

# **Dr. Robert Yarbrough, Pastoral Epistles, Session 12, Introduction to Titus and Titus 1**

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This is Dr. Robert Yarbrough in his teaching on the pastoral epistles, apostolic instruction for pastoral leaders and their followers. This is session 12, Introduction to Titus, Titus 1.

We continue our study of the pastoral epistles and I'm calling this apostolic instruction for pastoral leaders and their followers. We're going to begin a study of Titus and as we begin I want to read one of the key passages in Titus. This passage combines something very practical, how we view other people, but also it gives a glimpse of the theology that underlies the book of Titus because Titus has so much practical counsel and comment on the setting at Crete and the people on the island of Crete, it can cause you to think maybe that this is weak theologically and it's mainly logistics or handling people, but here we see the combination of how we regard people and how God regards people and what God has done to improve the situation of people.

And so, we read, at one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived, and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. This is the Apostle Paul writing to Titus. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another, but when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us.

Not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that having been justified by his grace we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying.

Let's ask God's blessing on these lectures on Titus. Heavenly Father, thank you so much that despite our errors earlier in life, despite being born in sin and also being sinners by choice, the kindness of you, God our Savior, appeared in your son. Thank you for the word that has gone forth into the world and has saved so many, and thank you that that word has come to us, I pray that you would cause that word to echo throughout these lectures and that the grace that we have just read about might be furthered in all of our lives.

Thank you that this, like all of your word, is a trustworthy saying, and we commend ourselves into your good hands as our study continues. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

So, a few notes of introduction for Titus in particular, and back in Lecture 1 under 1 Timothy, I talk more about the pastoral epistles and issues of authorship and so forth, but more specifically regarding Titus, we see the purpose of Titus in verse 5. Paul says the reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town as I directed you.

And Paul in this letter wants to encourage Titus and ground him more deeply, because in this situation where he needs to appoint leaders and train leaders, we find that there are problems. There are people there, we read in verse 16 of chapter 1, who claim to know God, which sounds like a good thing, in and around the church, but Paul says by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for doing anything good.

So, Paul wants to address this need, and also the problematic elements that exist at Crete. Paul's concerns can be summarized like this, I won't read all the verses because I would really be reading all the epistle, and I'll do that in a minute, but he wants Christian leaders to meet stringent standards. To have strong subgroups, if you think about the military, if you want strong fighting units, you have to have good officers.

And in an elementary school, if you want kids to learn well, you need a great team of teachers. Well, it's the same way in the church. You need high standards for your leaders, and so one of the things that the book of Titus does is set forth the kind of qualities that we need for leadership in the church.

And of course, there it's parallel with 1st Timothy chapter 3. Another concern is that Christian teaching suffuses Christian's consciousness, permeates Christian consciousness and behavior so that the Word of God will not be dishonored. And I won't read all the words that are up there in your screen, but we'll see in chapter 2 that all the age groups and both of the genders are addressed in particular, and Titus is designed to remind Titus and those whom he trains of the need for the transformation of the Christian mind and of the Christian life, and not just sort of a religious overlay or people who believe in God and go to church, but so that at a very fundamental level, God's Word will be honored by people truly being claimed by that Word. And I do comment on how scholarship has leveraged this, these practical concerns, to mean that the pastoral epistles in Titus are what we might call domestication documents.

They're designed to set forth behaviors that will make Christians conform to the culture so that, they'll fit in and be accepted and won't be rejected. And when we study both the basis for what Paul says and the behaviors that he urges, this is really not in conformity to the culture. And sometimes we'll hear the term household code and say, well, these are the household rules and they're meant to make Christians fit into society.

And number one, I don't think that there were such things as household codes. I think that's a myth of New Testament studies. But more importantly, if you actually studied both the directions of chapter 2 and their basis in Christ, in the Incarnation and the Crucifixion and the washing of regeneration and all these things, we're talking about revolutionary lives.

We're not talking about anything that was normal to see in the Greco-Roman world. Another concern is that the grace of Christ's first coming instills revolutionary living, and also that the Church's Old Testament heritage, its identity as the people of God, and the Church's eschatological destiny, all these things together change the way that people live in very basic ways. Another concern, and we just read this, is that Christians would be socially engaged and considerate of other people because they are aware of their own former unregenerate state, and they are aware of how undeserving they are of God's mercy.

And so, they're not arrogant or they don't walk around and feel like they're better than other people, even though they're living differently, but they don't have a superiority complex, because they know if they live differently and if they're living differently in ways that you could say, well, that's better than these worse ways. It's not something that is based on their merit. It's based on God and on his mercy and what he's granted in Christ.

Another concern is for Christians to avoid useless controversy. Jesus said, blessed are the peacemakers and not the polemicists. And while there needs to be conflict at points, not useless conflict or useless controversy, Paul wants to avoid that and keep Titus and keep Christian leaders from getting swallowed up in unproductive polemics.

And finally, we see throughout Titus the call for Christians to be people of action, to be people of transformed behavior. And this is stressed so much that you could wonder whether it points to an antinomian social tendency, that is a tendency in society to be lawless and not like there to be rules or policing. And we'll discuss that as we go.

Or is there a stress on behavior so much because there's a fear in the church of standing out and facing ostracism? If you live like a Christian, people will recognize it and maybe penalize you for it. There's some reason why this call to good works, this call to transform lives, is so prominent in the book of Titus, and we'll explore that as we proceed. Where is Titus? Well, Titus is on Crete.

And where is Crete? And if we look at our trusty Google Maps, we'll see a map of the Mediterranean. I'm getting closer. And right there is Crete.

Now this is the Greek Google because Greece is up there, Turkey is over there, and Italy is over there, and Rome is up there. And this is the island out in the Mediterranean with the Aegean Sea to the north and the Mediterranean all around it. And then down here, this is North Africa.

That's where Crete was, and that's where Titus was. That island is over 3,000 square miles and looks very small on the map, but today it contains just under a million people. It's a lot of people.

It's more people on Crete than there are in the state of Montana, which is a pretty big state. It was the home of the ancient Minoan civilization, and Greek mythology associated Crete with King Minos and the labyrinth where the Minotaur was that Theseus slew. So, it was a storied location in the in the Greek Greco-Roman mentality.

In the Old Testament, Crete is associated with Kaphthor in Deuteronomy and in Jeremiah. Amos calls it the land of origin of the Philistines, which may or may not be true, but that's what we learned in Amos. The island was therefore rich in cultural associations and identity.

It was conquered by Rome in the first century BC, and the Romans administered Crete from North Africa, so it was part of a North African administrative area. The question arises, what were Christians doing in Crete? Jesus didn't go to Crete, and we don't have a clear indication of churches being planted there, but evidently, there are churches there. And the greatest work on early Christian mission from a historical standpoint in the last century has appeared in *The Last Generation*, written by Eckhart Schnabel.

Two fat volumes are called *Early Christian Mission*, and Volume 2 is *Paul and the Early Church*. On page 1284 of that volume, Dr. Schnabel writes, that there were large Jewish communities on Crete. And that's undoubtedly true in the first century.

And we know from Acts that there were pilgrims from Crete in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2.11 tells us that. And so, we can surmise that some of these individuals could have been Jews, they could have been converts to Judaism, or they could have been either one, and they were in Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost.

And they could have taken the Christian message back to Crete with them. In that case, churches could have begun in the early AD 30s or mid-AD 30s on the island of Crete. Another alternative, and Dr. Schnabel suggests this too, he says a mission to Crete would have been a logical project for the early Jewish Christian missionaries, Jews who were converted in Jerusalem around the time of Pentecost and thereafter.

They could have gone to Crete, and there were synagogues at Crete, and they could have gone on to the synagogues and announced the good news that the Messiah had come. And then we could imagine the church dating to the later 30s or 40s. Another suggestion is that in the late 50s, Paul's witness in Crete while on his way to Rome for the first time, in Acts 27, that witness could have formed an embryonic church.

And then when Paul was released from his Roman imprisonment, he could have wished to establish that church more firmly on his release. And so, Paul, if he was freed in around AD 63 from his first Roman imprisonment, could have visited the island, taken stock of its needs, and left Titus there to extend the work in Crete, while Paul traveled on to Nicopolis in Western Greece, as he says in Titus 3 chapter 13. So we don't lack, we don't have secure knowledge of the founding of churches, but if Paul is writing to Titus in the AD 60s for the purpose of establishing pastors, it may seem unlikely that the church would have already been in existence for a decade or more because training and appointing elders is one of the things that happens, as churches are established.

And that we can see that in Acts 14:23, at the end of the first missionary journey, they establish cell groups, and once they realize, well, we have these groups, they appointed elders. So, a founding by unknown means within not many years of Paul's writing is plausible. Now here's another alternative.

The church could have been 30 years old by the time Paul and Titus are associated with it, but it could have stagnated after it was planted. In this scenario, it had a beginning, but then it degenerated so seriously that Paul found it necessary to enlist Titus to stir up a fresh start or renew zeal for the truths that the church began with. It could be that the church was in its second generation by the AD 60s, and often, churches are excited at first, and then you go back 10 or 20 years later, and they're dead.

We call that nominalism, when people are Christians in name only, and they've really, like the Church of Ephesus in Revelation, they've lost their first love. So, a scenario like this could account for the ground-level activity of training pastors that Paul lays on Titus, but at the same time, the presence of rebellion and deception in the church, which seems to have had sort of a history. So, it's kind of complex when you read Titus.

Are you starting something new, or are you dealing with old problems? And in this scenario, the answer is yes. There's a reboot that's needed because churches that have been there for a while have kind of lost touch with the gospel message and living out the gospel message. So, we don't know enough about Crete or its inhabitants to say much more about them or their cultural setting.

We know what we know from the book of Titus and some other things that I'll mention, but that's not a great deal. What we do know is that it was a real place. It had a notable presence in the Greco-Roman world, and ruins still testify today to vibrant towns and cities that were there in Paul's time.

How about Titus? We know a lot about Timothy from the New Testament. We know a lot about Titus from the New Testament. His name appears 14 times in the New Testament.

Just two of these are in the pastoral epistles. One when he greets him by name in Titus 1.4, and one at the end of 2 Timothy 4.10, where he says Titus has gone to Dalmatia. These references indicate that Titus was an active co-worker with Paul near the end of Paul's life.

But his involvement with Paul goes back to Paul's composition of the book of Galatians, which I think we can put in the late AD 40s. In Galatians 2:1, Paul, as he talks about his conversion and his ministries, and when he went to Jerusalem and conferred with the Jerusalem pillars, he says, I went to Jerusalem with Barnabas and I took Titus along also. This indicates that around AD 47, when Paul and Barnabas met with the pillars in Jerusalem, the pastors in Jerusalem, James, Peter, and John, Titus were there.

And not only was he there, but he was close enough to Paul's inner circle that his Gentile status was an issue. He was not circumcised. And Paul says in Galatians 2.3, not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek.

From reading the early verses of Galatians chapter 2, we see that there were false believers who snuck around and discovered that Titus was not circumcised, and they wanted to discredit Paul's ministry because in their view, everybody who accepted Jesus as the Messiah should become Jewish. They should conformed to Judaism as they could, they should change their diet, they should observe the traditions of the Jewish people, and for men that would mean they should be circumcised. And Paul and Titus stood up to this faulty theological understanding and this inappropriate demand.

Paul says, we did not give in to them for a moment so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you. And of course, if you want to read more about this, you can read Acts 15, when this issue came to a head, and James and Paul and Peter and Barnabas and the Church of Jerusalem all made the decision that the gospel message, for its full reception, did not demand of people who were not ethnically Jews that they accept circumcision and Jewish food laws and observed the traditions that Jews were observing in the first century. They didn't say that Jews needed to stop being Jewish, but they said that Gentiles did not need to become participants in

Jewish customs, especially diet, and circumcision, which were so symbolic of Jewish heritage at that time and still around the world.

So, it's interesting when you read Titus that some of these same dynamics, like false believers and Jewish-based challenge to gospel teaching, we were going to see these things in Titus, and they're anticipated 20 years earlier, almost, in Galatians. The other New Testament references to Titus cluster in 2 Corinthians, which is close to a decade after the writing of Galatians. And Titus is deeply involved in negotiations between Paul and the Corinthian congregation.

They have a rocky relationship with Paul because it seems that there are what Paul calls false apostles, super-apostles, who are trying to hijack the Corinthian congregation in the direction of their understanding of the gospel and not Paul's understanding of the gospel. Part of Paul's ministry over many years in Greece and Macedonia and the central part of the Roman Empire there in the Mediterranean was for Gentile believers, some of whom were not very wealthy, in fact, some of them were very poor, but they sacrificed a great deal to take up a collection to bring back to the Judean believers who really doubted that these people were even Christians because they were Gentiles. And Paul wants to show the Judean believers the oneness of the body of Christ.

And you could say wants to heap coals of fire on their head by showing them that the body of Christ, including its Gentile side, has regard for all the members of the body, including the Jewish members. So, there was this, over years, money was built up and finally, the money was sent to Jerusalem, but for security reasons and also for, you see, informational purposes to confirm that the money got there, these different regions of the Gentile churches that Paul had founded, they appointed people to travel with Paul to oversee the administration of the money. And then these men could go back and say, the money got there because we traveled with Paul and it was delivered.

Well Titus was in, he was a member of this envoy of bodyguards and representatives. In the course of Paul's writing to the Corinthians and negotiating with the Corinthians, Titus is part of this team. He's part of the go back and forth between Paul and the Corinthians because Paul, he wrote to the Corinthians and he was traveling and he was evangelizing and planting churches and dealing with the Corinthians at a distance at the same time.

And it was Titus who was doing some of the courier work back and forth. We read that Titus comforted Paul. Titus, Paul is refreshed.

He's refreshed by the Corinthians' responsiveness and Titus helps to urge the Corinthians to a full participation in the collection. And in all this, Paul calls Titus my partner and my co-worker. And there are a few of Paul's letters where he writes, well

no, he never mentions Titus as a co-writer of a letter, but still they are partners and co-workers.

Titus walked in the same footsteps that Paul did and by the same spirit as Paul. So that's high praise, not quite as high as he has for Timothy, but still high praise. So, to summarize, if Paul's epistle to Titus is written late in Paul's life, then he was a Pauline co-worker for nearly two decades with ministry experience in various settings.

He wasn't a novice, but somebody that Paul thought could put into practice and could expand on the sketchy remarks that make up this short epistle that goes by his name. It could be that he had never been on his own to the extent and with the high stakes. This could have been the biggest assignment that he had had and so the book of Titus sort of concretizes or crystallizes a lot of the principles that Paul had used and Titus had been observing the implementation of but maybe had never had the full administrative responsibility for on his own.

So, the book of Titus kind of outlines and reinforces things that Titus would have observed over the years, but maybe had never been in charge of administering himself. This also could explain the terse-ness of the letter and I say here that Paul writes idiomatically. It's not the same vocabulary that he uses with the Colossians or with the Romans, but it's in some ways a little more complicated, just like 1st and 2nd Timothy.

It's a rather distinctive vocabulary that's used, but he and Timothy shared two things, a Jewish heritage and also, they were native Greek speakers especially Paul, a very bright native Greek speaker with a very big vocabulary and we see that in 1 and 2 Timothy. I think we also see it in Titus and there are words he uses in Titus he doesn't use in other letters and I think that reflects the relationship that he and Titus had and the fact that again they both had grown up in a Greek area and while Paul trained in Jerusalem he didn't grow up there, he was not born there and that's why there is this frank and terse exchange between them. If you've watched earlier lectures that I am sort of addicted to statistics when it comes to the words that occur in New Testament letters. I'm fascinated by what they talk about and I think what they talk about the most often tends to be what the letter is most about as in 1 and 2 Timothy and in fact in all of Paul's letters and other New Testament epistles too the thing that's talked about the most is God.

So, this is a chart of major significant words in Titus, that's significant words not and, the, but. I think these are all nouns. I think there's one verb although that verb gets used in a form that's adjectival but these are pretty much all nouns. So, you've got God and then you've got the word for work or deed as in good work or good works. You've got faith, you've got another term that is always used with the capital S and that's Savior. Then you've got man or person, you've got good, word, another word for good, teaching which is a concern throughout the pastoral epistles, then the word



Jesus and Christ. From number 8 on although it goes from 8 to 13 all these words occur with the same frequency four times. Jesus is four times and Christ is four times. And so is grace and number 11 is the only verb in this list but it's used in a participle form. It's used adjectivally. It means healthy and it refers to healthy teaching. We translate it as sound doctrine. So that word is used metaphorically to refer to the teaching that needs to be strong or sound or healthy.

Then a final note, soter is used of God three times that is the word Savior refers to God three times. God is the Savior three times. Once it refers to Christ Jesus the Savior. Once it refers to Jesus Christ the Savior and then in one reference both God and Jesus Christ are called Savior. So, Savior is used extensively which marks this a little.

It's different than 1 and 2 Timothy. He doesn't use that word he uses the word 1st 2nd Timothy he uses Lord extensively and I think that's because this word Lord is very very common in the Greek Old Testament and he and Timothy shared this Old Testament that's this Jewish heritage. But Titus did not grow up as a Jew he grew up in a Roman world where the word Savior would be much more associated with a God figure who would rule over everything and somehow redeem everything.

So, both because of I think Titus's heritage but also because Titus is ministering in Crete. Paul's not going to be using the word Lord so much because he's going to be using it very little he's going to be using the word Savior and using it in a very significant way in that he's going to use it repeatedly in conjunction with God. He's going to use it repeatedly in conjunction with Jesus or Christ Jesus and so much so that this is one of the major ways that Titus affirms the divinity of Jesus or the divinity of Jesus Christ. It's because he calls him Savior and in the logic of biblical religion you can't have multiple Saviors because God is one. So, if God is Savior and if Jesus is Savior then Jesus is God. Paul uses the word Savior to signal these truths.

Finally, for those who are interested the word work occurs four times with kalos which is good. It refers it appears two times with the word agathos which also means good but kalos might have a more aesthetic connotation good in terms of beautiful or desirable. Agathos might have a slightly more moral connotation morally good.

A final introductory observation one of the unique or almost unique or at least distinctive features of Titus is in the prescript all Pauline letters start with his name. Then there's some kind of a greeting and then you get the addressee listed. This was a convention in Hellenistic letters although Paul customizes his use of this convention.

But in the left-hand column starting with Romans and going through the canonical order you see the beginning of every Pauline letter Paulos in Greek every Pauline letter begins like this and Titus is no exception.

I've got it bolded down there then you get the addressees to all in Rome, to the Church of God in Corinth, to the churches in Galatia, to God's holy people and that would be the Greek word *hagios* or *hagioi* saints but the NIV translates it holy people which is okay as a translation. For Timothy it's to Timothy my true son in the faith that was 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy to Timothy my dear son. Then to Titus, my true son in our common faith. Then give another example to Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker.

So, you've got Paul to church group people but let's count the number of Greek words between Paul's name and the addressee and that's where Titus stands out if you look at the Timothy letters between Paul and to Timothy you've got 14 Greek words 2 Timothy you've got 13 Greek words. When he writes the Thessalonians you just got four words between Paul and to the Thessalonian but in Romans you've got 71 words. If you look at the book of Romans you'll notice it's Paul. Then six or seven verses later to the Romans and there's like almost a systematic theology between his name and to the Romans.

There's also a little bit of an expansion in the book of Galatians 25 words between Paul and the Galatians. But Titus is 46 words he says a whole lot between his name and when he writes to Titus. So, we want to pay a special attention to these words because they stand out in Paul's letters and one suspects that there's lot of information here that Paul wants to reinforce as he writes to Titus and perhaps also that he wants reinforced in the churches at Crete.

He wants Titus to take this and if there's a chance that this was copied and sent or this was sent to Titus and that Titus would have used it in his instruction of members there or leaders there. In that case, there would be this added theological punch at the beginning of the letter for Titus's own leadership training use at Crete.

So, we come to Titus chapter 1 and I have marked the chapter beginnings with green. In this lecture as with 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy in terms of headings there's a heading opening and I'm following the headings in the NIV. One of the things that this is distinctive about the headings in the NIV is after you get past the opening all the headings have the word good in them until you get to final remarks. So you've got appointing elders who love what is good rebuking those who fail to do good.

When we get to chapter 2 doing good for the sake of the gospel and chapter 3 saved in order to do good. So there's a lot of goodness and we'll see the details as we move through the letter. Paul a servant of God and I yellow the words that refer to God

directly because Savior is so much a part of the rhetoric of Titus. I'm also yellowing the word Savior and when it's capitalized. Of course, it's referring exactly to God or to Christ and it's always capitalized.

In the book of Titus, "Paul a servant of God an apostle of Jesus Christ to further the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness."

I'll explain the underlining in a minute. "In the hope of eternal life which God who does not lie," could also be "who cannot lie." it literally is the non-lying God, the God who does not deceive. He promised before the beginning of time the eternal life which he promised before the beginning of time and which now at his appointed season at the right time, he has brought to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior. To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior."

So, just a couple of observations about the words here. Paul is a servant of God. That's different from 1 and 2 Timothy. No one knows for sure why he styles himself a servant here but that doesn't change the fact that he's also an apostle. It could just be that on that day Paul wanted to say both that he was a doulos and an Apostolos. He didn't have to say that as I pointed out in earlier lectures. The apostles we regard them highly but they were not regarded highly in society. The fact that they were opposed so frequently and so flagrantly even in the church is a reminder that in the first decades of the church things were not established yet.

It wasn't yet clear how the church would be administered and just as in churches today a lot of times there are power struggles there were very acute power struggles in the early churches. I mentioned a few minutes ago in Acts 15 and in the Council at Jerusalem that that's 20 years into the existence of the early church and they still were experiencing very pitched conflict over whether people needed to become Jews in order to be regarded as Christians or not. That's a whole generation. Since they made that decision in Acts 15 and since now we've had 2,000 years almost of church history we don't think about the growing pains of the early church and the conflicts that the early church went through.

When we think of a possible we think of somebody that they're right and they're true and God Jesus chose them or Paul Christ appeared to him on the Damascus Road, it's more of an exalted term. But apostles in the ancient world the apostles then the jury was out on whether their names were going to be revered or in the mud. In many places in the epistles, we see that they are opposed. So, they were getting mud slung at them at that time. So, apostles were servants they were servants of Christ they were servants of the word. They were servants of congregations. They were servants of a lost world who didn't appreciate that God was reaching out to them for their own good.

The servant status of the apostles is confirmed by the fact that virtually all of them were martyred. We think the Apostle John died naturally but we think all the rest of them were martyred. In many cases we can corroborate that with historical evidence.

I'll come to the underlined in just a minute but he's an Apostle and he's a servant. He's writing to further their faith and he's writing in the sure knowledge of eternal life. I mean that's what the word hope means here because God what he promises he's going to do he says he hasn't done it yet. We have a hope but this is a hope that's secure because of the person that secures the promise. He's writing in the hope of eternal life which God promised before all times before the beginning of time and which now has been fulfilled.

He's brought that promise to light in the fullness of time and he's done it through the preaching of the gospel. Now of course, Christ had to come to be preached about but here he doesn't stop and talk about the incarnation. He assumes that Christ has come, Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ is the son at the right hand of the Father.

He's going to mention Christ's return later on but Christ's coming has made preaching of Christ possible and that preaching was entrusted to me. Paul says and he has a special charge to the Gentile world. Titus is a Gentile and Crete is a Gentile region.

This is all by the command of God our Savior so there's a lot here about God. There's a lot here about God's faithfulness, about God's integrity, about God's plan, about the reward of gospel's reception, that is eternal life, about ecclesiology, and how did the gospel get to the Gentile world?

It's through the appointment of the Apostles. What was an Apostle? Well, they were servants.

There's just a wealth of information in these 46 Greek words and when he says then to Titus my true son this is sort of like what he says to tie it to Timothy. I think it indicates the closeness that was between them, the bond that was between them because they shared a common faith. This is covenant language, an affirmation of trust in the God who way way back a had created the world.

Then after the fall of man and after the flood and so on and forth he makes a promise to Abraham that in Abraham all the nations of the world will be blessed. Especially in a place like Romans 4 Paul draws out the Abrahamic heritage and how Abraham is the father of all those who believe. He says the same thing in Galatians

which Titus is directly or indirectly related to this message of the gospel to the whole world but including the Gentiles.

Paul says we are children of Abraham by faith this is our common faith. It's Paul's, who's a Jew. It's Titus' who's a Gentile. It's the faith of all of God's people through the ages and it was fulfilled in Christ. The promise of God was fulfilled in Christ.

Therefore, Paul can write and can wish and can, you could say, dispense. He can dispense grace and peace because it's there for the offering and it's there for the taking because God has granted it. God the Father has granted it and Christ Jesus our Savior has won it. And so, you could almost just say that's a letter right there because there's so much hope, there's so much theology, there's so much affirmation of the fullness of the message that brings salvation to the world.

But before we go to another section with respect to the underlying words, I want to dig deeper into this idea of furthering the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness. These are two of the goals of Paul's servanthood and apostleship. The first is to further the faith of God's elect. Paul has already told us in 2 Timothy he endures everything for the sake of the elect. He's looked back over his ministry. This is one way of interpreting Paul. What have you done with your life? Well, I've endured everything for the sake of the elect that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Paul calls believers by this same word elect as in Romans 8:33 and in Colossians 3:12 where it's translated as those whom God has chosen. This designation has ancient grounding in God's sovereign and gracious choice of a redeemed people through the calling of Abraham and the calling of his descendants. We can read about that in Genesis 12, and then also in Romans 9 and 11. Paul confirms this language and this status of people.

Jesus likewise called his followers in Jesus' time. Rabbis did not call followers came and attached themselves. But in the New Testament we read that Jesus stayed up all night one night praying and then the next day when he got up he up he called 12. He appointed them, it says that they should be with him. I think this is emblematic of something that's very true about people who come to faith in God. God has been working behind the scenes. We could say to groom them to prepare them for communion with him and service of him and worship of him. He called his followers the elect and in broad biblical perspective. There are few concepts that are more basic to the identity of God's people than being chosen by God, whether you talk about Israel or whether you talk about Abraham.

These are all people that God appears to and you can't just snap your fingers and say okay God I'm here. You can't rub a lamp and there's God. Especially in the ancient

world where there was a lot of corruption and people believed in many gods. The God of Abraham somehow came to Abraham, and we can't account for it except God is merciful and God does what he wants to do.

Whatever Paul writes in Titus it's going to extend and solidify this identity of being God's people.

A second goal of Paul's servanthood and his apostleship pertains to their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness. They're referring to God's people the elect this knowledge can be understood as in accordance with godliness. It's not vague knowledge of God. It's not a random piety, okay, I know God and then I'll live however I want. It has a norm and this godliness we've already seen a lot in 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy. About the same time in 2 Peter, Peter is exhorting his readers to the same quality of character. This is a godliness that is practically expressed. It's the living out in real-life situations of the knowledge of God which I've observed knowledge of God can be formal. It can veer off into abstract conviction. It can be mentally stimulating but not change a person's life.

But in contrast to this theoretical knowledge or speculative knowledge, Paul talks about this in 2 Timothy people always learning but are never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. Paul commands a knowledge of the truth that makes a difference for his readers everyday religious disposition and how they conduct their everyday affairs, how they conduct their relationships, and how they act.

This practical emphasis to the beginning of the letter paves the way for Paul stress on works later in the epistle. and I think that Paul is using truth in a way that foreshadows a polemical or an apologetic stance toward the opponents of his apostolic status and his apostolic message. He's writing to further the truth and he's writing to Titus who's sort of in a quagmire of quasi-truths and untruths that he's going to need to address.

We can move quickly through this next section appointing elders who love what is good. Paul says the reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town as I directed you.

Now here are some qualifications an elder must be blameless faithful to his wife a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient remember these are house churches people convene Christian families got together in somebody's house. And so, it was important that a man have a Christian marriage and that the religion of the parents was shared with the children since an overseer. So, you see that overseer here, an elder, are being used in the same way manages God's household. He must be blameless, not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.

Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine or sound teaching and refute those who oppose it.

So that's a vignette, a very short little characterization of the kind and the quality of the person. Since it says faithful to his wife, it's clear he's assuming that this is a male. This is a man, the quality of person that Titus needs to keep his eye out for and needs to insist on to train for leadership in the cell groups, the small groups that had been established at Crete which were growing in the direction of being churches.

Now every clause in every word here we could we could break down and look at but I just want to look at this idea of an elder being blameless because I know from experience that a lot of people wonder, what does that mean? When churches are discussing who should we call? Some churches use these for deacons, others use them just for pastors but these are qualifications certainly for godly leadership in any church.

What does it mean to be blameless? Some people will say well, I can't be a minister because I'm not blameless. So, let's dig deeper and ask what does that mean and notice that Paul repeats it in verse 7. So, it's important.

Well, the word can't mean sinless or morally perfect because Paul knows that we all sin and fall short of God's glory. So, we know that much I think it can also hardly mean a wonderful person in the sight of everybody having a life that offers no convincing evidence of wrongdoing that's what one commentator thinks.

It means you look for somebody who whose life offers no convincing evidence of wrongdoing. This would go against Jesus' teaching that his followers will be disliked and they'll be opposed by at least some people. Jesus says woe to you when everybody speaks well of you and Paul says the same thing to Timothy. He says everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. Persecution implies wrongdoing or accusation of wrongdoing and to define blameless as perfect and everybody thinks you're the greatest thing since sliced bread. It would be contrary to the assumption of the epistle because this epistle addresses the problem in the reality of people straying from apostolic faith and practice and people who are straying from what Paul and Titus stand for.

Obviously, no one would consider Paul and Titus blameless because they're against them. They're blaming them for their convictions they want different views and practices so for convinced pagans and convinced Jews. No one who espoused Paul's gospel could be considered blameless.

But there are two other New Testament passages that use this word and they may help us. First in 1 Corinthians Paul says to the Corinthians that Jesus Christ will keep you firm to the end so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul isn't saying that the Corinthians are perfect or that they will be in the end something they are not now because what they are is what they are. 1 Corinthians is a letter that calls the Corinthians into question, you could say, convicts them of many errors. But he is saying that as believers in Christ they've received the grace of the gospel and they possess a righteousness through faith and this righteousness through faith assures them of God's present exoneration. They are already saints even though they are struggling and in some cases are transgressing. They're blameless in God's sight by virtue of the sufficiency of Christ's death.

For their sake similarly, Paul tells the Colossians that God has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight without blemish and free from accusation. There's that word blameless. Paul's not saying of the Colossians that they're sinless. He's also not suggesting that they're above criticism and how they live because Paul is critical of them. But he's speaking of their standing in God's sight by virtue of their faith in Christ Jesus. They love that they have for all God's people, they've received the gospel message and it is transforming them and this work of God's Word confers a status of blamelessness upon them in God's sight.

So, I want to suggest that to be blameless as a pastoral candidate means to be living in the present in a way that's consistent with what the grace of the gospel confers on those who believe and receive it. You're living in a Christian way receiving the gospel and living it out 1 Corinthians and Colossians both bristle with ethical teachings that imply how the readers blameless status theologically should manifest itself practically and Paul is likewise telling Titus that pastoral candidates must exhibit strong signs of the presence of the divine grace that transforms lives in godly directions.

We could sum it up by saying committed godly and growing in true faith and fruitful practice. If we are trusting Christ, if day in and day out we are living in a relationship of repentance for our wrongdoing and growth in the gospel and fruitfulness and following him. Then Satan can say all he wants about us and people who don't like Christians can criticize us and other people maybe even in the church who are who are jealous or who just don't like us.

For some reason I mean if you have a very big church you're going to have people who blame each other because that's just kind of what people do is that they look askance at other people and think well, I'm not that bad or I don't approve of how they handle their kids or I don't like their Bible translation. I don't like it they're driving an electric car. I don't like it they're not driving an electric car.



There are all kinds of ways that people blame each other. But I think policy talking here theologically and he's saying to Titus, Titus look for those people who are walking in Christ and then what that looks like. He gives a lot of other indicators like being faithful to his wife and his children and not a drunkard and all these sorts of things that help us see how blamelessness gets fleshed out in practical living.

Well, this lecture has gone on for quite a while and we included a lot of introductory material. I think what we're going to do is stop now and then we'll pick up the rest of chapter one in our next lecture and go on and finish chapter two thank you

This is Dr. Robert Yarbrough in his teaching on the pastoral epistles, apostolic instruction for pastoral leaders and their followers. This is session 12, Introduction to Titus, Titus 1.