

Title: Paul's Introduction to the Epistle to Titus

Text: Luke 1:1-4

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Today, we'll be beginning our series going through the book of Titus and especially looking at that introduction piece today. Now, normally, at least for myself, when I think of the introduction to a book, it's very easy for that to become the part that I quickly skim past. I need to get to the actual content, right? Paul writes in a little bit different manner. Instead, he utilizes his introduction in order to point his readers towards things that are going to come. He uses it in a strategic way to say, that's what I'm going to talk about in a little bit.

In many ways, it seems like Paul writes his introduction kind of like an overture. An overture is a part of a musical or an opera or a film and it works out different songs from throughout the whole work in order to show the listener or the viewer the direction of the rest of the whole work. A few famous ones. The Wizard of Oz. At the very beginning, it weaves together pieces of music from the whole thing in order to show the watcher where the film is going to go, emotionally guiding them. Another one would be Beauty and the Beast. It takes music from the whole movie and strings it together in order that we can see from the very beginning where the storyline is going to go. In doing that, it catches both the emotional highs and the emotional lows in order that the viewer can see them.

In the same way, Paul does the same thing here at the beginning of Titus. What's fascinating with that is that these verses aren't filler but instead they're loaded with theological depth. Paul carefully puts them together and he puts the major themes of Titus together before he's going to continue on later to actually go about developing those ideas. So, our task today is to carefully listen to that overture. To identify the themes, to trace Paul's emphases, to see how this introduction prepares us for the entire message of the book of Titus. So that message that we're going to be focused on today is going to be this: good teaching of good doctrine produces good works.

I'm going to make the argument that that is in our outline or Paul's push for the entire book of Titus, and he uses the introduction in verses 1-4 in order to begin bringing out some of these ideas and then we'll continue to see them throughout the rest of the book. The main idea of the whole book of Titus is this: good teaching of good doctrine produces good works. Hopefully that's easy for us to remember and cling onto as we continue to examine the text. I also want us to recognize that this introduction is very intentional. Paul doesn't just do this because he has to do it and it certainly isn't just, hey guys I'm starting my letter, but instead it's truly Paul getting at the themes of what it is that he wants to talk about.

As we mentioned with the overture imagery of more of that coming out as we spend more time in the text, I think that's also pushing another idea that we're supposed to be returning to the text. We're supposed to again and again and again return back to the scriptures. Psalm 1:1 & 2 tell us to meditate on the law. Joshua 1:8 tells us meditate on the law. Speaking to Joshua meditate on this. But you go to

Deuteronomy 17:18 & 19 it's the instructions for the nation of Israel when one day they receive a king. This is what he's supposed to do. He's supposed to take the law, he's supposed to write out his own copy of it and then after that gets verified he's supposed to take it and carry it around and walk it around and read it every single day returning back to the same thing over and over and over again.

We get to jump ahead to Romans 12:1 & 2 and we're supposed to be transformed by the renewal of our minds. How does that happen? The word and going back to it again and again and again. Thus, I suggest to you that this book is not one that we're supposed to read through and move on but rather one that we're supposed to return to again and again. The introduction of Titus 1-4 is not a one-time read that hopefully we catch important things but rather this is something that we'll continue to come back to as we spend time in the text for the foreseeable future. As Deuteronomy 6 puts it, we're supposed to write this on our hearts, we're supposed to tie this to our hands, idea there being that this should not leave us but rather we are to meditate on the word.

So, if we approach Titus with that understanding then I believe that this introduction is a beautiful emotional foretelling of what is to come in the rest of the letter. So, if you would please stand with me out of honor and respect for the reading of the word of the Lord.

Titus 1:1-4 says this, *"Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began 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; To Titus, my true child and a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our savior."*

Let's go ahead and pray together.

Father as we approach your word this morning, help us to see each piece of this introduction that we would identify who's writing it and where it's going to and what the thrust of Paul's argument is in order that we might be able to read the rest of this book well and appropriately and gleaning from it what we are intended to take away from it. I'd ask that you would make us in our study together of the word and in our personal study that you would take both of those things and that you would make Grace Chapel a group of people who are faithful Bible readers who read the word and they know what it means and they know how to read it. Father encourage us in a few of our identities this morning whether as slaves or elect ones or those who share in a common faith may we remember those things and may they be drives for godliness. Father open our eyes and open our minds to understand your word. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in your sight Lord my rock and my redeemer.

And pray all of this in Jesus's name and in the power of the Holy Spirit, amen.

You guys can have a seat.

Again, this introduction is not just fulfilling a purpose. I hope that we're on the same page with that one at this point. And so, I want to hit on what our four big points are going to be for this morning and so here are those four. First the author of our text that's going to be verse 1a. Our second one in verse 1b is going to be the aim of the book of Titus. Then in verse 1c through verse 3 we're going to see Paul's argument. The argument of the text. And then in verse 4 we'll see the audience of our text. I tried to do my best Pastor Zach impression and give you all A's so hopefully you appreciate that. But the author, the aim, the argument, and the audience of our text. That's what that's what we're going to be looking at this morning and in each of those will be setting up the framework for what we're going to see in the rest of the book of Titus.

So, to begin this morning we're going to start in verse 1 with the author of our text and so I'm going to read that again. *"Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ."* I would assume probably none of you have slave in your Bible. Is it servant? Yes, okay. So many of you probably have servants and I think that that's appropriate. I also think that we at times seem to try to sidestep a potential problem by making it sound friendlier. And so, I just want us to take this very head on we're going to call this Paul a slave of God and we're going to we're going to translate the same throughout the rest of our Bibles as well. Because if we will take this head on and deal with it at absolute worst-case scenario, I think it better prepares us to actually be able to continue to read the rest of our Bibles.

That being said Paul to begin his letter says me a slave of God. I think the question that we have to answer is why in the world would Paul begin a letter by saying it's me the slave of God? And this seems to be a potential tie up. And I'd adventure that many of us say well I know my Bible I know that Paul writes other places Jesus says other places you're not a slave. So, what in the world is going on? We're not a slave but then Paul seems to say that he is a slave. What is happening? I think that that's a reasonable question and so as we're looking at verse 1, we have some problem, *"Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ."* May we consider Romans 8. I think that that's a question of are we slaves or are we not is a real one. And Romans 8 speaks to that. It says this, *"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!' The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs - heirs of God and fellow heirs of Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him."* Did we read that, sons, we're friends. We're sons of God. We're not slaves.

Or maybe you bring up John 15:13-15. It says this, *"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you."* That's Jesus speaking to the disciples. He says you're not slaves you're my friends. So, we're not slaves. Why would Paul say this? Why would he possibly say I'm a slave of God? I think that we would be remiss to view either of those passages though as primarily saying you're not a slave. I think Romans 8 the thrust that it seems to be trying to get to is you're not a slave you're a son and thus you're an heir.

And so, the goal there is that we would view ourselves as heirs. Further we would view ourselves as sons and therefore, we wouldn't be afraid. And so, you're not a slave in the sense that you ought not be afraid because you are a son of God. Or we could go to John 15 and the thrust there you're not a slave you're my friend. And so, as a friend of God then you can know the plans of God. It's not dismissing the idea that you're a slave but rather it's getting at the one that you know the plans of God. I think the John 15 one's funny. We could go even further down in John 15, hopefully you have your Bibles open there, and you can see this. But John 15:13-15 you're not a slave you're my friend. And then we go to John 15:20 and it says this, this is still Jesus talking, *"Remember that the word that I said to you: 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours."* So, what is Jesus doing there? He's saying a slave and a master, and he says I'm the master you guys are the slave. So, either John doesn't know how to write a book, Jesus is nuts, or somehow both of these things are true. That Jesus would say you're not a slave you're my friend and then he'd turn around five verses later and he'd say you are a slave and I'm your master.

We have a problem here dealing with how in the world will we deal with the idea that we are slaves and yet we're free? A hope that we like to return to as Christians again and again is that the thought of one day when I die coming to heaven and hearing *"well done,"* you know it, *"good and faithful servant."* That's Matthew 25 which we could also translate as well done good and faithful slave. Good job slave. Good job good slave. That's the same thrust that it's getting at. So, our very hope is the idea of being told well done good and faithful slave. And so, is Paul a slave or is he not? The answer seems to be kind of both. In one sense Paul himself as we saw in Romans writes that he is no longer a slave, rather he's been delivered from fear. He's been made into an heir.

We saw in John 15 he's been made into a friend of God in order that he might know the plans of God. And at the same time Paul seems to mark himself as a slave. Paul sees himself as one created by God in order that he would worship him. Paul sees himself as one purchased by God in order that he would worship him. Paul sees himself as one commanded by God in order that he would worship him. The reason that we spend so much time looking at this though is because this is a communicative issue for Paul. If Paul's dubbing himself as a slave, what is it that makes him a slave? And we find ourselves under the same guidelines. We too have been for the believer we've been created by God for his worship, we've been purchased by God for his worship, we've been commanded by God for his worship, and so then in a funny way we too are also slaves of God.

We can consider 1 Peter 2:16. It says this, *"Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a coverup for evil, but living as slaves of God."* Live as people who are free, who are slaves of God. And so, these two things must be woven together and so are we slaves are we not. We certainly are in the same way that Paul is or we certainly are not in the same way that Paul is not. For the one who's in Christ we are free of sin. We are made into heirs of a great inheritance. We are made into sons/ friends of God. However also in the same way as Paul we are to understand our status as those who are slaves of God. It's good that we remember that we've been created by God, we've been purchased by him, and we since have been commanded by him as well. So may we not be horrified of our status as slaves but instead delight in the one who we are enslaved to.

The question that we have to address is why should we care so much about this? And I hope that you're hearing because we share the same basis for that language that we would be slaves or as your Bibles likely have a servant. It's not a dreadful thing but instead like we said to be a slave to God is to be clearly free from slavery in the sense that we used to be. And so, it's not an issue of slave or not slave but instead slave to God or slave to sin. And so, we're no longer in bondage to sin and in brokenness and evil but instead we're made sons and heirs and friends of God that we would be enslaved to him but yet that's a much better thing.

May we remember Romans 6:20-23, *"For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit that you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* So, to be a slave of sin is to be one who is enslaved to death and to be a slave to God is to be one who has life. Brothers and sisters may we be a people who are driven by our freedom from sin and our slavery to God. And may we not be a people distressed by our status of servitude but instead delight in the God who provides life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Further on in verse 1 we see a second description of Paul. Paul is a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. Tho slave like we said was a shared title, a shared role that we have with Paul. This apostle one's a little bit different and instead it reveals authority that he has over the reader or Titus or whoever else we're going to get to in just a moment. Just as the first one was shared Paul also notes himself as an apostle in order to indicate his authority, his ability to speak on this. So, the book of Titus is authored by Paul a slave to God like us and an apostle of Jesus Christ. Let's continue on into the aim of the book of Titus. It says this, *"for the sake of the faith of God's elect."* So, this book of Titus it's written by *"Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect."*

So, our second emphasis is on that very thing. That it is targeting the elect of God. I think often I'm hitting on all of the divisive topics today so you're welcome for this. But we got slavery now we're talking about election. And so often we hear that term elect and we cringe because we know the argument that's about to come. If you don't know what I'm talking about then you might be the person citing the argument. But there's this argument that's strapped in there and it's so unfortunate that has become this frustrating tension-bringing thing and instead of being one that's full of life and hope and joy. And so may we speak of election today as something that's beautiful that Paul lays out not as something to have us fight over but instead as something that we should take joy in. I also think it's interesting that we don't take this word as synonymous with Christian in the same way.

I don't regularly walk around dubbing myself as an elect one if somebody asks me what faith I'm under but instead I maybe refer to myself as a Christian. I think that's interesting because Paul seems to use it interchangeably. And yet will interchangeably to highlight the same group of people it's as though he's bringing out a different characteristic of those people. So, to be a Christian is to be one in Christ. To be an elect one is to be one who's chosen by God, and we'll see before the foundations of the world. Right? We

could go to Romans 8:33, *"Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies."* God's elect, right. We could go to Revelation 17. This is verse 14, *"They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is the Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with him are called and elect and faithful"* or *"called and chosen and faithful."* You see the elect are those again and again through your Bible who have done absolutely nothing. They're those who've done nothing to merit salvation for themselves and instead rely entirely on God. They're fully dependent on their being chosen by God.

So, then the question comes but when? When did that happen? And Ephesians 1:4-5 is very helpful here. It says this, *"even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will."* So, when were we chosen by God? Before the foundation of the world. But on what basis did he choose us then? Romans 9:11-12, it says this, *"though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad - in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls - she was told, 'The older will serve the younger.'"* So, this thing that happened before time of selection, why, it's because of him who calls. And we see that here in Romans. It contrary to all common sense the older son would serve the younger son. Not because of their works but because that's simply what God chose.

Now as we touch on election, I want us to briefly consider a question that I believe regularly arises. Is this an election that's an individual specific you election or is this a oh well I've elected Christ and later on I've drafted you into Christ? And a defense for that maybe comes from Ephesians 1:4-5. It says again, *"even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world."* Now there'll be an argument drawn out there that this is then pointing to even as we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. And while we certainly want to confess that we were in a sense chosen in him. We are not to somehow dismiss a personal nature of this as well. To be a part of the elect by God is to be specifically individually elect as well. It's both to be elected into Christ and yet also elected you individually.

Consider 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, says this, *"For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God."* So why would he do that? Verse 29, so that there would be no boasting among men. It is not some far-off election of Christ that we're then able to somehow add ourselves into if we behave rightly but instead it's an election as well of individual people in order to put them in Christ. May we not lose sight of that.

If we are to claim that Christians or believers if we are to claim that we are those people, then it is to assume that we are those who are elect. We ought to use this synonymously. That the Christian and the believer and the elect those are all the same group of people. We know definitively that this is a work done by God on our behalf because we could not possibly merit salvation. This isn't derived from our goodness but instead it's fully derived from God's grace. And so, I want to push you in a few ways accordingly with the election point.

First may the Christian be the person most willing to plead for forgiveness. Because of our status of I didn't do anything to deserve this. God acted on my behalf by his grace in order to give grant me salvation. In light of that may we be people who are very willing to ask for forgiveness. Because of my concealing of my sin is not somehow making more of myself but instead of all that it's really doing is lessening the grace of God. May we allow full glory to be granted to God because he has done a work to save us. In the means by which people may know that we are broken and thus needing salvation. And salvation has been given is by our confessing our sins.

Second may we rely wholly on Christ for our very life. Like I said we've been chosen into life with him and so may we not somehow forsake life with him now. That we wouldn't become people who are selected into Christ and then dismiss Christ. But instead that we would continue to cling to him. And Mark's done an excellent job of bringing that up again and again in our confession each week. And so may we remember that very thing. That it is a wrong thing for us to forsake Christ now.

And finally, I think that there are some implications on the thought of some people being elect when we consider evangelism. You may be sitting there honestly asking the question I've wrestled with this much as well. You may be sitting there asking the question if people are elect why in the world would I go make a fool of myself? Why in the world would I go share the gospel with somebody if the elect people are already going to believe? I ask you to consider Acts 13:47-48 with me. It says this, *"For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, 'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.' And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed."*

Catch the ordering there, *"as many as were appointed to eternal life those ones believed."* Not as many as believed were then appointed to eternal life but instead as we said, *"as many as were appointed to eternal life those ones believed."* They rejoiced. They glorified the word of the Lord. And we can continue on into Acts 18. It says this, *"And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.'"* The Lord's calling Paul to go into another city in which the gospel has not yet gone. He says go I have people there who are mine. I have people there who have been appointed to eternal life and have not yet believed, and so bring the gospel to them.

And so, this isn't a good basis for which we should dodge evangelism because oh well some people are already going to believe and everyone that's going to believe is going to and so I don't need to worry about it. But instead, it's a perfect drive for us to actually go do evangelism. Our very hope in evangelism is the fact that there are many who are sheep who will respond when they hear the shepherd's voice. Thus, we ought not to be ashamed because we have words of life. Thus, may we say exactly the same thing as Paul does in 2 Timothy 2:10. As he says this, *"Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."* Brothers and sisters, we need to be willing to endure everything for the sake of the elect so that they might obtain salvation.

The elect obtaining salvation not those who are already saved in order that they might become elect but instead the ones who don't yet believe who are elect. May we be willing to endure everything in order that they might know. And so no you're not going to make a fool of yourself for some baseless reason but instead we ought to go share the gospel in order that those who are elect who do not yet know would know. And so, there are implications because of this on local evangelism. May we be a people who go to our neighbors and are willing to endure everything in order that they might obtain salvation. That the elect neighbor would know. May we be a people who are passionate about church planning in order that churches might be planted in order that more people might know. That I would endure even something as crazy as going off into this place that I'm more unfamiliar with in order that people there might obtain salvation. May we be a church who's driven by the idea of their being elect in South Asia and in other places overseas in order that the elect there might obtain salvation. That requires us to be willing to endure everything.

Third I want to continue on into Paul's argument. He says this, I might read the first part again as well, *"Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began 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."* Paul's desire is this, first that there would be knowledge of the truth which comes about as we talked about previously and as we'll certainly talk about a lot more in the coming weeks which comes about by good right teaching.

Paul cares about the knowledge of the truth. He then cares also that that would lead to something else. That that would lead to godliness. We see that teaching piece in chapter 2:1. He says this, *"But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine."* Good teaching gives way to good doctrine and out of that then flows what he's saying in verse 2. *"Which accords with godliness."* Or the end of verse 1, excuse me, *"which accords with godliness."* This godliness piece I think we could also take to understand in line with what Paul says in Timothy, that this is good works. That good teaching of good doctrine should then lead to good works or godliness. We'll see that again and again throughout the text. We'll look at that in just a moment as well.

Just like we said this is the big idea of the whole book of Titus. And this is a zoomed in piece as well then. That there would be a good teaching that would lead to good doctrine that then would accord with godliness in hope of eternal life that then at the proper time was manifested. Those three ideas if you're a note-taker I think this is really cool within Titus biblical theology of it. Those three ideas coming back up again and again and so we're going to examine the rest of the book very quickly and see those again. And so, we've got accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, and at the proper time manifested. Those are my three ideas, okay.

We're going to go to chapter 2:11-14. It says this, *"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a*

people for his own possession who are zealous for good works." I tried to underline these so you can see them, but the grace of God has appeared. It's been manifested, right. We see that same idea and continue on waiting for our blessed hope. Chapter 1 we see in hope of eternal life. And then the end here which accord with godliness, which accord with good works.

Look at verse 14, *"who are zealous for good works."* We continue on to chapter 3:4-8. I will read that as well. It says this, *"But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."* The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things. So that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. Again, I present to you the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior has appeared. It has been made manifest that this accords with the hope of eternal life. It's on the hope of eternal life. And the fruit of this is that they ought to be careful to devote themselves to good works.

I made this chart because it was helpful for me. Hopefully it's helpful for somebody in here. And so, you can see very clearly how Paul takes these three ideas and he draws them out through the rest of Titus as well. And so just as I said that this acts as an overture to the rest of the book, we're going to see that again and again. That this godliness and hope and it being manifested that comes up in chapter 1 is not an accident. This is not Paul just trying to throw some words together and so that he can check off his introduction on his checklist. But instead, it's Paul grabbing main themes for the rest of the book and saying this is what's going to come. Heads up it's going to be great. That's what he's doing here and so we then as readers get to look forward to each of these things.

But as I mentioned earlier that we get to return back to the text again and again as we spend time considering Titus time and time and time again. And then we note these and so then you get to the introduction it's Paul starting it. This is godliness. He wants all of this to lead to godliness and he's talking about it right here because that's his point. How awesome that the word is oriented in such a way that we might be able to meditate on it. I also want to hit on this briefly while we're here because I think that this is kind of a funny piece that Paul drops in there. In verse 2 he goes, *"in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began."* I read that and it's like why in the world is Paul just like oh yeah by the way God who never lies and then he just keeps going.

And so, I think this is another opportunity for us to as we're reading catch things that seem odd and ask questions about them. So why in the world does Paul emphasize *"which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began."* That seems like such an odd thing to throw in there. Like of course God never lies. But that's not the case in this environment. Instead look at chapter 1:12. It says this, *"One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.'"* Actually, look at verse 13 also. I think this is funny. Paul then goes, *"This testimony is true."* The Cretans they're always liars, they're evil beasts, they're lazy gluttons and Paul goes yep that's true. And so, then in chapter 1 at the beginning when Paul has to say, *"which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began."* It's very intentional

because clearly the Cretans have a problem. They lie, their prophets lie, their gods lie, and so nobody is considered a truth-teller anymore.

And so, Paul makes a point to say hey by the way your God is not one who lies but instead he's a God of truth. He's a God who tells the truth and means the truth and he acts on the truth. So, if that is true in the slightest then again, we should rejoice. Our God has made such a plan that we may forever have life in him, right. He promised that before the ages began and if we serve a true God then his promise is certainly going to come about. And so, then when it says that it's made manifest that's a true thing. We serve a God who has truly made manifest our hope of eternal life. Unlike the Cretans we serve a God who is not untrustworthy. We serve a God who is trustworthy. We serve the only true God, and he has promised us life.

Fourth, Paul's audience. The answer is very easy here. Well, we're going to key in on something particular. It says this, *"To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior."* And I want to key in especially on that phrase, *"my true child in a common faith."* We know from other places that Paul is single. So, if you read this and you say ah his true child, that's a son, got it. That's not totally right because Paul is single. But generally, this is understood to mean that Paul would have shared the gospel with Titus and that is how Titus came about to be one of the faith. It's interesting though that Paul sees that and says we're under a common faith.

I think that the gospel in its repercussions are a flattening thing. They put everyone all of a sudden at the same level. I think this has repercussions for us as well. When there's some hero of the faith or a pastor or another believer that's been another believer for far longer than we have we ought to understand that we are by the grace of God elect equally with them in children of the same common faith. A few examples: John MacArthur and the believer at Grace Chapel are sons of the true common faith, John Piper and the believer at Grace Chapel are sons of the true common faith, Pastor Zach and the other believer at Grace Chapel are sons of a common faith. It's one that rests in the same hope.

We read from Acts 2 in our scripture reading this morning. That was very intentional. If you didn't know today is Pentecost Sunday. So, we can celebrate that. Rejoice in that. Because of that we have the spirit indwelling in us. Believers in this room the elect ones who believe, we equally share in a common faith in which the spirit equally dwells inside of us. Fully dwells in us. So, to end today, may we consider our indwelling of the spirit. The spirit of God himself makes man into his dwelling place. That's an awesome thing. And for the elect one in this room, the spirit of God himself has made you his dwelling place. That's something worth rejoicing in.

And so, as we continue on through the book of Titus in weeks to come, I look forward to returning again to this opening passage again and again and again coming back to it. And I'd encourage you to do the same whether in your personal study or in your time studying together as a family that you would return back to just these four verses. Rehearse some of the same truths. There are things in here that we did not get to speak about this morning. And so, I'd encourage you to go back there and read it and meditate on it because it's going to come up later.

May we leave today remembering though who we are in Christ. The Christian is a slave to God. That's not a burdening thing but rather a thing that gives us life. The Christian is one of God's elect. He's been chosen by God. The Christian shares the common faith that we're on an even playing field in which we're all fully indwelt with the spirit. And out of those three things may joy be what bleeds out of this. May Grace Chapel be people who are so filled with joy that our neighbors speak to us and that's all that comes out is delight. Because I'm a slave to God. I'm enslaved to life. May joy come out because I'm one of God's elect. May joy come out because I share in a common faith with you guys. May we therefore live in a manner that accords with godliness. When people bump up against us may we have a different taste in our actions because of these things. In the weeks ahead as I said we'll continue to see this truth unfold. I hope that you're beginning to see how all of this comes back to good teaching of good doctrine producing good works.

For now, I want us to linger here for a while. As I said I'd encourage you to come back to this. Return to these words. Meditate on them often. Let them dwell richly in you. For just as an overture grows sweeter when you know the rest of the Psalms, I trust that these opening words of Titus will become sweeter to us each time that we come back and return to them. And so may the melody of the gospel echo in our hearts this week as doctrine stirs worship and truth produces godliness and the Word of God shapes us more into the likeness of Christ.

Let's go ahead and pray together.

Father, we thank you that in this time together we can rejoice in good truths of who you've made us out to be. That for the believer that we would be God's elect. That we'd be a slave to not death but a slave to life and that we would share in that commonly. That we would each be indwelt with the spirit. Father may those be things that we remember and that we know and then we continue to return back to again and again in order that the ways that we live as good teaching gives way to good doctrine. As we remember that good doctrine may our action accord with godliness. Father make us people who are joyful in things of life. That we would cling to you and that would seep out of us for the rest of our lives as well in opportunities for evangelism and in sharing what it is that we claim to believe. This week may we remember that we are sons of life, that we are heirs, that we have great joy because you are a God, and you are the one who will not forsake us.

And we pray all of this in Jesus's name in the power of the Holy Spirit, amen

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