

Main Reading: **Titus** 1:1-5

"Paul, a servant of God..."

"Servant," in the Greek, comes from the word, *doulos*, which we have discussed before.

Many Bibles today translate it as "servant,"
but the word is stronger than that and means "**slave**."

Often times, this *particular* kind of slave was a person with a *ton* of **debt**.

So much debt that they decided to become a slave to their lender
rather than trying to pay all the money back.

This was a practice that started in the Old Testament among the Israelites. **Exodus** 21:5-6

The meaning of this word is important for *many* reasons, but first of all...
Because it shows us Paul's **heart** as he writes.

Paul was a man, who realized that God had **given** Him *so many* things,
that he could *never* repay Him for it.

And because God was so good to Paul, he was compelled to *willingly* become His servant.

And this should be *our* heart as well.

We *all* need to realize that God has given us everything—**life** on earth, **forgiveness**,
eternal life, and *all* the **extra** stuff—and we could *never* even begin to repay Him.

This is why we serve God and *willingly* obey Him. We were bought with a price (*1 Corinthians 6:20*).

We don't obey God in order to butter Him up and get more stuff,
but because we are moved by His **kindness** to us *already*.

And as a side note, I love that Paul is not looking at Himself here.

He doesn't say "From Paul, the legendary minister who God used to write so many great letters"

Deep down, when Paul evaluated his life, he saw himself as a **servant** of God with a calling to ministry.

Then, Paul *also* claims to be **"... an apostle of Jesus Christ..."**

So, Paul was a servant, but he was *also* an **apostle**.

Jesus *Himself* appointed, trained, sent, and used Paul to grow the Church. **Galatians** 1:1, 11-12

So, yes, Paul was a humble servant, but He had an important role given to Him by Jesus.

"...for the sake of the faith of God's elect..."

1) True Christians are God's chosen people.

2) God calls certain Christian men to the pastoral ministry—both internally (a man's desires - 1 Tim. 3:1), and externally through the testimony and judgement of his fellow church members.]

Paul, and Titus as the messenger to the Corinthians, had faced some "apostles," who did **not** teach for the sake of the edification of God's church.

Paul marked them as deceitful workers of **Satan**.

But, here, Paul is reassuring Titus of his genuine mission as an evangelist *of* Jesus *to* His church.

I think he's even bringing Titus back to the point where they worked together; saying "*Titus, I trained you. Remember how we served God's people together.*"

QUESTION : ***Paul knew his purpose. What's yours?***

How do you see your life contributing to God's Plan?

"...their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness..."

The Bible has *many* purposes in the Christian life, but one of the *essential* reasons why we have the Bible is

for our minds to be filled with God's **knowledge** to the point that
it impacts our lives and our **conduct**. **Psalm** 119:11, **1 John** 2:1

The Bible should certainly change our minds,
but its doctrine *must* also make a difference in how we live.

If not, we probably haven't applied it or understood it *properly*.

If our Bible study does not impacted our love and our obedience to God,
then it hasn't been effective for us...

***"If our lifestyle as Christians is like our outward appearance (skin, hair, etc),
then doctrine is the skeleton."* — Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones**

When we *truly* **study** God's word, God studies us and exposes the things that need to be fixed.

v. 2 — ***"...in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began..."***

Here is yet *another* thing we've discussed before! God *cannot* **lie**.

There you have it, you can *finally* do something that God can't do.

Remember Balaam's prophecy that we studied in **Jude**.

Even though Balaam was a messed-up, greedy guy, God used him to deliver a message,
and one of the main points was ***"God is not man, that he should lie"***

Charles Spurgeon points out that God would never even *need* to lie.

Lying is something that fools do when they need a *temporary* advantage in the *present* moment...

But God, seeing the *whole* **picture**, doesn't *need* to lie.

Liars **lose** in the end when the truth comes out.

But honest people, though they may suffer at first, will be successful in the end.

Now, there *are* times where God **allows** people to lie, and God *uses* the consequences for His plan.

But, He *never* endorses dishonesty.

[Some say that God lied in Jeremiah 20:7, but this is just an example of poetic language. After all, God warned Jeremiah with the hard truth in Jeremiah 1:8, 19; 12:5]

In *this* context, Paul references something that God *specifically* has **not** lied about...eternal life.

God promised a plan of **salvation** from the consequences of sin
before time began according to Paul!

And He wasn't lying either. **John** 14:1-3

There are some people who are starting to believe that God changes with the times.

They say: "In the Bible times, some things were sinful, but now they're okay"

In other words, He could've said something yesterday that isn't any good today.

But the fact that God does not **lie** and does not **change** is one of the *most* important things about Him.

Malachi 3:6 — If God changed, He might wake up one day and decide to forget all about forgiving us—to take back His word about salvation and Heaven. But He *won't* change and He *cannot* lie.

Now, this verse *also* mentions Christian **hope**.

Christian hope is *totally* different from the way we normally think about hope.

We say "Ahh, I hope we're having pizza for dinner tonight"

"I hope the Panthers go to the Super Bowl this year"

Or "I hope that package was delivered today"

Christian hope is being **certain** of something, and this verse totally explains it.

We can be *absolutely* sure of God's promises because He cannot lie, and *that* is Christian hope.

v. 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;

One of the ways that God can use a person is through preaching.

We still have this privilege today. **Romans** 10:13-17

Preaching is foolish to the world, but God uses it in a powerful way. 1 **Corinthians** 1:18

And the words in this verse make it clear...if you want your preaching to be substantive,
you *must* be bringing God's word. **Colossians** 1:25

**v. — 4 To Titus, my true child in a common faith:
Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior."**

Paul was Titus' brother in Christ, but because Paul had trained Titus so closely,
Paul identifies Titus (as well as Timothy) as his son in the faith.

The "Christian faith" brings people together into a family. We are **family** in Christ.

v. 5 — "This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order..."

This verse explains why this letter to **Titus** so important—even to us today.

The church was about to go through a **HUGE transition**.

After more than three decades of being led by Jesus and then men who were appointed to
leadership *publicly* by Jesus (like Peter, John, James, Jude, and Paul),
now the church was going to be led by trained **elders**, pastors, and overseers.

So, Paul writes this letter to Titus, and two letters to Timothy,
about how to *be* a solid **pastor** and how to appoint *others* to positions in the church.

Now, you *might* think, "*I'm not a pastor or church leader, so how will Titus apply to me at all?*"

Well, almost *everything* required of pastors and elders is required for *all* Christians.

God *doesn't* want **pastors** to be spiritually thriving and **congregations** to be backsliding.

He wants *every* person in the church to be walking in a way that honors Him.

That being said, positions in ministry are reserved for those who are *especially* **mature**.

Now, there's *another* way that this short letter applies to us, and I'll explain it like this:

Titus, having been trained by Paul, *already* knew *most* of this **content** in the letter.

He traveled with Paul and got to see his apostolic church planting happen firsthand.

So, he knew what qualified someone to be a pastor,
and he knew how congregations should behave...

But, Paul sends him this letter—inspired by the Holy Spirit of God—to **arm** Titus with **authority**.

The rebellious people in Crete—some of whom were in the church—might have tuned Titus out...

But Paul sent a book of the **Bible** to Titus, and *true* Christians would *have* to listen to that.

See, our opinions or feelings about something don't always matter.

But, if God speaks about a subject...everybody *must* do what He says.

In our lives, when we address others in the church, or when we speak to an unbeliever,

Our opinions might matter a little here-and-there...

but if we choose our words with the Bible in mind, we can have a *serious* impact.