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*God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.*

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## Titus 1.

(2013)

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The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

***Teach it, don't demand it.***

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## Titus.

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### Topics.

- The knowledge of the truth is in agreement with godliness.
- God manifested his word through preaching.
- Titus is to appoint elders in every town.
- The character of an elder/overseer.
- Elders, overseers and bishops.
- Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons.
- To the pure, all things are pure.

**INTRODUCTION:** this mid-first-century pastoral letter from the apostle Paul to Titus was intended to offer encouragement and wisdom as Titus endured ongoing opposition from the ungodly and from legalists within his congregations. Paul instructed Titus to complete his assigned job of establishing elders for the churches under his care.

He described what sort of people these leaders should be, and how both leaders and other believers should live in relation to each other as well as in their interactions with non-believers. Proper Christian behaviour is based on the fact that “the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people” and therefore those who believe in him are to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives as they await his return (Titus 2:11-13).

**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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### The Knowledge of the Truth, is in Agreement with Godliness.

Titus 1:1-3 ----- <sup>1</sup>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, <sup>2</sup>in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began <sup>3</sup>and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Saviour;

The words, “Their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness” (v1) means that the truth of God's word is in accord with living a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith.

It means as people read and study the Scriptures with a right heart attitude the knowledge they learn will not only guide them to God, the Lord Jesus Christ and eternal life, but also call them to live lifestyle of doing what is right and good and living in the fruits of the Spirit (i.e., love, compassion, kindness, mercy, grace and forgiveness etc., against which there is no law).

The knowledge of the truth in this context does not refer to every aspect of the Bible (i.e., many of the laws recorded in the book of Leviticus are irrelevant for us today and no-one needs to understand the detail of Israel's history or the family tree of their kings to be saved to eternal life). The primary focus of the truth in this context is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which leads to salvation and the Lord Jesus Christ himself who said: -

- I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6).

So the truth Paul has in mind is those teachings concerning Christ. Jesus himself said to religious Jews who believed in God, read the Old Testament Scriptures daily and held fast to keeping every religious rite, law and tradition: -

- You do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life (John 5:38-40).

These verses clearly show that the purpose of the Scriptures is to bring us to Christ. When we all stand before the Lord's judgment seat Christ will not sit us down to do a written doctrinal exam, but he will examine our lives to see if our religious actions stemmed from a devoted and loving heart toward him and his Father or from self, ego, and pride and will measure us against the Royal Law, "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Matt. 22:37-39) (Mark 12:28-31) (James 2:8). (Meaning did we treat others with love, kindness, compassion, grace, mercy and forgiveness) especially our brothers and sisters in Christ.

**NOTE:** this does not mean that studying the Scriptures is of no value, quite the contrary, since the more we understand the Bible the stronger our faith and our hope grows and the more we learn of the nature, character will and the heart of the one we love.

**To give a simple example:** a young man may meet a girl that he is attracted to, so he takes her out on a few dates and finds she has a pleasant personality and caring nature, now, he knows this girl, no-one can say anything against her that he would believe because he knows her nature and her character, but if he never takes her for another date, it won't be long before that relationship will dissipate and other things will take its place. So it is with the Scriptures they are our date with Christ and through them we gain eternal and heavenly insights into treasures of God that touch our hearts in a manner that nothing in this world can.

**HOPE:** when salvation to eternal life is spoken of as the hope of the faithful in Christ, it is not called hope because it might or might not happen, but because it is unseen and yet future. The hope itself is guaranteed because it is based on God's promise and he cannot lie (Rom. 8:24).

The apostle Paul wrote; "In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies,  
Promised before the ages began" (Titus 1:2).

The Christian hopes to be resurrected from the grave to be raised up to eternal life and everlasting glory to be made perfectly free from sin; to be everlastingly happy, but it is faith that gives these things a mental reality in the mind and it is under this influence of faith that those in Christ allow these unseen and yet future events to control their mind as if they were a reality now.

**God manifested His word through preaching:** the words, "God manifested eternal life which he promised before the world began in his word through preaching" (v3) means that it is through preaching and teaching of God's word that God's eternal plans, purposes, promises that He purposed in His eternal mind before the word began are manifested. Jesus came and perfectly manifested God's character love, compassion grace and mercy etc., and God's miraculous power and His plans and purposes in his flesh (meaning in his lifestyle and teachings).

Paul is now saying that he manifests God's plan of eternal life through preaching. This glory is not limited to Paul only, but by extension to everyone who proclaims the Gospel of Christ since it is through this message that the eternal plan of salvation that God purposed in His eternal mind before the word began is manifested to others.

**God our Saviour:** since every Christian knows that the Lord Jesus Christ is their Saviour some religious teachers use Paul's words, "God our Saviour" (v3) to support the theory that that Jesus is God. Sadly this stems from ancient religious teaching, tradition and a lack of understanding the relationship between the heavenly Father and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. God is the Saviour of us all since he is the source of all life. Before time began God in His eternal mind planned and purposed that salvation to eternal life would be in his Son, so Jesus is the fulfilment of

God's foreordained plan of salvation for all mankind. But, without Christ no-one can be saved, thus both God and Christ are the Saviour but in a different manner. God is the Saviour in that He is the source of all life and planned and purposed the eternal way of salvation, but Christ is our Saviour in that he is the fulfilment of God's eternal plan. Without God there would be no salvation, but God's eternal plan without Christ would be left bankrupt thus the reason the Bible in various contexts can refer to God the Father or the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour.

**Words of comfort and encouragement:** since the teaching that Jesus is God has such a strong hold on much of traditional Christianity the following will encourage and comfort faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who maybe in some doubt and unsure of what to believe concerning the Father and the Son. The Bible very clearly shows that even if Jesus was God no one has to know this to be saved to eternal life since there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states: -

- We must believe that Jesus is God to be saved.

Nor is there one verse from Genesis to Revelations that says: -

- Whoever believes that Jesus is God the Son will be saved.

In total contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures throughout the pages of the New Testament that very clearly proclaim: -

- We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved.

And that say: -

- Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved.

Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was actually God to be saved to eternal life Jesus, the apostles and Paul would have told us at least once in all their teaching concerning salvation, but all we hear from Paul, the apostles and Jesus himself is them saying that we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved to eternal life. Jesus himself said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God 'and' Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

**For further information see the title: -**

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity).
- In Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

**Titus is to Appoint Elders in every Town.**

Titus 1:4-5 ----- <sup>4</sup>To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour. <sup>5</sup>This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you.

**Crete:** is an Island about 160 miles long and located about 180 miles from Athens in the Mediterranean Sea. Paul's goal was to have elders (overseers) in every town of Crete so he gives Titus a character list of the type of men he should appoint. Keep in mind there are no church buildings mentioned in the New Testament, the elders during Paul's era were to oversee the Christian groups established mostly in faithful brothers and sisters homes. It was of course important that those appointed to such a positions where men of integrity and who understood the Gospel because their lives would influence many either toward Christ or against him, toward the Lord if they were a good testimony, against Christ if they were men of hypocrisy and pretence (See v10-16).

**The Character of Elders, Overseers and Bishops.**

Titus 1:6-9 ----- <sup>6</sup>if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. <sup>7</sup>For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or

violent or greedy for gain,<sup>8</sup> but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.<sup>9</sup> He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

**Elder/Overseer:** (Bishop in KJV) in this context carries the idea of a person who has been inspected and selected for the relief of others and by implication refers to a superintendent who not only has the responsibility of supervision, control and the management, but also to one who cares. The office of a bishop/elder/overseer embraces not only managing and teaching, but also the ministry of visiting for the purpose of relieving and protecting those they are visiting.

**NOTE:** the word elder in this context does not mean that the overseer must be an aged man, but it does mean that an elder should be one who is experienced in life, mature in spiritual matters, full of the fruits of the Spirit and has a good knowledge of the Scriptures. During the early church most who were coming into the Christian faith were Gentiles who had no understanding of the Christian life or of Christian teachings therefore those who were appointed into positions of authority were mostly older men. But, today we have men who are raised up as Timothy was from birth and have amazing insights and understanding of God's word and are mature in their nature since they have been raised by Christian parents, to stop these younger men from holding a position of authority simply because they are not old in age I personally think would be missing the Spirit of what Paul is saying. Especially when I look back over my forty-years in Christianity and have observed faithful young men reach and communicate with groups of people far better than those of my generation were able.

**Character of an overseer or elder:** following are qualities of elders (also called overseers and bishops) taken from the book of Timothy and Titus (1 Tim. 3:1-7) (Titus 1:5-9).

Elders/overseers should not be: -

- Open to any charges of wickedness corruption or rebelliousness, but law abiding.
- Arrogant, conceited egotistical, full of self-importance or men who feel superior to others.
- Quick-tempered quarrelsome, argumentative, difficult and confrontational.
- A drunkard, obviously this means they should not be given to drinking an excess of alcohol, but it also carries the idea of being sober minded meaning clear minded and clear in their thinking in contrast to being given to fantasies, fables, myths speculations, assumptions and suppositions.
- Violent, forceful and aggressively severe toward others, but instead should treat people with kindness and gentleness.
- Greedy for gain (i.e., not a lover of money) they must not crave after worldly wealth and possessions.
- A recent convert; no newly saved person should be given such tremendous responsibility for two reasons firstly to place so much honour and responsibility upon a new convert there is a very real danger that they will become puffed up with self-importance and a sense of superiority and secondly they maybe emotionally vulnerable to the affections of female attention, flattery, flirtation and seduction and should they fall to such they give occasion to those outside God's Kingdom to speak against the Christian faith, thus the reason it is not wise to appoint a new convert to the position of overseer of God's family (1 Tim. 3:6).

**Elders/Overseers should Be: -**

- The husband of one wife; some think this means that elders/overseers should only have ever had one wife meaning they should never have been divorced and remarried, but this idea would exclude men who had been divorced and remarried prior to being converted and that would be denying the power of

God's grace in Christ's and the message of the Gospel which proclaims we are new creatures in Christ and all sins are forgiven so what does Paul mean? Paul says the husband of one wife whereas the Church of Rome says the husband of no wife, but from the beginning God had never designed this to be. Marriage is an ordinance from which no profession or calling in life prevents, even the apostle Paul could have taken a wife had he so chosen (1 Cor. 9:5). Forbidding, to marry is one of the erroneous doctrines of the antichristian church (1 Tim. 4:1-3).

Paul is not saying that ministers must be married (i.e. Paul was a single man) this is not what he means; but rather if a man does have a wife he must only have one at the same time. Nor does it mean that he might not be married to more than one wife successively, but, being married he must have but one wife at once, not two or more, according to the common practice of those times, by a corrupt following of the practise of the Old Testament patriarchs who not only had many wives, but also many concubines. Paul in this discourse is saying this is not to be so in the Christian church. No elder can copy the ways of the patriarchs nor can they be a bigamist as the early Mormon Church taught (and may still do in some regions).

- Above reproach: meaning the secular world should not be able to bring any shameful accusation against them.
- Hospitable, welcoming, friendly, generous, kind and sociable.
- Lovers of good: meaning they get joy from seeing people treated with justice (i.e., fairly) and from what is right and proper.
- Self-controlled: meaning they have the ability to control their own behaviour, especially in terms of reactions and impulses and are not given to showing any strong emotions such as anger or violence.
- Upright and holy: meaning they should be respectable and well thought of by others.
- Disciplined: meaning well-organized methodical and well prepared.
- Trustworthy, honest, dependable, reliable and responsible.
- Competent to give instruction and able to teach, this does not mean they must be a brilliant orator or public speaker, since they most likely will have others in their midst who they can use, but they certainly should know the word of God and have some skill in teaching it since much of their ministry is visitation.
- Able to rebuke and reprove when a brother or sister is acting in a manner that is dangerous to their faith or is bringing a bad testimony to the name of Christ and the Christian faith. An elder must in a spirit of love and gentleness be able to warn, caution and reprove that brother or sister for the sake of their faith, the testimony of the Lord and the reputation of Christianity.
- Capable of managing their own household with dignity, self-respect and goodness toward their wife and children (1 Tim. 3:4).

**SUMMARY:** an elder/overseer is not just a teacher they are the shepherd of the flock, who is not only responsible for training God's children in the right way to go, but also for their care and protection from spiritual harm thus the reason there is such high standards placed on an elder.

#### **NOTE.**

If we wait for people to fulfil these requirements to perfection before we appoint anyone to the position of elder, overseer or deacon we will struggle to find anyone that qualifies for the positions since no-one (male or female) is going to fulfil these requirements perfectly because we are all full of sinful dysfunction and aberrations within our fallen and corrupted body. The idea is that we promote those who most closely fulfil the guidelines and thereby lessen the chance of them bringing

disgrace not only to God and the name of the Lord, but also to the reputation of the Christian faith. It should also be remembered that the principle under the Gospel is one of submitting to one another in love an elder is not to dominate or see himself as superior and thereby lord it over those they oversee, but rather to view himself as a humble servant in submission to the Lord and to those they shepherd. Jesus when teaching his twelve disciples said: -

- You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them, but it should not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be as your servant, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matt. 20:25-28) (Mark. 10:42-45).

Added to this Paul in his letter to the Corinthians wrote: -

- Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy” (2 Cor. 1:24)

And to the Ephesians he said: -

- The will of the Lord is that every brother and sister in Christ filled with the Spirit would submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Ephesians 5:18-21).

Clearly no-matter what our position or how talented or gifted we maybe we should all be submitted to each other as under the Lord.

### **Cretans are always Liars, Evil Beasts, Lazy Gluttons.**

Titus 1:10-14 ----- <sup>10</sup>For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party (Jews). <sup>11</sup>They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. <sup>12</sup>One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." <sup>13</sup>This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, <sup>14</sup>not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.

**Myths:** carries the idea of speculations, assumptions, philosophies and human reasoning.

The expression, "to act the Cretan" is a proverb for, "to lie." The particular reason why is unknown, but being a Cretan became synonymous with being a liar, in the same way as to be a Corinthian, became synonymous with living a licentious life. The words, "Evil beasts" (v12) carries the idea that they were unrestrained in their passions and indulgences like that of a wild and ferocious animal. It is interesting to notice that laziness and gluttony are often linked together this is most likely because during the era of the apostles it was very rare that an industrious person would be given to gluttony and a person who is given to gluttony would very rarely be industrious since the majority of work was very physical. The corrupt traits of character pertaining to the native Cretans also applies to the character of the Jews living there since the teachings of both the Cretans and Jews were upsetting entire Christian families.

**NOTE:** lying in this context does not necessarily mean lying in the sense that they were lying to each other, but can refer to the fact they had strong teachings of many false beliefs and other gods. I am sure if Paul was alive today and saw teachers in our school classrooms teaching children that evolution is an absolute scientific fact he would call them liars in the same manner that he is calling the Cretans liars. False teachers are often referred to as liars in Scripture because their deceptive teachings led people to believe lies.

**They teach for shameful gain:** the words, "They are teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach" (v11) shows that even in Paul's era there were many false teachers distorting the word of God for their own selfish gain. Today Paul's words would also include modern day religious teachers who promise their followers that they can teach them spiritual keys to a successful life and the secrets to obtaining to such great levels of faith that they will be able to bring to pass whatever they desire. Multitudes are leaving the sound teachings of Paul and the

apostles to chase after teachers who proclaim they can escape the hardships and troubles of life. This is happening on a global scale, because of the internet, people from every nation of the world are embracing teachings that appeal to self, ego and pride and doctrines that promise success, prosperity, wealth and worldly riches.

These men not only speak with absolute confidence and authority but are also highly skilled in speech-making and the art of persuasiveness and by these and their eloquent speeches seduce many to follow their empty words and the myths and fables they teach. In total contrast to the life of Christ, the apostles and Paul many of these ministers live in opulent homes, wear designer clothes and Rolex watches, drive excessively expensive cars and only stay in the most luxurious hotels when they travel from country to country to share the word of the Lord. Since the spirit of the world craves after wealth and luxury those with itching ears (a worldly spirit) leave the high calling of the Gospel to follow the promise of these self-exalted and prideful ministers who use those who are under their influence as merchandise to expand their own religious empire.

### **To the Pure, all things are Pure.**

Titus 1:15-16 ----- <sup>15</sup>To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. <sup>16</sup>They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

**The pure:** refers to the believing faithful whose minds and consciences are full of integrity, truthfulness goodness sincerity and the words "To the pure all things are pure" (v15) means no matter what a person with a mind and conscience like this does or says it will be pure meaning it will be right, good and uncorrupted.

**The defiled:** refers to false teachers whose minds and conscience are full of lying, deceitfulness, dishonestly, greed and selfish ambition and the words "to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure" means that no matter what a person with a mind and conscience like this says or does it will be corrupted in some form and some manner.

Paul in these verses is contrasting those who were faithful and honest to the truth to those who like the prideful and hypocritical Jews (especially the religious leaders) and Cretans were full of false teaching lies, greed and dishonesty etc. He is contrasting those whose good works evidence what they believe to those who appear religious and say they believe in God, but their lifestyles of hypocrisy, pretence, deception and greed tell a different story.

This is what Jesus meant when he said: -

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves, you will recognize them by their fruits a healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit thus you will recognize them by their fruits (Matt. 7:15-20).

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End