

Christian Purpose, Church Leaders, False Teachers
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Happy Mothers' Day! Today we're talking about living with PURPOSE. Some of the most PURPOSEFUL people I know are Moms!

Titus 1:1-16

Opening Discussion Question: Think of someone who lives their life with PURPOSE. Got a mental picture? What are some adjectives, some words, we might use to describe that person? That person is...(fill in the blank, what are some words?)

The Apostle Paul definitely lived his life on earth with a PURPOSE. Before God got his attention it was an evil purpose, what was it? After Jesus struck him down on the road to Damascus his purpose radically changed. In this letter to Titus, his OPENING SALUTATION tells us A LOT about Paul's PURPOSE IN LIFE AND MINISTRY.

Since this is our first week in Titus, let's answer some key questions about this letter. Did any of you do any advance research for extra Sunday School points?

- Who was Titus?
- What was his story?
- What was he doing when Paul wrote to him?
- What was Crete like? (Verse 12)
- Why did Paul write to him? We'll see many similarities to the two letters to Timothy.

We'll see three key things in chapter one of Titus:

1. Paul's purpose in life, and how it CHALLENGES US about OUR purpose for Christ.
2. The qualities of Christian leaders, and why every Christian should care about that.
3. The warning signs of false teachers and why every Christian should care about that.

Let's start with Paul directions to Titus, then come back to Paul's example of what we should all BE as a Christian who lives with a PURPOSE in life.

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

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

- Like Timothy, Titus was a "spiritual son" to Paul. **Why do you think Paul used the metaphor of a "true child" rather than my "associate" or my "friend"? What would "true child" tell everyone? What do we often SEE if someone is a child?**
- Now, on to what Paul wants Titus to DO in the churches on the isle of Crete.

5 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— 6 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. 7 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, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 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.

- This sounds familiar doesn't it? A lot like 1 Timothy 3 we just studied. It is.
- Like Timothy in Ephesus, Titus, in Crete, had his "hands full" in ministry and Paul gave him instructions on organizing the churches there.
- When you read scripture you need to ask: "Why is this important to ME?"
- **Why do you and I need to know the qualifications for church leaders?**
- If you are a committed believer, you need this because you will: FOLLOW church leaders; help to SELECT leaders; or you will BECOME a church leader; or all three.
- We have God's inspired PROFILE for church leaders in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
- Whether we become a church leader or not, these are great qualities to strive for!
- We also need to know what Paul told Titus next. Some characteristics of false teachers and how to handle them.

10 For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. 11 They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. 12 One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." 13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth. 15 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. 16 They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

- **Why do I need to be familiar with these verses?**
- When we come across false teachers, we have to SPOT them and STOP them.
- Verse 13 says, "*rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.*"
- As believers in Christ we cannot allow false teaching in the church.
- Important instructions for ANY local church: Choose Godly leaders; STOP false teachers!
- What really grabbed me is in verses 1 through 3, Paul's PURPOSE in life.

Titus 1:1–16 (ESV)

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 at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior;

- It's AMAZING how much IMPORTANT stuff is in verses 1,2, and 3!
- Before Paul finishes his GREETING we learn a LOT we need to know!
- Verse 1: Paul describes himself as a "servant of God"? Your translation?

- **What is the difference between a servant and a slave?**
- **What was Paul saying about himself with those words?**
- Also, Verse 1: Paul describes himself as an “apostle of Jesus Christ.”
- **What was an “apostle”? What did this title say about Paul?**
- In today’s language: *“I’m a complete SLAVE to Christ and MESSENGER OF Christ.”*
- **Later in verse 1, what was Paul’s PURPOSE in life? For the sake of...what?**
- **What does “the faith of God’s elect” describe? Who are “God’s elect?”**
- Paul lived not only to bring about the “FAITH” of God’s elect, **what else does it say?**
- God’s plan is NOT to stop at SALVATION. Once we’re saved, our Heavenly Father wants us to GROW in RELATIONSHIP with Him. To do that we have to have the “knowledge of the TRUTH” (God’s word) which leads us to “godliness.” We’re not called to PERFECTION, we ARE called to become more “godly” IMITATING Christ.
- Paul wanted to bring people to FAITH (Salvation); KNOWLEDGE that leads to GODLINESS; all of which leads to...(what does it say in verse 2?)
- **Who promised that? When did He promise it? Why can we TRUST Him?**
God didn’t just promise this, he “manifested it” -- TOLD US about it, **in what?**
- **And what did God COMMAND Paul to do with that manifest WORD?**
- We get intimidated by the term PREACHING. The Greek translates “proclamation.”
- When we tell anyone about anyTHING we are PROCLAIMING that information.
- Review what Paul has said about himself and his PURPOSE in LIFE and MINISTRY:
 - I am a SLAVE to God
 - I am a MESSENGER of Christ
 - My purpose is to win people to FAITH in Christ...and...
 - To help them GROW in KNOWLEDGE of the TRUTH (God’s word)...and...
 - To KNOW God’s word so they can become more GODLY, because they have HOPE of ETERNAL LIFE, which God PROMISED, and God CANNOT lie!
 - God revealed all that in His WORD which I am to PROCLAIM everywhere I go.
- That list was Paul’s PURPOSE in life.
- **Other than the title “apostle,” can you think of anything in this statement of Paul’s PURPOSE in life, that DOESN’T apply to every BELIEVER in Christ?**
- Here’s the challenge for you and me:
 - Do we have a purpose in life, or are we just bumping around through life?
 - Picture a toy car that runs into an obstacle, backs up, and runs off in another direction.
 - Where is that toy car going?
 - Instead, an RC car you can maneuver around, over, through in a DEFINITE direction?
 - Paul’s words challenge us to ask: “Is my life more like toy car #1 or toy car #2?”

“Don’t become a wandering generality. Be a meaningful specific.”— Zig Ziglar

- What if we took a stab at our own PURPOSE STATEMENT for our lives as Christians?
- First, what is your aim in life as a Christian? The Westminster Shorter Catechism:
- “Chief aim of man? Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.” http://www.creeds.net/Westminster/shorter_catechism.html
- In 1 Corinthians 10:31 Paul wrote: *“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”* That’s a good start for our purpose!
- Sincerely desiring to do everything “to the glory of God” would keep me from trouble.

- Where else could we turn in scripture to develop our purpose in life?
- What about the Great Commandment? Matthew 22:34-40
- What about the Great Commission? Matthew 28:16-20
- Considering all that, a believer in Christ might say their purpose in life is to Glorify God; Love God; Love Others; and Make Disciples.
- That covers it but for me I decided to try to write it SIMPLY yet PRACTICALLY, a purpose statement like this:
- *"My purpose in life is to leave people and situations better than I found them"...*(and added the words)...*"to the glory of God!"*
- *"...leave people and situations BETTER than I found them, to the glory of God!"*
- You may write one that's better than that...it must suit the individual. Let's use that one as an example.
- How would that purpose statement (above) fulfill the Great Commission?
- ...your family responsibilities?
- ...your church and ministry calling?
- ...your business responsibilities?
- ...service to mankind?
- ...even your own health and well being?

So, What's the Takeaway?

- In just his introduction, Paul set the TONE and the EXAMPLE for Titus, the church at Crete, and for all of us. Paul was CLEAR about his PURPOSE in life.
- It begs the question: Am I living the Christian life with a PURPOSE based on scripture or am I just "bumping around" like that toy car from thing to thing?