will do. You can count on His character.

As Joshua reminded the people before he died:

**11** **Joshua 23:14**  
*“Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed”*

**2 Peter 3:9:** *“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise.”*

## **12**

# III. GODLINESS

## TRUTH LEADS TO GODLINESS

Paul knew who he was and what he was supposed to do ..... He also knew his purpose.

**Titus 1:1**  
*to further the faith of God’s elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness*

He was a servant and an apostle “**for the faith of God’s elect.**”

- Paul’s mission was to fortify the faithful and grow them in godliness.
- The word “**elect**” means “to pick out for one’s self.”
- We don’t have time this morning to get into a detailed explanation of the doctrine of election except to say that the “elect,” according to Paul, are those who have accepted the gospel message and are therefore secure before God.

Paul does something very important here!! He links doctrine with duty: “*and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness.*”

**Knowledge is more than just knowing facts;**

- it implies a more intimate and personal relationship with truth.
- Truth must transform the way we live.
- Proper belief must lead to practical behavior.
- **In fact, doctrine is deadly when it is divorced from godly living.**

**Because the Cretan culture had so many ungodly elements to it, the believers were to demonstrate the reality and possibility of godly living.**

The word godliness is derived from two words which literally mean,

- “*well reverence*”
- “*well worship*”

**It is used to describe the awesome respect we are to have of God. We should think so highly of Him that it shakes up the way we live.**

The Scribes and Pharisees focused on external standards of godliness. Jesus showed them that what’s in the heart is most important.

Are we living with everything you do open to God?

- If you want to impact the Cretans around you, you must remember that they are **reading you a great deal more than they are reading the Bible.**

## 13 IV. IN TIME

*“...and which now at his appointed season he has brought to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior...”*

All of God’s promises will come true but it’s on His timetable, not ours.

- Events on God’s calendar occur at designated times in history according to His complete understanding.

The timing of Jesus’ birth, for example, is one of Paul’s favorite themes.

**14** **Galatians 4:4:** *“But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law.”*

The word “appointed” refers to that which is one’s own private and unique possession.

- The purpose behind God’s timing is often known only to Him.
- The word “season” refers to a window of opportunity, or a fixed period of time.

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**Acts 17:26** *“...he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.”*

Do you have a hard time waiting on God’s timing?

- What is it right now that you’re struggling with?
- You’re not alone.

Walk through the season of life that you’re in so that you will be prepared for the next one.

- God is never late; but He is rarely early.
- Trust His timing.
- And don’t disregard the fact that if you have not put your faith and trust in Jesus yet, you must do so before it’s too late.

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## CONCLUSION

**Paul was defining what the Gospel does when it is personally encountered it creates a Revolution!**

Finally Paul's greeting to Titus:

**Tit 1:4**

*"Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior"*

A teacher of a young adult class asked the students to write their answers to the question, "What do you want most out of life?" Nine out of ten answered, "Happiness."

Psychology Today magazine took a poll of 40,000 readers. Eighty-three percent responded that their main question was, "How can I find real happiness?"

If anybody should be happy, it is a Christian.

- But are we known for his joy?
- Many think of a Christian in terms of solemnity, seriousness, and severity.

Some of us are like the country boy whose grandmother forbade him to engage in "worldly amusements" on Sunday.

Dejected and lonely, he walked down to the barn fence and while he was there a mule came up and put his head into the boy's hands. Patting the sad face of the mule, the boy commiserated, "Poor fellow, you must be a Christian, too."

Christians have good reason to be the happiest people in the world. Their happiness is not based upon the condition of the world but upon the condition of the heart. They are happy because of God and not because of man.