

The Epistle Of Paul To Titus

The Argument

When Titus was left in Crete to finish that doctrine which Paul had there begun, Satan stirred up certain which went about not only to overthrow the government of the Church, but also to corrupt the doctrine; for some by ambition would have thrust in themselves to be pastors; others, under pretext of Moses' Law brought in many trifles. Against these two sorts of men Paul armeth Titus: first teaching him what manner of ministers he ought to choose, chiefly requiring that they be men of sound doctrine to the intent they might resist the adversaries, and amongst other things he noteth the Jews which put a certain holiness in meats and such outward ceremonies, teaching them which are the true exercises of a Christian life, and what things appertain to every man's vocation. Against the which if any man rebel or else doeth not obey, he willet him to be avoided.

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Titus 1

6 He sheweth what kind of men ought to be chosen Ministers; 10 how vain babblers' mouths should be stopped; 12 and through this occasion he toucheth the nature of the Cretians, 14 and the Jews, who put holiness in outward things.

1 Paul (1) a (a) servant of God, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the (*) faith of God's (b) elect, (2) and the acknowledging of the truth, which is according to godliness,

(1) He voucheth his Apostleship (not for Titus, but for the Cretian's sake) both by the testimony of his outward calling, and by his consent wherein which he agreeth with all the elect from the beginning of the world.

(a) Minister, as Christ himself, in that which he was a minister and head of the Prophets, is called a servant; Isaiah 43:10 .

(*) That is, to preach the faith, to increase their knowledge, to teach them to live godly that at length they may obtain eternal life.

(b) Of those whom God hath chosen.

(2) The faith wherein all the elect consent, is the true and sincere knowledge of God, tending to this end, that worshipping God aright that they at length obtain life everlasting according to the promise of God, who is true, which promise was exhibited to Christ in due time according to his eternal purpose.

2 Unto the (c) hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, hath (d) (♣) promised before the (*) (e) world began;

(c) Hope is the end of faith.

(d) Freely, and of his mere liberality.

(♣) Hath willingly, and of his mere liberality promised without foreseeing our faith or works as a cause to move him to this free mercy.

(*) Romans 16:25; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:26; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:20 .

(e) Look at 2 Timothy 1:9 .

3 (3) But hath made his word manifest in due time through the preaching, which is (*) committed unto me according to the commandment of God our (f) (♣) Saviour;

(3) This truth is no other where to be sought, but in the preaching of the Apostles.

(*) Galatians 1:1 .

(f) This word (Saviour) doeth not only signify a preserver of life, but also a giver of life.

(♣) Who both giveth life and preserveth life.

4 (4) To Titus *my* natural (*) son according to the common faith, (5) Grace, mercy *and* peace from God the Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

(4) The Apostle moveth the Cretians to hear Titus, by setting forth his consent and agreement with them in the faith, and therewithal sheweth by what special note we may distinguish true ministers from false.

(*) In respect of faith which was common to them both, so that hereby they are brethren; but in respect of the ministry Paul begat him his son in faith.

(5) There is but one way of salvation, common both to the Pastor and the flock.

5 (6) For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest continue to redress the things that remain, and shouldest ordain Elders in every city, as I appointed thee;

(6) The first admonition: to ordain Elders in every city.

6 (*) If any (♣) be unreprieveable, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, which are not slandered of riot, neither are (g) disobedient.

(*) 1 Timothy 3:2.

(♣) That is, without all infamy whereby his authority might be diminished.

(g) This word is proper to horses and oxen, which will not abide tolerate the yoke.

7 (7) For a Bishop must be unreprieveable, as (*) God's (h) steward, not (i) (♣) froward, not angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre,

(7) The second admonition: what faults pastors (whom he comprehended afore under the word Elders) ought to be void of, and what virtues they ought to have.

(*) Who hath the dispensation of his gifts.

(h) Whom the Lord hath appointed steward of his gifts.

(i) Not hard conditioned, and evil to please.

(♣) Or self will.

8 But harberous, one that loveth (♣) goodness, (k) wise, (*) righteous, (♣) holy, temperate,

(♣) Or, good men.

(k) Circumspect, of a sound judgment, and of a singular example of moderation.

(*) Toward men.

(♣) Toward God.

9 (8) Holding fast the faithful word according to doctrine, (9) that he also may be able to exhort with wholesome doctrine, and convince them that say against it.

(8) The third admonition: The pastor must hold fast that doctrine, which the Apostles delivered, and pertaineth to salvation, leaving behind all curious and vain matters.

(9) The fourth admonition: To apply the knowledge of true doctrine unto use, which consisteth in two things, to wit, in governing them which shew themselves apt to learn, and confuting the obstinate.

10 (10) For there are many disobedient and vain talkers and deceivers of minds, chiefly they of the (l) (*) Circumcision,

(10) An applying of the general proposition to a particular: The Cretians above all others need sharp reprehensions; both because their minds are naturally given to lies and slothfulness, and also because of certain covetous Jews, which under a color of godliness, joined partly certain vain traditions, and partly old ceremonies with the Gospel.

(l) Of the Jews, or rather of those Jews, which went about to join Christ and the Law together.

(*) Which were not only the Jews, but also the Hebionites, and Cherinthians heretics, which taught that the Law must be joined with Christ.

11 Whose mouths must be stopped, which subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

12 (m) One of themselves, *even* one of their own (*) prophets said, The Cretians *are* always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

(m) Epimenides, who was counted a Prophet amongst them. Look upon Laertius and Cicero in his first book of Divination.

(*) He calleth Epimenides the Philosopher, or Poet, whose verse he here reciteth, a Prophet, because the Cretians so esteemed him; and as Laetitus writeth, they sacrificed unto him as to a God, forasmuch as he had a marvelous gift to understand things to come; which thing Satan by the permission of God hath opened to the infidels from time to time, but it turneth to their greater condemnation.

13 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them (n) sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,

(n) Roughly and plainly, and go not about the bush with them.

14 And not taking heed to (*) Jewish fables and commandments of men, that turn away from the truth.

(*) 1 Timothy 1:4.

15 (11) Unto the pure (*) *are* all things pure, but unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving *is* nothing pure, but even their (o) minds and consciences are defiled.

(11) He sheweth in few words, that purity consisteth not in any external worship, and that which is according to the old Law, (as in difference of meats, and washing and other such things which are abolished) but in the mind and conscience; and whosoever teach otherwise, knows not what is true religion indeed, and also are nothing less than that they would seem to be.

(*) Romans 14:20.

(o) If our minds and consciences be unclean, what cleanness is there in us before regeneration?

16 They profess that they know God, but by (*) works they deny *him*, and are abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

(*) For as much as they stay at things of nothing, and pass not for them, that are of importance, and so give themselves to all wickedness.

Titus 2

2 He setteth out the duties of sundry persons and states, 6 and willeth him to instruct the Church in manners. 11 He draweth an argument from the end of our redemption, 12 which is, that we live godly and uprightly.

1 But (1) speak thou the things which become (*) wholesome doctrine,

(1) The fifth admonition: The doctrine must not only be generally pure, but also be applied to all ages and orders of men, according to the diversity of circumstances.

(*) Wherewith our souls are fed and maintained in health.

2 (2) That the elder men be sober, honest, discreet, sound in the faith, in love, and in patience;

(2) What are the chiefest virtues for old and young, both men and women; and how they ought to be stirred up unto them continually.

3 The elder women likewise, that they be in such behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not subject to much wine, *but* teachers of honest things,

4 That they may instruct the young women to be sober minded, that they love their husbands, that they love their children,

5 *That they be* discreet, chaste, (a) (♣) keeping at home, good and (*) subject unto their husbands, that the word of God be not evil spoken of.

(a) No gadders up and down.

(♣) Not running to and fro without necessary occasions, which is a sign of lightness.

(*) Ephesians 5:23 .

6 Exhort young men likewise, that they be sober minded.

7 (3) In all things shew thyself an example of good works with uncorrupt doctrine, with (b) gravity, integrity,

(3) The sixth admonition: That both the Pastor's life and doctrine must be sound.

(b) Not such a gravity as may drive men from coming to the minister, but such as may cause them to come in a most reverent and honest sort.

8 *And* with the wholesome word, which cannot be condemned, that he which withstandeth, may be ashamed, having nothing concerning you to speak evil of.

9 (*) (4) Let servants be subject to their masters, and please *them* in all (c) things, not answering again,

(*) Ephesians 6:5; Colossians 3:22; 1 Peter 2:18 .
(4) The seventh admonition, of servants toward their masters.
(c) Which may be done without offence to God.

10 Neither pilfering, but that they shew all good faithfulness, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

11 (*) (5) For that grace of God, that bringeth (♣) salvation unto all men, hath appeared,

(*) 1 Corinthians 1:2; Colossians 1:22 .
(5) The eighth admonition belongeth to all the godly; seeing that God calleth all men to the Gospel, and Christ hath so justified us, that he hath also sanctified us, we must all of us give ourselves to true godliness and righteousness, setting before us a sure hope of that immeasurable glory; which thing must in such sort be beaten into their heads, that the gainsayers also must be reprov'd, by the authority of the mighty God.
(♣) Of what condition or state soever they be.

12 And teacheth us, that we should deny ungodliness and (d) worldly lusts, and that we should live soberly and righteously, and godly in this present world,

(d) Lusts of the flesh, which belong to the present state of this life and world.

13 (e) Looking for the blessed hope, and appearing of the glory of our mighty God, and Saviour Jesus Christ,

(e) Christ is here most plainly called that mighty God, and his appearance and coming is called by the figure of speech Metonymy, our hope.

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purge us *to be* a (f) (*) peculiar people unto himself, zealous of good works.

(f) As it were a thing peculiarly laid up for himself.
(*) Most dear and precious.

15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all (g) (*) authority. See that no man despise thee.

(g) With all authority possible.
(*) As becometh the ambassador of God.

Titus 3

1 He willeth that all generally be put in mind to reverence such as be in authority. 3 That they remember their former life, and attribute all justification unto grace. 9 And if any babler withstand these things, 10 he willeth that he be rejected.

1 Put (1) them in remembrance that they (*) (♣) be subject to the principalities and powers, *and* that they be obedient, *and* ready to every good work,

(1) He declareth particularly and severally, that which he said before generally, noting out certain chief and principal duties, which men owe to men, and especially subjects to their magistrates.

(*) Romans 13:1; 1 Peter 2:13 .

(♣) Although the rulers be infidels, yet we are bound to obey them in civil policies, and whereas they command us nothing against the word of God.

2 That they speak evil of no man, that they be no fighters, *but* soft, shewing all meekness unto all men.

3 (2) (*) (♣) For we ourselves also were in times past unwise, disobedient, deceived, serving the lusts and divers pleasures, living in maliciousness and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another;

(2) He confirmeth again the former exhortation, by propounding the free benefit of our regeneration, the pledge whereof is our Baptism.

(*) 1 Corinthians 6:18 .

(♣) For let us consider what we ourselves were when God shewed us favor.

4 But when the bountifulness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

5 (*) Not (♣) by the works of (a) righteousness, which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the (♣) washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the (b) holy Ghost,

(*) 2 Timothy 1:9 .

(♣) God doeth not justify us for respect of anything, which he seeth in us, but doeth prevent us with his grace and freely accepteth us.

(a) Word for word, of works which are done in righteousness; and this place doth fully refute the doctrine of merits.

(♣) Baptism is a sure sign of our regeneration, which is wrought by the holy Ghost.

(b) Which the virtue of the holy Ghost worketh.

6 Which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour,

7 That we, being justified by his grace, should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

8 (3) This is a true saying, and these things I will thou shouldest affirm, that they which have believed God, might be careful to shew forth (c) good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

(3) Again with great earnestness he beateth into our heads, how that we ought to give ourselves, to true godliness, and eschew all vain questions, which serve to nothing but to move strife and debate.
(c) Give themselves earnestly unto good works.

9 (*) But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and brawlings about the Law, for they are unprofitable and vain.

(*) 1 Timothy 1:4; 1 Timothy 4:7; 2 Timothy 2:23 .

10 (4) (*) Reject him that is a heretic, after once or twice admonition,

(4) The ministers of the word must at once cast off heretics, that is, such as stubbornly and seditiously disquiet the Church, and will give no ear to Ecclesiastical admonitions.
(*) This commandment is given to the minister, and so particularly to all men to whom the sword is not committed but else the magistrate, whose chief office is to maintain God's glory in his Church, ought to cut off all such rotten and infectious members from the body.

11 Knowing that he that is such, is (*) perverted, and (♣) sinneth, being damned of his own self.

(*) So that there is no hope of amendment.
(♣) Willingly, and wittingly.

12 (5) When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me unto Nicopolis, for I have determined there to winter.

(5) Least of all, he writeth a word or two of private matters and commendeth certain men.

13 Bring Zenas (*) the expounder of the Law, and Apollos on their journey diligently, that they lack nothing.

(*) It is probably, that he was an interpreter of the Law of Moses, as Apollos.

14 And let ours also learn to shew forth good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

15 All that are with me, salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all, Amen.

*To Titus, elect the first Bishop of the Church of the Cretians, written from
Nicopolis in Macedonia.*