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Introduction

Well, if there was ever one concise book on what a church is to look like and how it is to function, Titus is that book. Titus is the book only three chapters long. And yet it is a packed book. We could go line by line and spend months in this book. But we can't do this. So, we're going to go chapter by chapter, and try and get all of this in. As we work our way through this little book, you're going to see that there's a lot packed in here that will hopefully be a blessing to you, and strengthen your walk in Christ.

Now Titus was the second to last book that Paul wrote before his death. His last being 2nd Timothy, it was the last book that Paul wrote. And you can see from Paul's writings that he was very concerned about the church. He loved the church, very concerned about the church. The first ten books that he wrote, were to Galatia, Thessalonica, Corinth, Rome, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, and then he writes a letter to Philemon, which even if you look there, it's to the church that is there in his home. So, he's all about the church.

But his last three letters that he writes, are written to pastors of churches, to Titus and to Timothy, his sons in the faith. And he wrote to the churches to give them instructions on doctrine, and duty, and then he writes to pastors to help them to lead the churches that God has established. One of those pastoral epistles is this one to Titus.

Now, we don't know the exact date of this writing of Titus, but it was somewhere around 64 A D, between His first and his second Roman imprisonment. It was written around the same time that he wrote 1 Timothy. So, he writes 1 Timothy, and then he writes Titus. You can even see if you were to look at both of those letters, there's a lot of similarities between 1 Timothy and Titus. But pastoral ministry is on Paul's mind. It's on his mind. Now, Titus was a Gentile, who was most likely converted on Paul's first missionary journey in Antioch. So, Titus is not new to ministry.

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Paul, you have to think about, has been a missionary for many, many years. He's traveled all over. He's been doing a lot of preaching and building up churches and planting churches. And Titus has been there along with him. Titus is one of his sons in the faith. Titus is not new to ministry. He most likely traveled with Paul on his second and third missionary journeys and did a lot of ministry with Paul. Titus, in fact, was at the Jerusalem Council, where they settled the debate on whether a Gentile must be circumcised in order to be saved. And we talked about that in Galatians. Galatians, chapter 2. Titus was there for that Jerusalem council.

So, Titus has been in the fight for the truth. He has been fighting right there alongside Paul. And he's been fighting for the truth, especially against Judaizers (false teachers who were saying that gentiles and Jews were bound by the Mosaic law in order to be saved.) If you wanted to be saved, you had to bind yourself to the Mosaic Law, and do, do, do, do, do. But what is the true gospel message? Is it by doing? No. It's by faith alone, in Christ alone. And so, Titus-- he knew these Judaizers. He was in the fight with these false teachers.

[Map of Paul's Journeys and the Island of Crete](#)

Now, Titus is on the island of Crete when Paul writes to him. On the island of Crete. It's about 600 miles off the coast of Israel in the Mediterranean. So, we might ask, how did the gospel get to this island? How did the gospel get over there? Well, in Acts chapter 2, when Peter was preaching the gospel in Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, guess who was there? Some Cretans. There were Cretans who were there. They heard the gospel. They were saved, and then they took the gospel back to the island. They began to preach it. Paul, then stopped there on his way to Rome (in chains) for his first imprisonment, and he spent some time on that island. After his first imprisonment, then he went back to Crete, he met up with Titus. And he spent more time there preaching the gospel to the people and establishing churches on this island.

And so, we can conclude that this island was well reached with the gospel, right? Well-reached gospel proclamation there on the island of Crete. But Paul left the island, and he left Titus on that island to put things in order in the churches. We see this in chapter 1 in verse 5. [“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you”](#) (Titus 1:5)

Eventually, Artemas and Tychicus, they would be sent by Paul to Crete, to take over ministry there. And Paul then wanted Titus to join him in Nicopolis, in the province of Achaia, in Greece, which is most likely where Paul is writing this letter from. But during the time of Paul's pastoral letter to Titus, Titus is on the island of Crete putting things in order, and he's appointing elders in the churches there on this island of Crete.

So, let's look at chapter 1. Tonight, we're going to break it down into three points: point number one, and we're going to see The Salutation of Paul. Point number two, we're going to see The Standard for Church Elders. And then point number three, we're going to see The Silencing of False Teachers. The Salutation, The Standard, and The Silence.

1. The Salutation of Paul

So, let's look at our first point here, The Salutation of Paul. The first four verses are Paul's greeting to Titus. And in the Greek, this is one long sentence, he just couldn't put the pen down, he couldn't put a period. He just keeps writing and writing and writing four verses long, there is a long introduction. We're going to look at this verse by verse. So, let's look at verse 1. "Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness," (Titus 1:1)

Paul identifies himself here as the author. And then he gives himself a twofold description. There's a twofold description of himself here.

- First, he says, he's a bond servant of God, a bond servant. That word bondservant there in the Greek is the word "doulos", doulos. And it means slave. Slave. This term speaks of one who sells himself into servanthood, and submission, of the will of another person. Who was Paul a slave of? God. He's a slave of God, and he sold himself to serve God and submit his life to the will of God, his life is completely surrendered over to the will of God.
- Second, Paul describes himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ, that word apostle there means a sent one, one who was sent with a message, and endowed with the full authority of the sender. This was a unique office, a unique office that only a few men had at the beginning of the church. These are men that we would call capital A Apostles, capital A Apostles, that is Apostles who are specifically chosen by Christ Himself, to be messengers to go and spread the gospel. Now, there were also other apostles that we would call lowercase a apostles who served alongside the capital A Apostles. They were messengers as well, but they were not messengers sent directly by Christ. And so that's the difference between the twelve and the Apostle Paul and other apostles during that apostolic period who were there ministering alongside the Apostles, doing apostolic work with the Apostles. But Paul was a capital A Apostle. He was an Apostle that was sent by Christ.

When was he sent by Christ? On the road to Damascus, on the road to Damascus, Jesus met him there. And he was then commissioned by Christ Himself. And Paul was sent with the message of the gospel that He received directly from Christ to go and preach to Jews, but specifically to who? Gentiles. To go preach to everybody, go preach it to the Jews and the gentiles, but specifically he was an apostle to the gentiles. Go get the gospel message out to the Gentiles.

Now, why would Paul use this title like this? Calling himself an apostle? I mean, doesn't it sound kind of arrogant of Paul, "I'm an apostle of Jesus Christ." Kind of an arrogant statement. But Paul is not being arrogant here. That's not his heart at all. He wants to remind Titus, of the authority of the words that he was about to give to Titus. This is authoritative. You listen to everything that I am writing to you, Titus, your duty, and your task Titus, is to obey everything that I am telling you here. Because I'm an apostle of Christ. Titus was accountable to obey everything that Paul was about to give him in this letter. And the same is true for us. Right? We are accountable to everything that is written in this book here. It comes directly from God, we've been studying that on Sunday mornings, right? Bibliology. It comes directly from God. And so, we are accountable to it, to obey every word of this. Because its ultimate

source is Christ Himself. He's the source of the Scriptures that we have. And so, we can't pick and choose, there's no picking and choosing what we want to obey in our Bibles. We're bound to obey all of it because it is our authority. It is what we submit our lives to.

Now, why was Paul a slave of God and an apostle of Christ? Well, he served (notice there) "[for the faith of those chosen of God](#)" (Titus 1:1). For the faith of those chosen of God, he saw himself as an evangelist, who was called to go and preach the gospel. And those who are chosen of God would respond to that call with faith in Christ. Listen, Paul was not worried about gimmicks. He wasn't worried about trying to do all kinds of gimmicks to bring people into the doors. Paul was concerned with preaching the gospel, and he knew those who are chosen by God would hear the gospel, and they would respond in repentance and faith. He left the salvation aspect of it up to God. He said, I'm a messenger. And my job is to go and preach the gospel. And all those who hear the gospel, if they're chosen of God, God will save them.

That's our task as well. It's why we don't do gimmicks. It's why we don't try and do all of this stuff to try and bring people into the doors. No, we preach the gospel, and God is going to save whom God is going to save. We leave the results up to Him. And that's exactly what Paul knew. But Paul didn't just stop there. Notice he goes on, "[and the knowledge of the truth...](#)" (Titus 1:1). His job was also to preach the truth and to edify God's church. He preached for the edification of the church. Notice how Paul even qualifies truth here. Truth is not subjective. It's not your truth. It's not my truth. It is the truth, the truth, which is according to godliness. Godliness only comes through obedience to God's truth, not my truth and not your truth, but God's truth.

True godliness and sanctification can only happen when one submits themselves to the truth of God's Word. That's what we're called to do. And as a person believes the truth of the gospel, then, a truly saved person will then desire to grow more in godliness in accordance with God's Word. That's the desire of a true saved person.

Paul goes on in verse 2, "[in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,](#)" (Titus 1:2) Once a believer gets saved, then they get sanctified as they're on the road to eternal life. That is our hope. Our hope is no longer in this world, but our hope is in Christ and eternal life with Him. That's our hope. Now, what is hope? We need to ask. Oftentimes we throw this word around, I hope that happens. I hope this happens. What is hope? What is true biblical hope? Hope is a confident expectation of something good, confident expectation, which means we can have a confident expectation of life with Christ forever. And how can we have this confidence? Because notice what he says there, because "[God, who cannot lie, promised us this eternal life, long ages ago.](#)" (Titus 1:2) He promised it and He can't lie.

How long ago did He promise eternal life to us? In eternity past, in eternity past, before any of us were even born, He promised us eternal life. He chose us and He predestined us to eternal life. We see this even in Ephesians chapter 1. Listen, God's plan of salvation did not start after the fall. It didn't start after the fall. God didn't see the fall and go, Oh, no, what am I going to do now? I better save these poor last sinners. No, it started way before the fall in eternity past. He chose whom he chose in eternity past. And

all those whom He chose will hear the gospel and respond in faith and believe. And they will be granted eternal life that God promised before the world was even created. God promised it even before then.

Look at verse 3, "but at the proper time manifested, *even His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior,*" (Titus 1:3) Although God's plan and promise were made in eternity past, they are revealed in a moment in time, the gospel has been revealed at the proper time. And the gospel now has been proclaimed. And He chose the Apostles to do it, to proclaim it, and to write it down so that you and I can have it in our hands and preach it every week. He chose these men. Paul was one of those who was entrusted with the gospel, in which he was commanded by God.

One commentator says, "That this phrase, *according to the commandment of God our Savior, drips with authority.*" That's what he's saying, here. This is not my message. This is the message of Christ, and therefore it has authority for everyone to believe it, and to obey it. Not that Paul in himself has the authority, but the message that he is giving, that is authoritative, and everyone must respond to this message. Paul, then designates who this letter is to. Notice in verse 4. "To Titus, my true child in common faith:" (Titus 1:4) Titus, like Timothy, is one of Paul's sons in the faith. Titus is a spiritual child of his spiritual father, Paul. And so that's Paul's salutation.

2. The Standard for Church Elders

Let's look at our second point tonight, The Standard for Church Elders. The Standard for Church Elders. Paul left Titus on the island of Crete. And he gave him two tasks, two tasks.

- First, set in order what remains. Now remember, Paul is, or Titus is not new to ministry, right? He's not new to, to ministry, to ministry in the church. He learned a lot from Paul, he had seen a lot of ministry happen in his lifetime. But Paul now tasked him with the duty to put the churches in order. What does this mean? It means to teach the church correct doctrine and teach them how to live in light of their salvation. Teach them doctrine, and then teach them how to live.

The church was under attack from false teachers during this time. Many false teachers were coming into the church and the church was under attack, and so they needed to correct doctrine. They needed correct doctrine. As we'll see, in chapter 2, they also need to be taught on how to live amongst one another in the church. And so, he writes in chapter 2 to the church and how they are to live.

- But there's a second task that Titus was given, and that was to appoint elders in every city. To appoint elders. "Appoint" here means to put in charge elders or to be put in charge. Elders is the word "presbuteros" and generally refers to any older man...and generally what it refers to. But here it refers to an official office. Not just an old man, but an official office. We know it's not specifically referring to old men. That's not in fact, because that's not a qualification to be an elder -- to be an old man. But we know that Titus and Timothy, were young men, right? Don't let

anyone look down on you because you are young Timothy. (1 Tim 4:12) He was a young man. Titus was a young man, and they were elders in the church.

Paul was to, or Titus was to [appoint these elders...notice...in every city \(Titus 1:5\)](#) Meaning there were a number of local churches that had been established on this island. Now, Paul, most likely started putting things together with Titus. But then he left to do more ministry. So, he left Titus behind to finish the job. But in order for Titus to appoint these men to leadership in the church, there were standards. These men had to meet qualifications. And in looking for these qualifications, this means that Titus was not alone in selecting these men. Notice this, he was not alone in selecting these men. He had the Holy Spirit alongside of him, helping him to choose these men, as he looked for the qualifications in these men, because it was the Holy Spirit who was preparing these men and giving these men that desire. And then pointing out to Titus, this is a man that is qualified, you will appoint him to the office of elder in the church. So, he has the Holy Spirit guiding him in this.

What qualifications must an elder possess? Look at verse 6. ["namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion."](#) (Titus 1:6)

- First, an elder can only be a man, only a man. The Greek word "tis" there is a singular masculine pronoun, which is where we get "any man" from, man. An elder can only be a man.
- Second, he must be above reproach. This means blameless. So, the idea is that if an accusation is brought against this man, it won't stick. You can bring accusations all you want, but they're just going to fall and fall and fall. He's a blameless man, above reproach. It doesn't mean sinless, but it means blameless.
- Third, he is to be the husband of one wife, meaning a one-woman man, obviously another qualification that shows that the office is only for men, husband of one wife.
- Fourth, having children who believe. Now, the Greek here is debatable. You look at this Greek word that Paul uses. The Greek word he uses is "pistas." And it can mean either believing, or it can mean faithful, either believing or faithful. That's what that Greek word means. But if we look over to Paul's letter to Timothy, that helps us to answer this question. Is it believing children, Paul? Or is it faithful children? Well, he says to Timothy in 1 Timothy 3:4, ["He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity"](#) (1 Tim 3:4) So he's not saying believing children. He's saying faithful children, that they must be faithful children. They must be faithful, meaning they must not be wild or uncontrollable, which is why he qualifies at the end of verse 6, ["not accused of dissipation or rebellion."](#) (Titus 1:6) One commentator says, *"What is clear is that the man's Christian faith has radically affected his marriage, parenting and home life. It's affected every area."*

Then he says in verses 7 and 8, more qualifications for an elder. We don't have time to go into all of those. But there they are. You can read those in verses 7 and 8.

Verse 9, he says, "holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict." (Titus 1:9) The elder must hold to the faithful Word. We could say he must hold to sound doctrine. He must choose the Word of God over all other opinions and teachings that go against God's Word. Somebody comes with an opinion, he says, "Nope, this is what the Word of God says." Frankly, I really don't care what your opinion is. What does God's Word say? That's what we want to know. That's what we go to. He's a man who clings to God's Word.

Why? Two-fold.

- First, "so that he will be able both to exhort and sound doctrine". (Titus 1:9) He must be able to teach. We see that in 1 Timothy 3. And using God's Word, he must be able to exhort. That word "exhort" there has a broad meaning of both encouragement from a softer side, so that he will be able to use God's word to encourage one another, to edify each other from a softer side, but also to exhort in a more stern manner, just as a father has to do with his children. Encourage...but there's times where he needs to exhort them..."Child, you must do this." And he must get a little bit more stern. The idea there is to come alongside for the purpose of strength, strengthening them and helping them. To urge, beseech, and encourage.
- Second, he must be able "to refute those who contradict." (Titus 1:9) Refute here means to speak against, to speak against. And they must speak against those who contradict sound doctrine. It doesn't mean to ignore them, listen to this, it does not mean to ignore them. And it doesn't mean to tolerate them. But stand up and speak against them. That's the job of the elders of the church, when false teachers come into the church, to refute them, to speak against them.

I had a phone call today in the Lord's providence, of a man who wanted to debate the Trinity with me. He said that Jesus is created. And he knew too much Hebrew and too much Greek to get himself in trouble. And he got himself in a lot of trouble, as he denied Christ. And so I urged him, to humble himself, to repent, and to believe in the true God of the Bible: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three persons, one God. And he went on and on and just talked and talked and talked, to finally get to the point where, sad to say, I literally hung up on the guy, because he just would not shut his mouth. Silence. And if that man ever shows up here, he will not be allowed in this building. Because he wants to start a fight. He doesn't want to come and listen, he doesn't want to hear from the Word of God. And it's the duty and the responsibility of the elders of the church, to take men like that and say, You are not welcome here. We will silence you, and you can leave.

That's the duty and the responsibility of the elders in the church to do that. Why? Because we love you. Because we don't want wolves coming in, to lead you astray. Because we care for you. That's the task of the elders. And that's what Paul was telling Titus to do, to appoint elders in the church to do this very thing.

3. The Silencing of False Teachers

Let's look at our third point, third and final point, The Silencing of False Teachers. Look at verse 10. "For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision." (Titus 1:10) Paul starts off in verse 10, with "For". One of the reasons why elders are so important in the church is because there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers that are out there. The rebellious are those who don't want to submit to authority, they demand autonomy. That's one way to spot a false teacher. Notice... they will be out away from a local church trying to do their own thing. They don't want to submit to authority. They're not connected to a local church. Another way you can spot a false teacher usually is they will have their name.com as a website, look for it. Watch. Why? Because it's all about them. It's me.com. And everybody should listen to me. False teachers.

Sadly, these men, especially these false teachers, on the island of Crete, that Paul is talking about here. These are men who profess to be believers. They profess to be believers, but they are unbelievers. They're rebellious, empty talkers. They sound impressive, but their speech is vain and senseless. Their words have no value to anyone, although they will make you think they are. They're also deceivers. What does that mean? They aim at your mind. They're coming after your mind to deceive you into thinking wrong things about God's Word. That's what deceivers do.

Paul then identifies a specific group of them. Notice -- he says there, "especially those of the circumcision," (Titus 1:10) these would be the Judaizers. Those who were teaching that circumcision and adherence to the Mosaic law were necessary for salvation. But remember, Titus has been there at the fight, right? He was there at the battle, the Jerusalem Council, he knows what's going on. Titus was well aware, and he was equipped to handle these false teachers, these Judaizers.

What must elders of the church do with these false teachers? Notice verse 11, "who must be silenced." (Titus 1:11) They must be silenced, not tolerated. You don't just give them another platform in the name of free speech? Nope, you silence them. They are to be silenced. And it's the job of the elders of the church to silence false teachers. That word there, "silence", has the idea of bridle, or muzzle, or gag in the mouth, and therefore bring them to silence.

Now, the hope of these false teachers is that well, the hope of the elders for these false teachers is that they would be brought to repentance and faith, right? That's the desire is that they would come to the knowledge of the truth. But there are way too many churches today who give platforms to false teachers who should be silenced. And there are way too many publishing companies who are willing to publish books by false teachers. These false teachers need to be silenced. It's the duty of the church to silence them. And any false teacher who comes into Faith Bible Church, it's the duty of the elders to silence them...and we will, we will silence them. We do it out of love, out of love, not just for them, because we desire them to come to the true knowledge of the faith, but out of greater love for you. Because we love you.

Because when they come in, look at what they're doing. They are damaging the church, like what Paul says, "they're upsetting whole families." (Titus 1:11) We as elders, we love God's people. And we love the families of Faith Bible Church. And we don't like it when false teachers come in and upset families.

So, we're going to stand up to them. We're going to warn you against false teachers, and we're going to stand up to false teachers and silence them. And listen, we won't offer any apologies. It's serious business. We're dealing with the truth of God's Word here. And we're not going to offer any apologies for it. We do it out of love for God's flock. Because we love you.

Notice what the motive of these false teachers is...*"sordid gain."* (Titus 1:11) They're always after the money. That's how you can tell a spot a false teacher. If they ask for money, don't give it. Don't give it to them. You're only furthering their cause. And Satan is the one who's behind all of that. You're essentially funding Satan's movement. Don't give to them. They're after your money. Even in Titus' day, they were after the money. It's nothing new under the sun, right? Nothing new.

Now Paul knows that these people that Titus is dealing with are not good people. And so notice he quotes one of their own prophets, not a prophet of God, but a well-respected Cretan. This is most likely Epimenides, who was a sixth century BC Greek poet and a native of Crete. And he knew about Cretans. Epimenides did, and he said Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons. This was the character of these false teachers, to which Paul says is true in verse 13. Right? He says, *"this testimony is true."* (Titus 1:13) This is who these false teachers are. What were these elders supposed to do with these false teachers? To reprove them severely, literally cut them off and do it now, and continually do it, so that any false teacher who comes in, you cut them off, you silence them, and you do it now, and you can continually silence false teachers. Anyone who turns others away from the truth must be stopped. They must be silenced.

One commentator says, *"It is it is necessary to appear rude sometimes for safety, if the house is on fire, and life is in danger."* Right? If the house is on fire, be as rude as you can be to get everybody out of there. And the same is true in God's church. It may seem rude, but it's because false teachers are coming into God's house, into God's church to destroy His church, and the elders are not going to allow this to happen.

Now Paul ends in verses 15 and 16, by describing these false teachers, and comparing them to true believers. Notice he says, *"To the pure, all things are pure."* (Titus 1:15) The pure, the true believers, and they will always go back to the pure Word of God and live according to it. To the pure all things are pure, and we live according to the pure Word of God, but false teachers, they are those who are defiled and unbelieving. They are defiled, both outwardly and inwardly. Both their mind and their conscience are defiled. Why? Because they're unbelievers, even though they profess to be believers, but they are unbelievers. In fact, that's what Paul even says in verse 16. *"They profess to know God"* (Titus 1:16) Right? They profess to know God. But listen, not everyone who claims to be a Christian is a Christian. They're not.

So how can you tell a false Christian? Notice what he says there? *"But by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed."* (Titus 1:16) Watch their life. Watch their life. If they're believers, they will grow and they will produce spiritual fruit. If they aren't, even though they claim to be a Christian, they won't be producing fruit in their life. It's that simple. Their deeds are going to show it. Just step back and watch them. They'll put it on display for you. I promise they do it. How do we know? Isn't that what Jesus said in Matthew 15:11, *"It's not what enters the*

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mouth that defiles a man, but what proceeds out of the mouth that defiles the man." (Matt 15:11) And Jesus goes on. And he says it comes out of their mouth because it comes from where? Their heart. (Matt 15:18-19) it will always come out. Watch a man's life. And you'll see whether or not he's a true believer.

Well, for those who are false teachers trying to get in the church, Paul says they must be silenced. And it's the duty of the elders of the church to do this.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for the truth of Your word. And thank You for godly men, like Paul and Titus, who stood for the truth, because they loved You. They love the truth. They love Your Word. They love Your church. And we pray against any false teachers that would come into this church. Father, I pray for the man that I spoke with today. I pray that You would change his heart, God, that You would open his eyes give him understanding of the truth of who Christ is. That he would come to the true knowledge of salvation. Grant him repentance and faith in the One True God. Father, I pray for our time now, in small group as we discuss these questions. I, pray that we would be edified and that we would glorify You in all that we do and say. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.