

Good morning church if you are here for the first time, welcome. We are about to wrap up our study of Titus. I have spent much time in this small but mighty letter in preparation for today. I asked the Holy Spirit to give me discernment and I asked a lot of questions. Why did Paul use this word? Why did he make this argument? How was Paul prepared to write this letter? It was that last question that helped me understand how God had orchestrated the events in Paul's life and prepared him to write this letter. We know that all scripture is God breathed, and that the Holy Spirit is working through Paul in writing this letter. But before that, God had arranged Paul's life and his experiences in preparation for this letter. While Paul was a prisoner of Rome his time was spent with Roman Soldiers, Roman Officers, Roman Rulers, and Roman Authorities. Paul saw firsthand how they were organized, how they planned, how they communicated, how they delegated authority, and how they dealt with discipline. Paul lived with Roman Soldiers, and he observed that when stationed outside of Rome, Roman soldiers represented their country like an ambassador. God used Paul's imprisonment and his interactions with the Roman world to change Paul. Paul learned how to setup, organize, communicate, and delegate. He learned how to create a framework and a "Framework for a Healthy Church" is the title of our series.

Let us begin in a word of prayer.

Titus can be read in less than six minutes, I know because I timed myself. This letter when received by Titus was a scroll. No chapters, no verses it was a letter from Paul. I say that because there are certain themes repeated again and again (good works & sound doctrine), and Paul also repeats practical application with declarations of sound doctrine. From our previous sermons we learned that Paul has instructed Titus to put things in order. To find Elders for the churches, Elders that must guard the flock and rebuke false doctrine. How older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and slaves should act personally and how they should act with each other. Now that the internal framework has been addressed Paul instructs Titus on the external framework. That is where we start. How should Cretans interact with those outside the church? How should Cretans interact with those in authority? Paul tells Titus that Cretans have been radically transformed and the cause and implications of that transformation. Lastly, Paul will end with a warning to watch for those who use false doctrine to harm the

church. This message applies to all Cretans in the church, and it applies to all of us in this church.

Let us start with verses one and two.

“Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.”

Put this down for your first point

Those in authority are put there by God v1

Paul was familiar with Roman law, and he knew his rights as a Roman citizen. Paul was a Roman citizen by birth. Paul was born in the city of Tarsus in the Roman province of Cilicia and in Acts 16 we read how Paul referred to his rights a Roman.

While Paul and Silas were in Philippi, they encountered a demon possessed slave girl and Paul commanded the demon to come out of the girl in the name of Jesus Christ. Her owners were not pleased with Paul and Silas. So, they dragged them to the marketplace and the Magistrate had their clothes ripped off. He ordered Paul and Silas to be beat with rods. He had them put into prison with their feet put in stocks. The next morning, the Magistrate ordered them to be released discreetly.

“But Paul said to them, “They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.” The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens.”

Paul as a Roman citizen, called upon his rights regarding due process.

Paul also knew what it was like to interact with Roman rulers and authorities. After Paul's arrest in Acts, he went before Governor Felix, Governor Festus, and King Agrippa and then to Rome as he appeals to Ceasar.

So, Paul had firsthand experience of dealing with rulers and authorities.

Here in Titus, Paul instructs the church to be submissive to rulers and authorities. He tells them, that they are commanded to submit. The word for **"submit"** in Greek is a military term, and it means to arrange under or fall in line, to submit one's control. The word **"authority"** is different than the authority in chapter two. Here, authority deals with governmental or administrative authority. Cretans are to submit to rulers and authorities. In the context of this passage a ruler would be the first person they are in contact with. It might be a Roman soldier or a local magistrate. Cretans must submit to both the first point of contact and the power behind that first point of contact. Not only must they submit, but they must also do so with obedience.

For Christians, submission and obedience to authority is clear in scripture. Scripture tells us that those in authority have been placed there by God.

In John nineteen Jesus and Pilot speak and Jesus tells Pilot where his authority comes from. We read in John nineteen verses nine to eleven.

"He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above....."

Where does Pilot's authority come from? Is it Caesar, the Senate, his family name? No, Pilot's authority comes from God. God is the one who put Pilot in authority. Paul writes about authority in Romans thirteen:

"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.."

Whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed. We obey those in authority because we know who put them in authority. We must have a heart of obedience like Jesus before Pilot and Paul before Roman Authority.

In your Outline for point 2 write

Christians should be prepared for good works

Continuing in verse two Paul provides a list of good works that all Christ followers should be known for.

to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people."

In his list Paul addresses a believer's thoughts, words, and actions. With our thoughts we should be prepared to do good, this requires pre-planning on our part. We should understand the words we use and the power of those words. We should not be argumentative or prone to fighting but gentle and courteous to all people.

Do you know what “all people” means in Greek? It means all people. Each person, any person, the whole group of people, it means everyone.

How are we doing on this church? These commands apply to Cretans, and they apply to you and me.

Next Paul writes about the radical transformation of the believers and who we were before Christ. In verse three we read:

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

How is that for our pre-Christ Resume?

Imagine going to a job interview and being asked “So tell me something about yourself what are your strengths?”

- I am Ignorant.
- I am Disobedient and Deceived
- I am a slave to various desires and to Pleasant Feelings
- I spend my day being Wicked and Jealous
- I hate everyone and everyone hates me.

That would be funny if it were not true and the sad truth is, this is the truth. That was us before Christ.

For a non-believer this is who you are and to pour more gas on the eternal and unquenchable fire. You cannot clean yourself up. Listening to motivational podcast cannot change you and there is nothing YOU CAN DO to change yourself. If you are listening, I mean truly listening right now you should be thinking, I am in trouble. You are right and you have no idea the eternal trouble that awaits you. Would you like to know the solution? Because Paul is going to give us the solution in verses four to seven and he gives us the solution by way of Sound Doctrine.

Here's point #3

A healthy church teaches sound doctrine

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Paul has mentioned sound doctrine twice before in this letter. In chapter one he told Titus to appoint Elders and in describing these men, Paul says this about Elders ***“He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so they so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine...”*** Then again in chapter two Paul instructs Titus ***“But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.”***

In these verses Paul is going to teach sound doctrine. Doctrine regarding Gods love, the work of Christ in saving sinners, the sinners inability to be right before God, Gods mercy, the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation and justification, the believers inheritance of eternal life, and the hope that one day we will be with GOD. Know this that if every single one of us could spend every

single second of the rest of our lives trying to understand these topics and then we could combine our findings. After all that work, we would not even have scratched the surface of GOD's Love, His Mercy, and His work of Salvation for us sinners.

Starting in verse four. ***"But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared."*** Our Salvation begins with God. Nothing that you or I could do, will do, or have done, would result in our Salvation. It begins and ends with God, His goodness and His loving kindness. God is both all good and all kind. His goodness and loving-kindness fulfill His purposes 100% of the time. In Romans 2:4 Paul talks about the kindness of God.

"Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance."

You see apart from the goodness and loving-kindness of God there would be no repentance on our part. We are all in eternal trouble. Left on our own, we were helpless.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God, our savior appeared.

Who is our savior? Jesus Christ. Listen to Mark 10:45

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Jesus Christ gave his life as a ransom. God sent Jesus to save sinners. The plan of salvation can be found in the beginning of scripture. In Genesis three verse fifteen and it is often referred to as the proto Evangelium which means the first gospel. Here we read.

"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

Her offspring is a reference to Jesus Christ and the verse points to a future savior who will defeat evil. What did this Savior Jesus Christ do? He saved us.

The bible teaches us that when we are born, we are born both physically alive and spiritually dead.

Hear the words of Jesus Christ in Matthew 8:21-22

“Another of the disciples said to him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

And Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.”

Without Jesus Christ we are spiritually dead, and it is only through Jesus Christ and Him alone are we made spiritually alive.

I have question for you. What can someone who is spiritually dead do to become spiritually alive? Are there any ***works done by us in righteousness*** that can help us? Can good works make him spiritually alive? Can being moral make him spiritually alive? Listen to Paul in Romans three:

“as it is written None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God.

All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”

The only way that anyone becomes spiritually alive is by the mercy of Jesus Christ. The Psalmist understood Gods mercy in Psalm 103:8 we read:

“The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.”

The mercy of God is unfathomable. Our merciful God provides clemency in offering to men salvation by Christ. The Apostle Peter understood Gods mercy and in 1 Peter 1:3 he writes.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

In the temple there was the Ark of the covenant, and the lid of the Ark was called the mercy seat. This is where God's presence would meet the high priest once a year on the day of Atonement. Sprinkled with sacrificial blood, it symbolized God's forgiveness and reconciliation with His people and it covered their sins. The high priest would do this once a year. The sacrificial systems were a foreshadow of the perfect lamb of God, Jesus Christ. But unlike those sacrifices that covered sins, Jesus Christ our Savior takes them away. We are told in Hebrews 10:4

"For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."

And in 1 John 3:5 we read.

"You know that he (Jesus) appeared in order to take away sins, in him there is no sin."

How great is the mercy of God. His kindness and good will towards the miserable and afflicted. That same mercy that God has for us, we should have for others.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."

As we continue in our understanding of sound doctrine from Paul, we understand the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation.

by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

The Holy Spirit washes us. In Greek it reads that the Holy Spirit bathes us. This word is used twice in the scripture both times by Paul. When you take a shower, you might not get every part of your body wet. When you bathe, every part of you gets wet, you are all in. Not one part of your body is dry. The Holy Spirit bathes the believer at the moment of salvation you receive all

the Holy Spirit. Not a partial, not a sprinkle but a bathing. This bathing of the Holy Spirit results in **regeneration**, a new birth, a new life consecrated to God. A radical transformation takes place within the believer. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 Paul describes this **regeneration**:

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away: behold the new has come.”

This is sound doctrine. Regeneration in Christ is a new birth in Christ. In Christ you are a new creation, you are made alive. No longer dead in your sins but alive in Christ.

The Holy Spirit is also renewing believers. Notice it does not say renewed, past tense. The Holy Spirit is renewing or completely changing us for the better. This Greek word is used twice, both by Paul once here then also in Romans 12:2 a verse that many have memorized thanks to AWANA's.

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Our regeneration and renewal have been poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior. The Holy Spirit pours it out, all of it. No holding back and He does so richly or abundantly.

It is by Christ and in Christ alone that we enter the eternal kingdom. In Christ's teachings we are transformed. In Christ, the church is one body. By Christ's life we are free from the law of sin and death. In Christ we are no longer dead in our sins. In Christ we are a new creation. By Christ's love we are redeemed. In Christ we are sanctified. By Christ's blood our sins are forgiven. In Christ we are sons of God and can call God our Father. In Christ's resurrection we have hope. No truer words could describe Jesus Christ our Savior than richly and abundantly. The way you see the world is new, how you interact with people is new. Your affections and

desires have changed. Your love for this world and the things of this world, you do not have them anymore. By the bathing of the Holy Spirit, you are a new creation.

Would you like to hear some more sound doctrine? In verse seven we read

“so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

Paul provides more Sound Doctrine to Titus and this regarding our Justification. The doctrine of Justification is like a masterfully cut diamond and the more you study it the more complexity it has and the more beautiful it becomes. Justification by grace brings many subjects together God’s Holiness, God’s judgement, Christ’s holiness, Christ’s perfect life, Christ’s sacrifice, the shedding of his blood, and His resurrection. The standing of sinful man before a Holy God. How we are made right or just before a Holy God.

Let us start with a biblical definition of Justification. This definition of Justification came from the Gospel Coalition website:

Justification is the instantaneous and irreversible divine declaration of the unrighteous as positionally righteous, based upon the merit of Christ’s obedience, applied by grace and received through faith ([Rom. 3.24-28; 4.1-5; 5.1-2](#)). God declares the unjust to be just based upon Christ’s work and His record is now your record. His merit is yours. God treats you as righteous because he treated Christ as unrighteous—for our sake. --- Erik Raymond June 26, 2025

In Romans 5, Paul elaborates on justification and its consequences.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

To make sure that we understand that our Justification is a work by God Paul tells us it was done by grace. Oh, the grace of God. God is the one who turns our hearts to Christ,

1. By God's grace we are chosen,
2. By God's grace we are called out,
3. By God's grace we are kept,
4. By God's grace we are strengthened
5. And by God's grace we are saved.

Sound Doctrine says that we are Justified by grace in Christ alone. That we have peace with God and stand right before a Holy God not by any works but by the Work of Jesus Christ.

Paul finishes this doctrinal statement on sound doctrine by telling Titus that as a result of the Justification by Christ, believers look forward to an inheritance, the hope of Eternal Life. Our inheritance or possession of eternal life comes from our being sons and daughters of God.

In Ephesians 1:5 Paul elaborates on this inheritance and our adoption. Regarding our adoption

".... In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.."

Then as a result of our adoption, our inheritance.

“In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

And what is our Inheritance? That when we depart this earth, when we make the transition from this body, when we die. We have for our inheritance, eternal life with God the Father and Jesus Christ. And just like Jesus Christ had a new body, so we will have a new body. But our new bodies will be glorified bodies. Our current bodies from the outer shell to our DNA have been impacted by sin. Because of sin we have sickness, and death. Because of sin our bodies breakdown and wear out. Because of sin we have fear, and anxiety. Our new glorified bodies are different. With the effects of sin no longer an issue our glorified bodies are perfect. There will be no more fear, no more worry, no more anxiety all those will be replaced by perfect peace. Those who were lame will run and not get weary. Those who are blind will see their savior and those who are mute will sing songs of glorious praise.

This new life we have will be eternal, it will never cease, it will always be, it will have no end. It is everlasting life.

Back to our text verse eight.

“The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.”

Paul tells Titus that this Sound doctrine. This sound Doctrine is the truth, and this sound doctrine needs to be proclaimed with confidence and boldness. Titus, Cretans need to hear this,

understand this, believe this, and live this out. Why? Why Paul? Because when sound doctrine is preached, heard, understood, and believed, it changes peoples lives. It changes people's minds; it changes people's hearts. It allows the hearer to devote themselves to good works. Listen to the writer of Hebrews on the power of God.

“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

And when believers engage in good works. The works described in verses one and two:

- Being submissive to rulers and authorities
- Being obedient and ready to do good
- Speaking evil of no one
- Avoid quarreling.
- Being gentle
- Showing perfect courtesy toward all people.

When believers do this, it profits everyone both believers and non- believers. Hear me please. Do you want to impact this world for God. Do you want to see God glorified in this world? Jesus said this in Matthew five

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

Every believer is a light. Does your light glorify God? Jesus words are clear “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

Our last point #4

Unconfronted False doctrine leads to confusion and death of a church.

Back to our text before Paul closes the letter to Titus he does so with a warning.

“But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

Paul tells Titus to focus on sound doctrine and avoid those who spend their time on stupid arguments, genealogies, controversies, and quarrels over the law. Paul singles out the person who stirs up division by way of false doctrine. For this person there is an intentionality behind their false doctrine. Behind what they are teaching and what they are doing. It is not innocent, and it is not by accident, it’s planned. Their plan is to create confusion and to divide the Church. The bride of Christ. Paul tells Titus to warn him once and then twice, after that have nothing more to do with him. False doctrine will create confusion and division in the local church, stops the church from fulfilling its mission, it makes the church ineffective, and it will eventually lead to the death of that church. Even today we see churches where false doctrine was accepted, then taught and now we see the outcome it produces. Confusion, division, and many denominations that were once orthodox have become heretical. When we understand the severity of these dangers we understand the severity of the solution.

Titus had his work cut out for him and it would not be easy, ministry never is. This is not just a letter to Crete it is a letter to all churches; it is a letter to this church. We have our work cut out for us and it will not be easy, ministry never is. My recommendation as your Elder would be for you to study this letter. Spend time in this letter and begin by asking the Holy Spirit for guidance. Spend time thinking about how you interact with those outside the church? How do you interact with those in authority? We have been radically transformed, and that transformation should impact your life.

Lastly, we should not forget the warnings of Paul. We should focus our time on the sound doctrine & doing good. Know that those who seek to create division and divide the church are not doing so accidentally. Let us pray.