

A Portrait of a Father in the Faith

Titus 1: 1-4

Today we celebrate Father's Day in America, a day set aside to recognize and remember our fathers. I will admit being a father is one of the greatest joys I have known. I am thankful for my family and the privilege of raising my girls.

As we honor the fathers here today, I am also reminded of others who have made a significant impact on my life. All were not my father, but they made a difference by investing in my life. There are men who have never had children of their own, but invested greatly in the lives of others. In fact, other men have contributed to my spiritual life more than my own father did.

Our text reveals such a man. We learn much about Paul through the book of Acts and the epistles he wrote, but the Bible is silent concerning Paul's family. We do know Paul stood as a spiritual father to many, leading countless souls to saving faith in Christ. Timothy and Titus, both young preachers, were Paul's sons in the faith. Although they were not his biological children, Paul was deeply concerned for their well being, especially their spiritual maturity.

I want to examine the [details](#) of the greeting Paul pens to Titus at the beginning of this letter as we consider: [A Portrait of a Father in the Faith](#). Whether we have children or not, all believers can and should invest in the lives of others as Paul did. Notice:

I. The Character of a Spiritual Father (1-3) – Clearly Titus knew Paul. He had been left on the island of Crete by Paul to help strengthen the churches there, [V.5](#). However, Paul knew others would read and hear this letter who did not know him, so he takes a moment to introduce himself. His introduction provides detailed insight of the characteristics of a father in the faith. We find Paul was:

A. A Saved Man (1) – [Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness](#); Paul described himself as a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ. This speaks of the personal relationship Paul enjoyed with Christ. Most biblical students have read of Paul's conversion. He was a high ranking Pharisee with a desire to rid the world of those who believed in Jesus as the Christ. While on his way to Damascus, in an effort to imprison more Christians, Paul met Jesus and was saved by His grace. Paul was never the same. The Lord used him mightily in spreading the Gospel and reaching the known world for Christ.

- As we think of spiritual fathers, those who reach others for Christ, it should go without saying that one must know Christ in salvation. However we need to emphasize the grave importance of such a relationship. It is possible to know the Bible and faithfully attend services and yet not know Christ as Savior and Lord. Those who have impacted my life were men of faith, genuinely born again in Christ with a desire to reach others and equip them in the faith. We can't talk about something or someone we do not know!
- If you are blessed with men of faith in your life, you have something to thank God for. Spend time with them, learn of them, and allow them to invest in your life. Their godly wisdom is of tremendous value!

B. A Sanctified Man (1) – Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; Paul's relationship with the Lord was not limited to the Damascus road experience. As he walked with the Lord, he grew in the faith, maturing in Christ and becoming more like the Lord he served. Paul well understood the value of living according to faith in Christ and seeking knowledge which leads to godliness. His faith in Christ was not limited to a past experience, but grew on a daily basis.

- I am certainly thankful for everyone who has been saved by the grace of God, but if we are to impact those around us, making a difference in their spiritual lives, there must be more than a salvation experience. I fear our churches are filled with people, men in particular, who have been saved, but they have never matured in Christ.
- If we are to reach the lost and equip others for service, we must live sanctified lives, growing and maturing in our faith. It is impossible to share something we don't possess. If I had never grown in my faith, I would not be able to help others. Our day desperately needs men of faith who are committed to continued growth and maturity in Christ. The younger generation needs to share in the wisdom and faith of mature believers!

C. A Secure Man (2) – In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; Titus had already laid hold on the hope of eternal life, but there were others who had not. There would be seasons of testing when Titus would have to reach deep within to maintain his focus in order to continue. Paul urged those in Christ to remember the eternal hope received in salvation. Paul was not sharing a message he hoped would eventually transpire; he was preaching in full assurance of eternal life. God had promised this to all the saved and there is security in the promises of God. John 5:24 – Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

- Our world is filled with uncertainty and fear. None can predict the future and we have no way of knowing what a day will bring forth. We can rest in the promises of God and the finished work of Christ. I am truly thankful for those who possessed unwavering faith in the Lord, those who faced difficult circumstances and yet refused to abandon their faith. Their commitment and faith gave me hope and provided strength to press on in the fight. There is enough negativity and pessimism in the world. We need men of faith who are secure in Christ and willing to encourage others to anchor their soul in Him as well. [2 Tim.1:12 – For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.](#)

D. A Seasoned Man (3a) – [But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;](#) Paul had faced his share of difficulty. There were those who urged him to pull back from ministry and lay low for a while. Even though he faced great opposition, Paul was not deterred. He was not looking for the latest gimmick to draw a crowd or seeking to simply please those to whom he preached. Paul knew the importance of preaching the Gospel and he was determined to do so as long as he lived.

- That attitude is essential if we are to maintain our witness today. We need those who are committed to exalting the Lord in an effort to reach the lost. Sharing the Word and standing on truth isn't popular today, but it is humanity's only hope. Our churches and communities need those who are seasoned in their faith and committed to standing for the Lord even if it isn't received. The world would have us believe it is hopeless, that our tactics are outdated and ineffective, but we must continue the work we are called to do!

E. A Submissive Man (3b) – [But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;](#) Paul never got over his conversion. He surrendered his life to the Lord, committed to being a servant and apostle, preaching the Word as God had commanded. His life was no longer lived in light of his personal desires, but in complete submission to Christ.

- Wouldn't you agree that we need more who are surrendered to the Lord in our day? If we are to make an impact on others, our lives must be surrendered to Christ. This involves much more than showing up for services once a week. We must be willing to seek the Lord's will for our lives and serve at His command. A half-hearted effort will produce little fruit. If we don't show enthusiasm and commitment to the Lord, we can't expect others to desire what we have!

II. The Concern of a Spiritual Father (4) – Here we discover Paul's concern for Titus. Consider:

A. The Relationship (4a) – *To Titus, mine own son after the common faith*. Paul referred to Titus as his son in the faith. They shared a relationship in Christ. Paul had led Titus to the Lord and he was thankful for the relationship they now shared. Paul was concerned about the well being of his spiritual son much like a father is his own children.

- As a pastor I can relate to Paul. I have a burden for the spiritual well being of the church. I am concerned for each of you. It is important that we all cherish the relationships we enjoy in Christ. We are all part of the same body of Christ. We have a connection that will endure for eternity. I will spend much more time with most of you than I will some of my own family. We must share concern for one another.

B. The Responsibility (4a) – *To Titus, mine own son after the common faith*. Paul readily admits that Titus is his son in the faith. Because of their relationship, Paul felt a deep sense of responsibility for Titus. He knew he was responsible to nurture him in the faith and seek to equip him for ministry. Paul didn't neglect his responsibility, but embraced it.

- We share a responsibility for one another. I feel responsible for the spiritual well being of this congregation, but you share in that as well. We must seek to encourage one another. We all have times when we are weak or vulnerable in the faith. We need those who will come alongside us and share our burdens. I would not be where I am today had it not been for the faithfulness of God's people helping me along the way.

C. The Request (4b) – *To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour*. Here we discover the desire of a loving father for his son. Paul wanted Titus, his son in the faith, to experience and enjoy the fullness of the Lord. He wanted Titus to mature in his faith and serve the Lord in such a way that he would receive all the Lord had for him. Paul wanted nothing less than the very best for Titus!

- Should that not be our desire as well? Far too many today are living below their means spiritually. They receive far less than is available to them. I don't want our church to barely get by, enjoying meager blessings. I want each of us to enjoy the fullness of God. I want us to walk with Him, enjoying His fellowship and abundance! Anything less is simply unacceptable.

Conclusion: This message had fathers in mind, but there is application for all believers. If we are to impact others, we must be people of character. Do you know Christ as Savior? If so are you walking with Him, maturing in your faith? Are you surrendered to His will for your life? Are you concerned about the spiritual condition of our church and each one who makes it up? If there are needs in your life, come to Jesus. He alone can provide what you need!