

Abounding Grace Christian Church

The Epistle of Paul to Titus – Part 2

I. Exposition of Chapter One (continued).

A. **Verses 3-4 – “but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior; To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.”**

1. **“...but has in due time manifested His word through preaching...”** – According to Donald Guthrie, the words, **“...due time...”** mean, **“the appointed season.”**¹ The New Living Translation, translates this as; **“...at just the right time...”**. The word **“manifested”** means; **“to cause to become visible—‘to make appear, to make visible, to cause to be seen.’”**² The idea is that God, Who before time began (**verse 2**), at just the right time made His Word (the Gospel) to be seen **“...through preaching...”**. **“Preaching”** means; **“the message or proclamation by the heralds of God or Christ”**³

“Amazingly, God has placed His eternal plan of salvation in the hands of people like you and me. We as heralds of the gospel are recipients of a divine trust, a sacred treasure. The message we preach is not our word; it is His Word. This is our commitment. This is His commandment. This is our calling. We preach His Word and no other word. We preach His gospel and not another gospel. Certainly some may preach the gospel better, but no one will preach a better gospel.”⁴

2. **“...which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;...”** – The idea is that Paul had been entrusted to preach the Gospel. This was given to him by the **“...commandment of God our Savior;...”** – The word **“Savior”** is found six times (**1:3; 1:4; 2:10; 2:13; 3:4; 3:6**) in this epistle and means; **“to rescue, to save, 21.18) one who rescues or saves”**⁵ In context, there can be no doubt that Jesus Christ is called God, affirming His Deity. Warren Wiersbe adds;

“As in 1 Timothy, the title Saviour is often repeated in Titus (1:3–4; 2:10, 13; 3:4, 6). The God-given written Word reveals the Saviour, because a Saviour is what sinners need. God’s grace brings salvation, not condemnation (Titus 2:11). Jesus could have come to earth as a Judge, but He chose to come as a Saviour (Luke 2:10–11).”⁶

3. **“To Titus, a true son in our common faith...”** – Regarding the phrase, **“..a true son...”**, Dr. Bob Utley writes: **“Paul uses this same terminology for Timothy in 1 Tim. 1:2 (cf. 2 Tim. 1:2) and Onesimus in Philemon v. 10. It is a familial metaphor for Paul’s converts and friends.”**⁷ Like Timothy, Titus was most likely saved through Paul’s ministry and became a protégé to the Apostle Paul. The idea of **“...our common faith...”** means that their faith in the true Gospel is what made them “family.”
4. **“Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.”** – This salutation is almost identical to that which is given in First and Second Timothy with the exception of the added words, **“...our Savior.”**

B. **Verse 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”** – Titus was left on the Island of Crete for two main reasons:

1. **“...set in order the things that are lacking...”** – It’s obvious that there was some unfinished business to take care of in Crete. Titus was left there by Paul which tells us that Paul had been there, presumably for a short period of time and left Titus in full confidence that he could do the job.
2. **“...appoint elders in every city...”** – One of the most important things which was lacking was the appointing of elders in each city. Apparently, there were a plurality of cities on the island of Crete who had Christian congregations. This task would probably take some time to accomplish seeing it would require a certain level of maturity to qualify to be an elder. **“Elders”** is defined as:

¹ Donald Guthrie, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, Volume 14: The Pastoral Epistles* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009)

² Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 278.

³ Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (New York: Harper & Brothers., 1889), 346.

⁴ David Platt, Daniel L. Akin and Tony Merida, *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: 1&2 Timothy and Titus* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2013)

⁵ Louw and Nida, 240.

⁶ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 260.

⁷ Robert James Utley, *Paul’s Fourth Missionary Journey: I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy*, vol. Volume 9, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 97.

“a person of responsibility and authority in matters of socio-religious concerns, both in Jewish and Christian societies”⁸
William Mounce gives another definition: **‘older’ and, when used with the definite article, is a common term for older men as well as for the leaders (‘elders’) in the synagogue and the church.”⁹**

C. Verse 6 – **“if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.”**

1. **“...a man is blameless...”** – **“pertaining to what cannot be criticized”¹⁰** The idea is that he has a good reputation. He may be criticized but not legitimately.
2. **“...the husband of one wife...”** – There are many ideas as to what this refers to. It’s probably not referring to polygamy because that was rare in those days. It could refer to never having been divorced but that seems to imply that divorce is not forgivable. It seems to me the most Biblically consistent view is that of being a **“one woman man”**, in other words, faithful to one’s wife.
3. **“...having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.”** – Children who are **“faithful”** means that they are believers. The word **“dissipation”** means; **“behavior which shows lack of concern or thought for the consequences of an action—‘senseless deeds, reckless deeds,”¹¹** The word **“insubordination”** means; **“pertaining to being rebelliously disobedient”¹²**

D. Verse 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,”**

1. **“...a bishop...”** – Here we see that a bishop and elder are one and the same (cf. Acts 20:17, 28; I Peter 5:1-2). The word **“bishop”** is the Greek word, *episkopos*. Ralph Earle writes: **“The word *episkopos* is made up of *epi*, ‘upon’ or ‘over,’ and *scopos*, ‘watcher.’ So it literally means ‘one who watches over.”¹³**
2. **“...must be blameless as a steward of God...”** – The word **“blameless”** is the same as in verse 6. The word **“steward”** means; **“one who has the authority and responsibility for something”¹⁴**

“For the overseer must be blameless as one entrusted with God’s work...” – New English Translation

3. **“...not self-willed...”** – **“pertaining to being arrogant as the result of self-will and stubbornness.”¹⁵**
This is one of only two verses where this word is found. In II Peter 2:10, this term is used of false teachers.
4. **“...not quick-tempered...”** – **“pertaining to a tendency to become angry”¹⁶** (cf. James 1:19-20).
5. **“...not given to wine...”** – **“a person who habitually drinks too much and thus becomes a drunkard”¹⁷**
Dr. Bob Utley states:

“This seems to be an allusion from the Septuagint of Prov. 23:29–35. It must be re-emphasized that the Bible rails against drunkenness but does not teach total abstinence (cf. Gen. 27:28; Ps. 104:14, 15; Eccl. 9:7; Prov. 31:6–7). Total abstinence comes from an individual believer’s commitment to the Lord Jesus based on the limiting of one’s personal freedoms because of love for others within the culture in which he/she ministers (cf. Rom. 14:1–23; 1 Cor. 8–9; 10:23–33). See Special Topic at 1 Tim. 3:3.”¹⁸

6. **“...not violent...”** – **“a person who is pugnacious and demanding—‘bully”¹⁹** Dr. Thomas Constable adds:

“Not a bully (Gr. *me plekten*, v. 3; Titus 1:7; lit. a giver of blows) describes a person who resorts to physical or verbal violence in order to vent his anger and/or to settle disputes.”²⁰

7. **“...not greedy for money.”** – **“pertaining to being shamefully greedy for material gain or profit”²¹**
There are many Christian leaders today, who seem to have fallen into this. They emphasize money to

⁸ Louw and Nida, 541.

⁹ Mounce’s *Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, William D. Mounce, Gen. ed. (Zondervan Publishers, Grand Rapids, 2006.), 208.

¹⁰ Louw and Nida, 435.

¹¹ Ibid., 752.

¹² Ibid., 468.

¹³ Ralph Earle, *Word Meanings of the New Testament*, (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1986)

¹⁴ Louw and Nida, 476.

¹⁵ Ibid., 763.

¹⁶ Ibid., 760.

¹⁷ Ibid., 772.

¹⁸ Robert James Utley, *Paul’s Fourth Missionary Journey: I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy*, vol. Volume 9, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 100.

¹⁹ Ibid., 756.

²⁰ Constable, 73.

²¹ Louw and Nida, 291.

an extreme and, though we can't be sure what's in their heart, they give the impression of greed by living a lavish lifestyle (cf. I Timothy 6:4; Titus 1:11). In his book entitled; *"The Midas Touch"*, Kenneth E. Hagin attempted to bring balance and correction to those who were taking the prosperity message to an extreme. In his introduction he writes:

"During my more than sixty-five years of ministry, I have often dealt with the issue of prosperity for believers, insisntly emphasizing a balanced, scriptural approach. I have observed many teachings and practices that have both helped and hindered the Body of Christ. I have seen some faithful men of God stay the course and move accurately with the truth of the Word and the Spirit, resulting in great blessing for a host of believers. Unfortunately, I have also seen many others become sidetracked by extremism, ultimately shipwrecking their ministries and hurting and disillusioning many people in the process."²²

E. Verse 8 – **"but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,"**

1. **"...hospitable..." – "to showing hospitality to strangers"**²³ Dr. Craig Keener adds:

"Hospitality' included taking in trustworthy travelers as guests. Welcoming strangers and visitors was a universal virtue, but because inns in antiquity usually functioned also as brothels, Jewish people in the Diaspora were especially willing to take in fellow Jewish travelers, as long as the travelers bore letters of recommendation certifying their trustworthiness. Ideally, eating together at table was supposed to form a permanent bond of friendship."²⁴

2. **"...lover of what is good..."** – This would mean loving what God says is good.

3. **"...sober-minded..." – 'to behave in a sensible manner,') pertaining to being sensible and moderate in one's behavior"**²⁵ This could include, not going to extremes or following after the latest "new doctrine."

4. **"...just..." – "righteous, observing divine and human laws; one who is such as he ought to be"**²⁶ This would also include the ideas of being fair and just toward others.

5. **"...holy..." – "pertaining to being dedicated or consecrated to the service of God"**²⁷

6. **"...self-controlled..."** – Dr. Bob Utley writes: **"The noun appears in the list of the fruit of the Spirit in**

Gal.

5:23. It reflects someone who, through the Spirit, has been able to control the passions and pulls of a fallen world system, the temptations of Satan (demonic) and a fallen sin nature. This describes a believer who has become Christ-controlled."²⁸

F. Verse 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."**

1. **"holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught..." – "holding firmly to the message which can be trusted and which is in accordance with the teaching' Tt 1:9."**²⁹ A. Duane Litfin writes:

"Not only must an overseer meet moral and spiritual standards in his personal life, but he must also be a reliable man of the Word. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught. This last clause, 'as it has been taught,' actually comes first in the Greek, for emphasis. According to Paul, an elder is a conservator of the truth, one who must understand it, hold it fast; encourage others by teaching it; and refute those who oppose it. To be qualified as an elder a man must be a capable handler of the truth."³⁰

²² Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Midas Touch* (Tulsa, OK: Faith Library Publications, 2000), xiii.

²³ *Ibid.*, 454.

²⁴ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 612-613.

²⁵ Louw and Nida, 752.

²⁶ Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti* (New York: Harper & Brothers., 1889), 148.

²⁷ Louw and Nida, 538.

²⁸ Utley, 101.

²⁹ Louw and Nida, 371.

³⁰ A. Duane Litfin, "Titus," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 762-763.