

Daily Bible Study

“An Important Introduction”

Titus 1:1-4

November 10 – November 16, 2013

MONDAY –We begin this week a study of the New Testament book of Titus; namely, **Titus 1:1-4**. I have entitled our first study, *“An Important Introduction”* and it most definitely is that. In these first four verses we find a very lengthy salutation which by comparison is the third longest in The Apostle Paul’s thirteen letters; only Romans and Galatians are longer. One reason for this is that Paul is laying a foundation for some important instruction. This long opening for such a short letter is in line with the character and purpose of the letter. The very important theme of Godliness and Godlike character in the lives of God’s people is introduced in the introduction. Paul stresses here that sound doctrine (teaching) goes hand in hand with the life of sanctification and the doing of good works. Although the letter is directed to Titus as an individual, it also moves past him to the churches he supervised. We can easily sit down with Titus and read this letter as if it were addressed to us. These instructions are as relevant to us today as they were to Titus and the saints of his day. We too need to hear about the careful selection of church elders and about the dangerous effects of false teaching (**Chapter 1**). We need to be instructed concerning how we live out sound doctrine in the home and about the transforming power of the two appearing’s of Jesus (**Chapter 2**). We then need to hear again about the civic and social responsibilities of the people of God and about the implications for practical good works as we live in the world (**Chapter 3**). These brief three chapters of Titus relate to the three main contexts of Christian living; namely, the church, the home and the world and connect for us the very practical outworking of duty and doctrine. Read **Titus 1:1-4**: *“Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, ² in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, ³ but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior; ⁴ To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.”*

Suggestion for Prayer: God, teach me this week from Sacred Scripture to understand, see, and celebrate the vindicating resurrection of Your Son, my Lord, Jesus Christ.

TUESDAY – **Titus 1:1**: *“Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness.”* Paul begins by pointing out two things concerning his identity; he is both a

bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. Servant (*doulos*) is better translated “slave”, and “slave of God” was the title given some of the notable men of the Old Testament like Moses, Joshua, the prophets and Jesus, “the suffering servant”. He is stressing the fact that he is God’s property; bought, owned, and directed by God. From this incredibly humble statement we transition to a title of incredible authority, *“apostle of Jesus Christ”*. Only twelve other men had this title which recognized their unique personal call, commission, and authorization from Jesus Christ Himself, to be His inspired messengers. Why was Paul a *bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ*? Although there is some difference of opinion among scholars concerning the translation of the preposition *kata*, literally *“according to...”* we have no problem seeing that his ministry is related to *God’s elect*, that is, the people of God. Paul’s position is linked with the faith of God’s people. It appears the text is saying that He was appointed *“to further”* their faith (NIV). His ministry was to foster or *the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords* (leads to) *with godliness*. Here in this opening verse we find the two fundamental characteristics of the people of God: *faith and knowledge*. It is those who know God’s name who put their trust in him. It is a believer’s knowledge of God and His person, His revealed character which is the foundation of their faith in Him (**Hebrews 11:6**). We trust in God because we know He is trustworthy. We as a family of faith are to grow more and more as we head and obey (live out) the Word of God as instructed by God’s messengers the Apostles.

Suggestion for Prayer: God, help me grow in faith & knowledge of You as I listen to and obey Your Word. Give me strength to obey it and as Paul said, realize I am indeed owned by You.

WEDNESDAY – **Titus 1:2**: *“² in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,”* Before we look at the particulars of **verse 2** I need to take us back to the end of **verse 1**. In the last phrase we read *...which accords with godliness*. In the Old Testament we often find the prophets combating false teaching among God’s people. Jeremiah would be such an example. False prophets professed to be preaching God’s message but actually were doing the very opposite and the sin of God’s people at that time was great and was reinforced and encouraged by the false prophets and their teaching. They did not call the people to repent but to continue in their selfish sinning. The ungodliness was prevalent and growing. Paul is saying here in our text that truth and true doctrine leads to and encourages godliness and right behavior. What we hear from Sacred Scripture and the lips of the Apostles is the truth that leads to godliness. This is what Jesus was saying in His prayer to The father in **John 17:17**. Here we see the importance of availing ourselves to the reading and studying of the Apostles doctrine, Sacred Scripture. If this truth is believed and practiced it will make us Christians growing in Godliness and our lives will be increasingly pleasing, useful, focused, and honoring to God. Now concerning **verse 2** we learn that sound doctrine, the Apostles teaching or we could say Sacred Scripture has to do with *hope of eternal life*. Paul, preached

the hope of eternal life. It was a key element of his ministry as a slave of God and an Apostle of Jesus Christ. *Eternal life* is something *which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began.* This verse is stating that before this world was made, God planned and purposed that certain people, namely, His elect people, would enjoy eternal life (see also **Acts 13:48**). *Eternal life* in the New Testament is a concept that gathers up into one, the blessings of salvation. All that is ours in Jesus as saved sinners is summed up in the word *life*. We do not presently have this life in its final form as there is more to be experienced of it in the future. This is “*hope of...*”. As we mention often, “*hope*” in everyday vernacular refers often to something uncertain while the Bible use of the word has to do with certainty and a certain expectation of something coming about. This is how it is with the hope of eternal life. We can be and should be certain that one day the fullest eternal life will be ours because God who does not lie has promised it to us (**John 3:36**). This was His eternal plan and purpose and we must believe this certain promise.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father God, thank You for the promise of eternal life through Jesus which You guaranteed to Your children who will believe in Jesus and love Him. I'm so glad that my hope is fixed not on how I feel but on what You have decreed to be. Help me believe.

THURSDAY – Titus 1:3: “³but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;” We have seen that from eternity God *promised eternal life* and now we learn how He revealed and reveals this message to mankind. We know that in due time (**1 Timothy 2:6, Galatians 4:4**) God revealed this message of salvation in Christ for both Jews and Gentiles and it was based entirely upon Jesus perfect life of obedience and the forgiveness of sin and repentance credited to us by faith. We know that salvation and its message was promised from eternity (**1 Corinthians 2:7, Ephesians 1:4, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Timothy 1:9**); once obscure and *hidden* (not fully realized and understood) from the eyes of former generations (**Romans 16:25, Ephesians 3:5-9, Colossians 1:26**); now fully made known (*manifested*—by means of gospel-proclamation or preaching of the Word of God (**2 Timothy 1:10-11, Romans 16:26, Ephesians 3:3-9, Colossians 1:26-29**). The Bible word for preaching is *kerysso* which literally means “announce, herald, preach” (**2 Timothy 4:2**). This portion of the letter to Titus a church leader is a statement of the place of the Word of God in the life of the local church. Paul’s ministry was for the faith of the church (God’s elect) and his ministry was not apart from the church but tied directly to it. Jude says this when he says, “*the faith was once delivered unto the saints*” (**Jude 3**). God had deposited this truth to Paul (**1 Timothy 1:11**) and he in turn gave it to Titus and Timothy. God’s grace to save sinners and sanctify believers to a holy life which follows true faith in Christ is revealed through preaching. This message is not merely for those “outside” the church but sinners in and out of the church need to hear this message; never minimize the place of preaching in the local church. Paul now in the final phrase of this verse says this glorious message of the hope of eternal life and the command for him to proclaim it

had been actually been *committed* to him by *commandment of God our Savior*. This gave him such gratitude that he interrupts the steady flow of the sentence with this phrase.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for giving me ears to hear this glorious message of salvation from sin and its penalty through faith in Jesus and His work. Help me desire to grow in Godliness and to enjoy You; living in obedience to Your Word and Holy Spirit.

FRIDAY – Titus 1:4: “⁴To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.” We now meet the main recipient of this letter who is to teach and pass on these truths, Titus. A little biographical information is as follows: Titus was one of Paul’s most trusted co-workers which is seen in the fact Paul sent him to trouble areas such as Corinth and Crete. He was a full Gentile (Timothy was only half-Greek). He was apparently converted under Paul’s preaching (**Galatians 2**). He is mentioned often in Paul’s letters. It is surprising that Luke does not mention him in Acts and as a side-note, some scholars think that he may have been a relative of Luke (possibly a brother) and to include his name would have been seen as an act of cultural impropriety on Luke’s part or Titus is Luke’s major source of information about Paul’s life and ministry and, therefore, like Luke, would not be named. He accompanied Paul and Barnabas to the important Jerusalem Council, recorded in **Acts 15**. Titus is acting as Paul’s official spokesman here in Crete and the last information in the NT about Titus is that he was sent to work in Dalmatia (**2 Timothy 4:10**). We see Paul recognizes him as *a true son in our common faith*. He is united in Jesus to The Apostle and they share as we do with them a common faith; unlike the higher, exclusive “levels” being taught by the false teachers genuine Christians both then and now are equally united in our common faith. It was common in personal correspondence to bring your greetings to a close with a benediction which is an expression of good wishes. Paul’s benediction is a familiar one to us and distinctively Christian: *Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior*. Titus and all Christians have known God’s *grace*. It was by grace we have been saved. But we need grace throughout our lives. It is by grace that the work of salvation continues. We need grace or help to love, forgive, pray, serve, persevere, etc.... So Paul prayerfully wishes grace for Titus. He also wishes *peace* for Titus. Like us, Titus was vulnerable to anxiety especially involved in the work of God’s church among God’s people and he wishes Him the *peace of God which passes understanding* (**Philippians 4:7**) with all the blessing such peace brings. We then see that God and Christ are linked by title, (*God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior*) which was a common technique of NT authors to assert Jesus’ full deity (see also **2:10, 13** and **3:4, 6**). Another note which we will see as we move through the book is that Titus has unique and clear references to the Triune Godhead and their oneness, personhood, and distinct work in our salvation.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I thank & praise You holy trinity for the wonderful & powerful good news of the gospel and Your grace, mercy and peace to me.