TITUS BIBLE STUDY

Lesson 1:

A- Introduction:

- Paul wrote this epistle to Titus. Titus was ordained the first bishop of the church of the Crete.
- He was a gentile (Gal 2:3) who believed at the hands of St. Paul and attended with him the first council in Jerusalem.
- Titus was a very close companion of Paul. Paul called him "a true son in our common faith," Titus 1:4. Paul said of him that he was "my partner and fellow helper," 2 Cor 8:23.
- Titus accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem when Paul "communicated unto them that gospel which (he preached) among the Gentiles," Gal 2:1-2. They were obviously very close.
- Several years later, Titus and Paul traveled to the island of Crete, where Titus was left behind to continue and strengthen the work.
- This epistle was written around 63–66 AD from either Macedonia or Nicopolis.
- Purpose
  - ❖ To oversee the new developing church in Crete and to appoint priests there.
  - ❖ To preach the sound doctrines.
  - ❖ To exhort them to do good works.
- May we have the same zeal for the Lord that Titus showed. Every believer would do well to model Titus's commitment to truth, fervor in spreading the gospel, and enthusiastic love for the church.

Summary:

This epistle chiefly contains directions to Titus concerning the elders of the Church, and the manner in which he should give instruction; and the latter part tells him to urge obedience to magistrates, to enforce good works, avoid foolish questions, and shun heresies. The instructions the apostle gave are all plain and simple. The Christian religion was not formed to answer worldly or selfish views, but it is the wisdom of God and the power of God.

B- Chapter 1: Greeting, Ordaining Qualified Pastors, Rebuking False Teaching, and Teaching Sound Doctrine

Outline of Titus 1

- The apostle salutes Titus. (Verse 1-4.)
- The qualifications of the godly clergy. (Verse 5-9.)
- The evil temper and practices of false teachers. (Verse 10-16.)

Scripture: 1:1-4 [Greeting]:

1 Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, 2 in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, 3 but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was

committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior; 4 To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

Commentary on v1-4:

Bondservant: by his freewill, St. Paul chose to be a servant of God forever

What Paul means by verse 2 is that it was always God's plan to provide humanity with the gift of eternal life. Adam and Eve possessed that gift before their fall from grace in the Garden of Eden. Afterward, God promised the defeat of the serpent, Satan, and humanity's redemption. Paul's point is that our "hope" is not based on presumptions but on trusting what God has promised and what He has done in the past. God determined from all eternity to give the gift of eternal life to those who received the "good news" of Christ. His plan for humanity's salvation was always in His heart.

In verse 3: This promise is affirmed in the due time by manifestation of His word (the incarnation of the Logos) through preaching.

Scripture: 1:5-9 [Qualified Elders]

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— 6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. 7 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, 8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, 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.

Commentary on v5-9:

V. 5 is an example of the oral tradition (as I commanded you).

The character and qualification of clergy, [priests and bishops] agree with what the apostle wrote to Timothy.

Question: In verses 6-9, what does Paul require of the men Titus appoints as leaders of the Christian communities in Crete? Name ten qualifications.

Answer: The men Titus appoints to be pastors must have these qualities:

1. He must be blameless.
2. He must be married only once.
3. He must have children who are Christians and of upright character themselves.
4. He cannot be arrogant.
5. He needs a mild disposition. [nor quick tempered]
6. He cannot be a drunkard or materialistic.
7. He must be hospitable.
8. He must love goodness and justice.
9. He must be self-controlled.
10. He must adhere to the true message of the Gospel so he can both teach sound doctrine and refute those who teach falsely.

To be "blameless," repeated from verse 6 & 7, does not mean the candidate must be totally without sin. St. Augustine remarks if that was the case, no one could ever be a presbyter. Paul is using the word to refer to the absence of any public dishonor and to possess a spotless reputation that embodies the Church's call to holiness.

Questions for reflection or discussion:

- Should the virtues Paul listed in verses 6-9 be limited to bishops and priests, or are they virtues that should be evident in the lives of all Christians in the Church? Why are those virtues especially necessary for parents and those involved in ministries in the church? How do you fare on the list of Paul's essential virtues?
- How can a person overcome a short temper?

Scriptures: 1:10-16 [The Elders' Task]

10 For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. 12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." 13 This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. 15 To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. 16 They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.

Commentary on v10-16:

In Titus 1:10-16, Paul wrote to Titus about how to handle the folks in Crete. Crete was Titus's mission field. Titus was the first bishop of the church of the Cretians. And there were two main problems among the Cretians with which Titus had to deal. There were believers whose faith was being subverted, mainly by Jewish proselytes (v.10-14), and there were unbelievers who professed to be believers (v.15-16).

A- The deceived believers of Crete – Paul addressed them in Titus 1:10-14

- What was their problem? Titus 1:10 – they were:
  - Insubordinate [so they wouldn't follow a pastor].
  - Idle talkers
  - Deceivers [they had been deceived and now they are deceiving].
- Why were they doing these things? Titus 1:12-14 – because of their lack of character.
- Because of their unsound faith, they were turned from the truth. They had given heed to Jewish fables. The Jews taught that you had to be circumcised and keep the law to be saved.
- How was Titus supposed to handle them? Titus 1:11, 13
  Their bad conduct must be sharply rebuked until the gospel so transforms them that they will become sound in the faith.

B- The unbelievers of Crete – Titus 1:15-16

- What was their problem? Titus 1:15-16 – they professed to know God when they didn't; in works they denied Him.

- How was Titus supposed to handle them? Titus 1:15
  Such should be resisted, and put to shame, by sound doctrine from the Scriptures.
- Many profess to know God, yet in their lives deny and reject him. See the miserable state of hypocrites, such as having a form of godliness, but are without the power; yet let us not be so ready to fix this charge on others, as careful that it does not apply to ourselves.

Discussion questions:

1) What is the promise of God to us? Check v2
2) Why did St. Paul leave his disciple Titus in Crete? See introduction➔ purpose.
3) Give proof of one of our traditions in the church. V5
4) How did the Bible reach the island of Crete? See introduction.
5) Where and when did St. Paul write the epistle? See introduction.
6) What does St. Paul mean by calling himself “a bondservant of God” (1)?
7) What are the “things that are lacking”, that need to be “set in order”(5)?
8) Why should the priest be “the husband of one wife” (6)?
9) Why “not quick-tempered’ (7)?
10) How should the bishop be “self-controlled” (8)?
11) What is “dishonest gain” (11)?
12) What are these Jewish fables, and the commandments of men who turn from truth (14)?

Lesson Application:

Watch the short video:

https://www.pursuegod.org/what-is-influencing-you-lessons-from-titus-youth/

What Is Influencing You?

- ❖ The people of Crete had a toxic culture. People didn’t value the truth. People didn’t mind being evil to others to get what they want. And they were just generally lazy people.
- ❖ Think about our culture for a moment. How would God describe our culture? Do the television shows, movies, and books we read line up with God’s truth, or not? If not, then that is a problem.
- ❖ The truth is that we don’t always realize how much culture influences us. By culture, I mean everything we watch, read, listen to, and just the general values of the world we live in; all of that is our culture. The Christians in Titus were being negatively affected by their culture.
- ❖ Here is how to identify bad influences. Ask yourself: Does this person, movie, or song help me love God and others more? Do they help me honor God? If not, then they are probably a bad influence. The Bible is clear about what to do with bad influences: Eliminate bad influences.
- ❖ In Matt 5:30, Jesus doesn’t literally want you to cut off your hand. Instead, He wants you to take bad influences seriously. He wants nothing to get in the way of your relationship with Him.

Lesson 2:

Chapters 2-3: Good Christian Behavior, Maintaining Good Works and Obedience to Leaders, Final Words of Advice, and Farewell

- Good Christian behavior (2:1-14)
- Maintaining good works and obedience to leaders (2:15-3:8)
- Final words of advice and farewell (3:9-15)

Chapter 2:

Scriptures: 2:1-10 [Good Christian behavior]:

1 But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: 2 that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; 3 the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things— 4 that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

6 Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, 7 in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, 8 sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.

9 Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

Commentary on v1-10:

In Titus 2:1-6 Paul instructed Titus to teach the Cretians things which were befitting sound doctrine. These things were dealing with behavior. In other words, if you believe the sound doctrine of the Bible, what you do should match what you believe. Your conduct and your deportment should testify of your faith in the words of God. Even Titus was to present himself as pattern of good works for others to follow, which would also serve to silence any opponents of the faith (1 of the faith (1-10)

Paul addressed four groups of people. He addressed the older men, the older women, the young women, and the young men. Each was to be given specific instructions concerning their behavior, here are some of them.

Instructions to older men:

1) Sober – Not given to wine.
2) Temperate – Exhibiting self-control.
3) Sound in faith – True believers.
4) Sound in patience – patient until God works things out His way in His time.

Instructions to older women:

1) Not slanderers. Not given to insinuations of evil
2) Not given to much wine. [Just like the bishops in 1 Tim 3:3 and deacons in 1 Tim 3:8.]

3) Teachers of good things – older women can teach many good things from the words of God and from practical experience.

Instruction to young women:

1) Discreet: How often thoughtless indiscretion has caused great pain and trouble!
2) Homemakers: Those who are continually out will neglect the duties of domestic life. That the word of God is not evil spoken of; particularly by unbelieving husbands, who lay all the blame on the religion of their wives.

Instructions to Young Men – Titus 2:6 they are to be: Sober minded Trained by Grace. A virtue rarely found in youth.

In verse 7, As Titus taught the word of God to the Cretians, it was essential that his good works matched his doctrine. Likewise, our works should match the doctrine we teach. You don't want to be like the Pharisees, whom Jesus condemned.

In verses 9&10, He also wrote that servants were to "please them well in all things." The world wants the employers to please the employees in all things. It's no wonder that many employers complain today that they can't find good help and people that want to work. Servants are to be diligent in three particular areas:

1) Not answering back – they're not to be talking back.
2) Not pilfering – Not taking or giving anything without their master's permission
3) Showing all good fidelity – fidelity is faithfulness and loyalty. They're definitely to be loyal and faithful. Faithfulness is one of the key characteristics of a good servant.

As a matter of fact, we know that many masters were converted by their servants.

Scriptures: 2:11-15

11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. 15 Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

Commentary on v11-15:

The divine grace shown in the gospel of salvation is for all men, servants as well as masters.

We are taught by the grace that we must deny ourselves all sinful lusts and live godly lives. This world makes gods out of everything that is not God. We should deny all these gods, including the devil.

Verse 13, The attitude of Christians is that of waiting in expectation of the fulfillment of a glorious hope.

Verse 14, The Lord who will appear and give the greatest of all things, Himself, for us. Jesus Christ not only "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed," thank God, but also that he purified us "purify for Himself His own special people, zealous of good works." See Eph 2:10. We are to do the work of God with fear and trembling, Phil 2:12-13. We are special in that we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ and not to the world. We are separated and chosen to live a holy life.

Verse 15, Rebuke with all authority – to rebuke is to reprehend for a fault, to check by reproof. Paul is urging Titus to have the courage to defend the true faith in his role as the bishop of Crete.

Chapter 3:

Scripture: 3:1-8

3 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. 3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. 4 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

Commentary on v1-8:

In this chapter, St. Paul instructs Titus to remind us to be kind to all men. Remembering the kindness of God toward us, not because we are worthy but because of His goodness.

What does Paul list in verses 1-2 as examples of good citizenship?

Answer: Christians should be obedient to local laws, ready to assist any good civil enterprise, not to engage in gossip or slander, to keep the peace, and practice kindness to everyone.

He also asks Titus to remind the Cretan Christians to be patient with their pagan neighbors because, before Christian conversion, Paul writes, we were all foolish, disobedient, deluded, slaves to various desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful to ourselves and to others. In other words, where our pagan neighbors are now, except for the grace of God calling us to salvation [through Baptism & Chrismation, we might also have found ourselves in their disgraceful state.

To be 'meek' is very different from being 'weak'.

Verse 6, God does not give to us little or just enough but plenty of His Spirit.

Verse 7, Now we are qualified to be heirs and have hope in eternal life.

Scripture: 3:9-15

Avoid Dissension and Paul's farewell.

9 But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. 10 Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, 11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.

12 When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. 13 Send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey with haste, that they may lack

nothing. 14 And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

15 All who are with me, greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

Commentary on v9-15:

- Some people waste time arguing. We are to avoid these things or 'turn our backs on them.'
- If our ideas divide the church, it is wrong.
- V10: The church leaders are to stop a man like that who wants to talk about his own ideas all the time. A man who will not listen, who has warped 'turned out' from the teaching of God's Word. Sadly, there are people whose lives are so bad that they must be put out of the church.
- The ban of excommunication for someone who continues in a grievous sin may seem unkind to some. However, it is necessary to protect the Christian community from influences that could damage the Body of Christ by encouraging others to fall into sin or to accept heretical teachings. Persistent sin is as deadly to one's spiritual health as disease is to one's physical health. Such a ban is always meant to be redemptive, in pointing out to the person the grievous nature of his actions that could determine his eternal destiny.
- St. Paul gives them two reasons why the people of the church should maintain good works: 1- that they may give help to people who are in need and 2- that they end with something of value [be fruitful].
- St. Paul closes his letter with greetings and benediction.
- Conclusion: now that we are saved by Christ, washed, renewed, Spirit-filled, and justified, we ought to be very different than we were before we were saved. The changes on the inside should manifest themselves thoroughly in our lives on the outside.

Questions for discussion or reflection:

- How is it that sometimes our best Christian witness can be through our actions and not just our words?
- As a committed Christian, what steps can you take to advance the Gospel of salvation as one of Christ's apostles?

Lesson Application:

Watch the short video:

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What Do You Reveal to Others About God?

You should be a Christian 24/7. It's not like being a Christian is only for Fridays and Sundays. God wants you to live like a Christian every moment of your life. God is honored when you spend every moment following Him. But your life as a Christian also affects other people. If you are a Christian, your life should show people who God is. Titus 3:2 gives us some ideas:

1) You Point People to God Through Humility: If you are humble, then you will be pointing people to Jesus. You can be humble in the way you talk to others, and humble in the way you interact with your friends. When you live with integrity and humility, you are making God attractive to people. Based on how you live, you can make people want to learn about God.
2) You Point People to God Through Honest Work

There is another section in Titus that talks about doing good, and this section is addressed to slaves. Now, normally when we think about slavery we might think of American slavery, but that's not what slavery was like in the time of the Bible. Most slaves in the Bible were more like extended family members. They had rights and protections under the law. So, when you read the passages about slaves you can apply it to your own life at school and work.
If all your friends cheat on a test and you go right along with them, then they aren't going to think Christians are any different than anyone else. But if you stand out from others because of the good you do, then you are pointing people to God.

Think about how you live your life and how you talk to your friends who aren't Christians. Are you living as a hypocrite, or do you think people would want to follow God because of you?

Final prayer:

Beloved Heavenly Father,

We sometimes forget that we have an obligation to our Savior and to His Church to live in imitation of His righteous life. We must act with integrity, show love to our brothers and sisters in the faith community and the human family, and adhere to sound Orthodox doctrine. When we behave badly, our actions reflect poorly not only on us as individuals but on the Church's witness for the goodness and truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Souls are at stake in the battle against Satan, and our mission is to carry on Jesus' work of redemption in the world. Lord, give us the courage and conviction to live a holy life, free from arrogance and ill-will, so, at the end of our lives, You will welcome us into Your Kingdom with the words, "Well done, my good and faithful servant." We pray in the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

References:

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