

## Sermon Notes

# WORSHIP SERVICE - 10.1.2023

## PART 30 - DEAR TITUS

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### Titus 1:1-4

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, 2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began 3 and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior;

4 To Titus, my true child in a common faith:

Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

### II. INTRODUCTION TO TITUS

#### 1. AUTHOR AND RECIPIENT

- Written by Paul, the apostle of the Lord.
- Not a general letter to the church but written to an individual, Titus, whom Paul calls his "true child in a common faith. "
- Titus was one of Paul's ministry companions. Paul calls him, "*my partner and fellow worker...*" (2 Cor 8:23).
- We won't find Titus' name mentioned in Acts, though Some NT scholars speculate that Titus was related to Luke, the writer of Acts.
- He was Greek by birth (Gal 2:1,3).
- Titus came to faith in Christ under Paul's ministry, and like Timothy, Paul considers him a spiritual son in the faith.
- "My true child in a common faith." Paul a Jew, Titus a Gentile, are united with Christ, they are one in Christ.
- Though this letter doesn't express all of the fatherly affection we find in Paul's letters to Timothy, you can still sense the fatherly concern Paul has for Titus.
- Titus seems to have been highly trusted by Paul with delicate matters, as we see in Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth. (2 Cor. 8)
- At the of 2 Timothy, we know that Titus had left to minister in Dalmatia (2 Tim 4:10).

#### 2. TIME AND PLACE

- A general consensus amongst NT scholars date the time of the writing of this letter to the early to mid-60s, around the same time as 1 Timothy.

- Written during Paul's fourth missionary journey after his imprisonment recorded in Acts 28, and not recorded in Acts.
- We know Paul was released from his house arrest and continued to preach the gospel.
- We know Paul had every intention to take the gospel to Spain (Romans 15:24,28).
- Early Christian writings indicate that he did take the gospel as far as Spain (Clement, Bishop of Rome in I Clement 5).
- We don't know where Paul was at the time of the writing of this letter, we know he left Crete and possibly was in or near Nicopolis, in Western Greece, because at the end of the letter, he tells Titus to find him there because that is where he has decided to spend the winter (3:12).

### 3. OCCASION FOR THE LETTER

- We will find similar themes and instructions in Titus as we saw in Paul's letters to Timothy.
- In v5 we read, "This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order..."
- This is Titus' reason for being in Crete. He had gone with Paul to bring the gospel to this island off the coast of Greece in the Mediterranean Sea.
- Titus was to complete the work that the apostle had begun of establishing leadership in the churches and organizing the fellowship of believers.
- Titus, like Timothy, needs to also deal with the false teachers and false teaching.
- Titus would also need to instruct the believers on how their faith works itself out in practice, conduct, and good works, which were a direct fruit of their salvation.
- This was no easy task as the fledgling churches found themselves in the midst of a culture that was deeply entrenched and shaped by Greek mythology and pagan worship.
- An additional challenge for Titus would be moving around the mountainous island that was over 3,200 square miles in size. Travel was not easy.
- Titus had logistical challenges and theological challenges he would have to overcome to complete the work assigned to him.
- Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, chronicling church history in the early 4th century, indicates that Titus returned to Crete at a later point and became its first bishop and remained there until his death at an old age.

## III. THE APOSTLE'S GREETING

### 1. THE APOSTOLIC MESSENGER

- 1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ...
- As he does in several of his letters, Paul identifies himself as a slave of the Lord.
- We were once slaves of sin that led to death and condemnation. In Christ we have been set free from sin's mastery and are now slaves of righteousness, having become obedient to God from the heart (Romans 6:15-23).
- Paul was Christ's slave. He was the Lord's bondservant.
- He is an apostle of Jesus Christ.

- Paul did not appoint himself to be an apostle. He was not called by man, he was called by the Lord Jesus Christ himself (Acts 9).
  - Christ appeared to him by direct revelation; which he details in Galatians (Gal. 1:12).
  - He was an apostle, like the Twelve, yet distinct from the Twelve.
  - He calls himself one who was “untimely born” (1Cor. 15:58).
  - He considered himself the least of the apostles because he persecuted believers (1 Cor. 15:9).
  - Recall in 1 Timothy 1, Paul celebrates God’s mercy and grace in saving him, he considered himself the chief of sinners because he was an opponent of the faith.
  - But his salvation proves that if God could save someone like Paul, he can save anyone.
- What Paul writes is authoritative. It is binding upon the Christian life because they are the very words of God.
  - Though written to a minister, it is for the church, for every believer.

## **2. THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY GOAL**

- for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness,
- This brief statement sums up the apostle’s aim and purpose for the apostolic ministry to which Christ called him.
- His purpose is three-fold: the faith, godliness, and hope of God’s elect.

### **a. THE FAITH OF GOD’S ELECT**

- All of his labor, preaching, teaching, and serving is aimed at the saving faith of God’s elect.
- His fervent preaching of the gospel, his bold testifying to Christ, his courage in the face of opposition, his care and devotion to the church all has its aim at bringing all those whom God has chosen to saving faith.
- He preaches the gospel indiscriminately to everyone with confidence that those whom God has chosen and appointed to eternal life will respond with faith.
- He taught in Romans 10 that salvation comes through the preaching of the gospel message. It is the means God has ordained for people to come to faith.
- Romans 10:12-17 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13 For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
- It is not Paul’s preaching that is the source of the hearer’s faith. The source of the hearer’s faith is grounded in God’s election.
- Because of God’s electing love, those who hear, will exercise faith.
- Preaching the gospel was Paul’s primary task.
- The knowledge of God’s election is never a disincentive to preaching the gospel and evangelism. (see Acts 18:5-11)

### **b. THE GODLINESS OF GOD’S ELECT**

- ...for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness,
- Paul's apostolic ministry had this as its second aim. He wanted people to come to saving faith in Christ Jesus and he wanted them to grow up in their faith.
- What's necessary for that? Having knowledge of the truth that leads us into godliness.
- God's truth is a sanctifying truth. God's truth is transforming truth.
- He knew that the word of God working in the people of God would produce the holiness of God in their lives.
- Those who possess genuine saving faith, will have that faith authenticated by the godliness it produces in their lives.
- Godliness reflects that the truth is true. Genuine faith bears the fruit of godliness.
- There is a direct correlation between our growing in the knowledge of the truth and our growth in godliness.
- The more we grow in our knowledge of the gospel and what Christ has done for us, the more we grow in our knowledge of God and his Word, the more we will love him and live for him.
- Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,
- Grace saves us and trains for godliness. Sound doctrine promotes godly conduct.
- Galatians 4:19 my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!

### **c. THE HOPE OF GOD'S ELECT**

- 2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began 3 and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior;
  - This is the third aim of Paul's apostolic ministry, encouraging hope in the people of God.
  - Hope is a motivating factor for our faith and growth in godliness.
  - Our saving faith and sanctifying truth, rests on the firm foundation upon which our hope is placed.
  - Why can we have such confidence in the hope of eternal life?
  - Look at the three-fold guarantee we have been given by God.
  - First, It is God who promised it.
  - And when did he promise it? Before the ages began.
  - That means it is an eternal decree God has made and because he has decreed it, promised it, it will surely come to pass.
  - Second, God who made the promise, cannot lie.
  - Why does he mention that? Because Cretans were notoriously famous liars (2:12).
  - Lying is contrary to God's character and nature. He cannot contradict his character.
  - Unlike Zeus and the pantheon of gods, our God can be trusted to fulfill everything he promised for his people.
  - Third, God manifested this promise at an appointed time through the preaching of the gospel.
  - The message Paul was entrusted with showcases the glorious promise of God of eternal life through Jesus Christ.
- The promise stretches back to eternity past, before the ages began, and stretches to eternity future, with the fulfillment of the promise at the consummation of the ages.

- And the in-between period, God has filled with the world-wide preaching of the gospel, spanning these two eternities of promise and fulfillment.
- To whom did God make this promise if it was made before we were even here?
- It was a promise made from God the Father to God the Son. It was a promise made out of the Father's love for the Son. The Father promised his Son a bride.
- Ephesians 4:3-6 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.
- 2 Timothy 1:9, ...who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,
- We get a glimpse of the promise fulfilled in the heavenly scene in Revelation. The bride of Christ, all of God's elect, clothed in fine linen, bright and pure, at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:6-9).
- John sees the radiance of Christ's bride in Rev. 21. She is the New Jerusalem, the holy city of God, the temple of God, she is the wife of the Lamb, clothed in the splendor of the glory of God (Rev. 21:2, 9-14).
- The eternal purposes of God were revealed in time to us. He manifested them in the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ.
- And when we spread the good news, when we preach the gospel, eternal life is manifested.
- Just as Paul was entrusted with that awesome responsibility, we too have been entrusted.
- God gives us the privilege of telling others of the hope of eternal life through his Son.
- And our confidence is that God has already chosen a bride for His Son. As we proclaim the gospel, those that are his people, will respond with faith.
- As they respond with faith, it is also our responsibility to help disciple them and help them grow into maturity in Christ and encourage them with the hope of eternal life.

### 3. THE APOSTLE'S BENEDICTION

- 4 To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.
- The introduction concludes with Paul's wishes for Titus, grace and peace.
- Titus' ministry among the Cretans will only flourish with God's grace and peace.
- We cannot have grace, undeserved and unmerited favor from God, and we cannot have true reconciling peace with God, apart from Jesus Christ.
- We will only flourish in life or ministry with the grace and peace that comes from God.
- If Paul's apostolic ministry is summed up in this greeting, calling us to saving faith in Christ, stirring us to godliness through sanctifying truth, and encouraging hope in us as God's people, how is that working out in your life?
- Is God's Word, his truth, transforming you?

- Are you encouraged by the hope of eternal life? Is it motivating you to a life of greater confidence and trust in Christ Jesus and motivating you towards godliness?
- This is only possible through Christ, who has made manifest at God's appointed time, revealed to us in the gospel, who caused us to be made alive through the work of His Spirit, all by the grace of God!
- The Christian life starts with grace and peace and continues with grace and peace.
- And it is only by the grace of God and the peace we have with God that we will experience the glories of the eternal life to come.
- Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior will see us all the way home.

## **APPLICATION AND REFLECTION**

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?