

Titus: Becoming a Sound Church

01 Who Are You?

April 30, 2017

I. INTRODUCTION

The bible is God's working throughout human history to redeem man. It includes creation, man's fall, God's promise, the fulfillment of that promise in Jesus, the church, and restoration.

Amongst this large metanarrative, the big story of the bible, we get history, poetry, prophecy, detailed stories, an account of Jesus life, and letters written to churches and interestingly enough, to Pastors. Yea, Pastors!

There are three letters in particular that address an individual who was pastoring, shepherding, overseeing, eldering... whatever you want to call it because all those terms are interchangeable in the scriptures.

1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus were letters written by Paul to an individual who had been tasked with the job of pastoring. Within these letters Paul deals with many different topics but ultimately encourages the Pastor to remain faithful to scriptures, to be driven by the gospel—as we saw very clearly last week—what a time together!

So over the next few weeks we want to take a peek into Paul's instructions to Titus in order to become, what the Book of Titus calls, a sound church.

It is as if we are peeking into a job description made up of the most essential things Titus is to do in order to have a sound

church. In doing this I trust we can then being to let God's divine words to Titus have the same impact on LITD. This week we start as we should, at the beginning...

lets READ Titus 1:1-4

1 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, 2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began 3 and hat the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior;

4 To Titus, my true child in ma common faith:

Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

II. PAUL

Our main characters are introduced, Paul and Titus. As with all introductions, the most important things about Paul and Titus come out. Much like how you and I introduce ourselves.

Hi, I am Mr CEO

Hi, I am Mrs. School Teacher

Hi, I am Creative

Hi, I am Musical

Hi, I am athletic

Hi, I am funny.

It usually is an issue of identity that drives an introduction. A moment for us to establish who we are and what we are about.

I never experienced this more than when I left Florida as a Student Pastor and began seminary. Every where I went I

found myself saying “*Hi, I am Bryan I used to be a Student Pastor,*” especially as we visited churches.

It was as natural as breathing, my initial introduction was a moment to say who I was and what I was about.

Makes you think... what is the most identifying thing about you. Well, for Paul when he introduces himself it typically depended on what he was about to write. But what is most noteworthy is all thinking about himself was only in relation to God. Paul only understood himself in light of God. Notice the terms used...

A. Who was Paul?

1. Servant of **God**

- a) God is king and Paul is servant, not the other way around, the first words he utters in understanding himself is Servant of God, God determines the course of his days, God determines purpose, God knows what is best for him, and his posture is surrender, look to him and listen

2. Apostle of **Jesus Christ**

- a) Authority—Paul’s apostleship given him by God is precisely why he writes and gives instructions and turns that authority towards Titus and speaks as a servant giving teaching and instructions from God, on behalf of Jesus

Apostle’s were those men who were directly appointed by Jesus and empowered by him, those men who had been eyewitnesses to the resurrected Jesus, those men tasked with bearing the gospel and God’s revelation to the church, they had authority for faith and practice in the early church

so Paul is giving Titus instructions based on his apostleship. He does not arrogantly hold this title over Titus, Paul started with servant, but rather empowers Titus to boldly proclaim truth to the Church on sound authority. He is serving Titus through his apostleship.

What about today, I wish I could call up Paul, or text him, or perhaps send him an email, FaceTime, or even better, meet up face to face and have coffee, and ask, “*Who am I and what am I to do?*”

Where is authority today for the Pastor to follow, for the church to know who they are and what they should do and believe.

Where are the apostles teachings? If only we had them written down somewhere? If only God had preserved his word for us today to read and study... well you catch my sarcasm.

Praise God he has!! Have you every wondered why so much emphasis on the Pastor to preach the Word as we heard last week.

Church we are no good and of little use if we do not let scripture authoritatively guide us.

- B. We cannot be on mission until we know who we are in Jesus, and the only way to know that is through the scriptures who have authority...healthy identity breeds mission!!

What we do is an expression of who we are. If you are a servant of God you live life to honor God.

If you are a servant of your own self promotion, well then you live life to honor yourself.

If you are a servant of money, you will live life to honor money. You see the list goes on and on...

Paul would not have put his life in jeopardy time and time again if he was not first and foremost a servant of God.

- C. Well...what Did Paul do as a result of being a servant and an apostle? ***READ 1:1-2*** He committed his life...
1. *For the faith of God's elect...* now this word causes anxiety for many or at least most are apprehensive, but for Paul it was sweet relief. Because he is saying I work, fight, toil, struggle for those who WILL be saved.

There is no question in Paul's mind that his work, that he pours himself out for daily, is surly going to be affective for the faith of some. How does Paul know that, because God never lies.

Paul is picking up a long standing tradition of God's people trusting God precisely because he does not lie (Nu 23:19). Paul is banking his mission on a God who will save some.

God's sovereignty "makes [him] bold and confident before men, so as to make [him] humble and

[persistent] before God”¹ because he does not lie and has said that some men would indeed repent so he put his life towards their...

- a) faith...towards their complete trust in God and then their
- b) ongoing knowledge of truth that sustains and makes one stable and produces...
 - (1) godliness, you see knowledge of truth is necessary for godliness. To be sound in our life, be godly, we must know truth.
 - (2) all of this in the hope of eternal life...ongoing endless life with the Savior because God promised!
- c) and how do we see this promised fulfilled today, THROUGH THE PREACHING OF GOD’S WORD, ****READ 1:3** PREACHING!!**

the apostles teaching, authority of scripture proclaimed. God by his design established the proclamation of His word where he can and will redeem man. I mean Paul said this very clearly in Romans 10:17, “*faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*”

2. You have to understand that Paul is intending that this letter be read out loud (*we know this by the letters ending—grace to you all*) in order for all there to hear his model and for Titus himself to set about this task of working towards the faith and knowledge of those who are and will be saved. But who is this guy Titus...

III. TITUS

¹ J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, p 122.

- A. (2 Cor 2:3-4, 13, 7:6-16, 8:16-24), 2 Corinthians gives us a portrait of a man who did considerable work in helping the troubled Corinth church but Gal 2:3 gives us a few details that might be helpful “*But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek.*”
- B. Who?

1. true child in a ***common*** faith...Paul does something very unique in introducing Titus that he does not do in the other PE. He says that Titus shares in a ***common*** faith.

It is this little word *common* that surprises me and is a bit out of place. Why does Paul draw out this thought...well as we will see in the coming weeks false teachers had caused controversy around the issue of circumcision, in essences saying it was necessary to be a part of God’s family (Titus 1:10)

2. Titus is an example to them of God’s elect—someone God had saved not based upon ethnicity, pedigree, financial standing, intellectual giant, charismatic figure, CEO, no—God saved HIM!! and now he is a child who shares a *common* faith with Paul.

IV. CONCLUSION

- A. We are a bunch of servants gathered together in Mesa, Arizona guided by the authority of scripture for the sake of those who are and will be saved!
- B. Our confidence as servants, is an unshakeable God who never lies, and who fulfilled his promise in the God-man, Jesus.

- C. Who and what you are will be who and what the church is...So if we are self absorbed servants of our own exaltation then we will be a church that is self absorbed only wanting to gather with people who look, talk, and smell like us. If we are small thinkers about God then we will be a church of small significance in the community.