

Equipped to Serve

Titus 1: 1-4

Our text today comes from one of the Pastoral Epistles. Titus was a young preacher and faithful helper of Paul. We know from Verse 5 that Paul had left Titus on the Island of Crete to settle the churches there and set in order their worship and operation. This was a tremendous task for the young preacher to accomplish. Knowing the responsibilities he had placed on Titus, Paul seeks to equip him for service and encourage him in the Lord.

While this epistle is often considered from a pastoral context, there is great wisdom and benefit for all believers. All are not called to pastor churches, but every believer is expected to be of service to the Lord. The principles Paul shared with Titus, in our text, regarding his service apply to every believer engaged in any work for the Lord. You may not be asked to set things in order within the local church, but you have a work to do. In order to be confident and effective, we all need biblical instruction to equip us for service.

Let's examine the [certainties](#) Paul shares as we consider: [Equipped to Serve](#).

I. A Word of Greeting (1a) – [Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ](#). Certainly Titus was well acquainted with Paul, but this greeting served as a reminder to him, and an introduction to others who might not know Paul. This greeting offers wisdom in serving the Lord. Consider:

A. Paul's Submission – Paul initially referred to himself as a servant of God. This word servant literally means “*a bond slave*.” This must have been encouraging to Titus and challenging to all who read these words. Paul was a giant in the faith, having experienced much through Christ in ministry, and yet he identifies as a servant of the Lord. Paul offered a reminder, that regardless of our accomplishments, we all remain nothing more than servants of our God. He sought to instill this mentality and devotion in all believers!

B. Paul's Service – He also referred to himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ. This title revealed the authority Paul possessed in the Lord, but it also reveals his calling and heart for service. He wanted Titus and others to know that his passion was serving the Lord. For Paul, nothing compared to the work he was engaged in for the Lord. His words carried much weight, being an apostle, but his manner of life also wielded great influence.

- We no longer have apostles today. Most agree these were those who witnessed the Lord in person. However, we all should have a desire to serve the Lord as the apostles did.

II. A Word of Grace (1b-2) – Following his word of greeting, Paul speaks of the marvelous grace of God bestowed upon all who believe. As we consider such grace, notice:

A. The Ministry of Grace (1b) – Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect. Paul was well aware of the grace he had received and fully embraced the ministry of grace given of the Lord. His focus was to share the redeeming grace of God through the Gospel. His focus was clear: he served the Lord by sharing the Gospel. After their salvation, Paul desired to help them establish a firm foundation upon which to build their faith.

- Regardless of our position or particular spiritual gifts, every believer is to be a voice for the Lord. We are all expected to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As we grow and mature in the Lord, we need to actively disciple those within the faith. If our service doesn't glorify the Lord and edify the body of Christ, we have missed our purpose!

B. The Mandate of Grace (1c) – 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 certainly acknowledged the truths of the faith. He would never consider compromising the fundamental truths of the Gospel. His life had been transformed in Christ; he was no longer the man he used to be. Now, rather than being a blasphemer and opponent of the church, Paul embraced the Lord which led to a life of godliness. He knew those who were born again in Christ would live lives that reflected the eternal change that had taken place.

- Our modern society, and even many among the church, have lost sight of this truth. We must embrace the Word and will of God. Those who walk in a right relationship with Christ will submit to His authority, embrace His Word, and seek a life of godliness. If the messengers and the church lacks godliness, they lack power. If they lack power, they lack effectiveness in ministry. A lack of effectiveness leads to a dead body of believers that experiences no new conversions. In order to be effective in service to the Lord, we must acknowledge truth and allow it to generate godliness within our lives. [Titus 2:12-13 – Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;](#) ^[13] [Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.](#)

C. The Measure of Grace (2) – In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Paul reminds Titus and all believers of the great measure of grace provided by God. Through salvation in Jesus Christ, eternal life is obtained. God has promised all who come to saving faith in Christ receive eternal life, and God cannot lie. His Word and His promises are sure!

- Paul reveals the great wonder in this measure of grace as well. Long before the world was ever created, before the fall of man in sin, and long before our birth and need of salvation, God ordained the means of salvation. He knew His only begotten Son would come to die for the sin of humanity. God knew, however, that death would not hold Christ. He would rise from death victorious in order to provide eternal life for all who come to Him by faith! If that isn't grace, I can't imagine what is! God made the way for our salvation and eternal life through the sacrifice of His Son. It is promised of God and cannot be revoked or taken away!

III. A Word of Gratitude (3) – Here Paul offers gratitude in regard to God's dealings with mankind. He is grateful for:

A. The Revelation (3a) – *But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching.* Paul well understood the weight of his calling. God had given His Word to humanity and ordained the means of preaching to communicate its truth to the world. Paul knew God had called him to study the Word and expound its truth for the salvation of those apart from Christ and the edification of believers. He was thankful for the Word and the calling to preach it faithfully.

- Some would argue the relevance of preaching in our day. They think it is outdated and no longer needed. Regardless of the approval or acceptance of society, the world stands in desperate need of men who will submit to the call of God in ministry and faithfully preach the Word. The world may not like it, but it remains God's chosen method. *Rom.10:13-15 – For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. [14] How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? [15] And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

B. The Responsibility (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 also understood the gravity of his calling. The Lord had committed unto him the responsibility to preach the Gospel of grace, particularly to the Gentiles. He had not sought or coveted this position; it was given Him of the Lord and he was determined to fulfill his obligation.

- Preaching may be largely unpopular and rejected by the majority, but I am thankful for the call of God. I am thankful for the men who embrace the call and commit their lives to preaching the Word of God, particularly the Gospel of grace. Many have heard the call and denied it. Others have initially embraced it only to abandon it. Some have remained faithful. We need men of conviction and compassion who will boldly proclaim the truth of the Word!

IV. A Word of Generosity (4) – In the closing thoughts of his introduction, Paul reveals his desire and generous attitude toward Titus. He refers to:

A. Their Relationship (4a) – *To Titus, mine own son after the common faith*. Paul enjoyed a special bond with Titus. It seems apparent that Titus was saved under the ministry of Paul. He referred to him as his own son in the faith. Paul wanted to do all he could to equip Titus and ensure success in ministry for him. He wanted Titus to enjoy all that was available in the Lord.

- There ought to be a special bond among those of like faith. We are all part of the body of Christ. This bond should be increasingly special for those whom you were privileged to have a part in their salvation. We should desire the fullness of God's grace in their lives!

B. The Resource (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*. Paul was never jealous or envious of others in ministry. He had experienced the marvelous grace, mercy, and peace from God and he desired no less for Titus. Paul wanted Titus to enjoy every benefit the Lord offered. He knew ministry would present many challenges and he wanted Titus to be equipped through grace, mercy, and peace. These provisions of God would serve him well in ministry.

- There is no room for jealousy within the church. None have a monopoly on the Lord and we genuinely ought to desire others to experience the fullness available in the Lord. Rather than resenting the blessings of others, we should pray toward that end. If God is working mightily in the lives of others, that will serve to benefit the church as a whole. Let's do all we can to share what we have received and pray for added blessings upon others!

Conclusion: Paul had received much from the Lord and enjoyed the benefits of such a relationship. He had a heart for the church and fellow believers. He was willing to pour himself into others for the benefit of the church. He knew what he had received and was convinced and committed to his calling. He wanted to do all he could to equip Titus and others for success.

We have the wonderful privilege of sharing in the lives of others. God has not blessed us with wisdom or gifted us with abilities to keep to ourselves. May we seek to share in the lives of others, discipling them in the faith. If you are unsaved, not knowing Christ as your Savior, you are unaware of these blessings. Christ made the way for your salvation as well. If He is speaking to you in regard to salvation, come now as He leads you!