

Titus

By Bernard Gabbott

Titus is one of those pithy, confronting and surprisingly deep letters that Paul seemed so inspired by God to write!

Sent to his protégé, Titus, Paul writes this letter to instruct him how to install leaders, teach sound doctrine, and live that teaching so that God's people might 'have the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness'. The aim of this letter is soundness—healthiness—in both doctrine and behaviour. In essence, it seeks the godliness that the good news of Jesus must create in God's people.

In this sense, this is a letter we need to read as we desperately seek godliness in this world. We know the hard battle to stand firm in the good news so that our good works display the goodness of God, in this world. This is a timely letter!

Study 1: Titus 1:1-4

Read Titus 1:1-4

Comprehend

1. Who is the author? (vs.1)

How does he describe himself? (vs.1)

How does he describe his mission? (vs.1-2)

How 'planned' was this work, and by whom? (vs.2)

How has this work been 'revealed', and by whom? (vs.3)

2. Who is the recipient? (vs.4)

How is he described? (vs.4)

3. What is the greeting? (vs.4)

Consider

4. Look at Acts 9:1-19.

How do you see the description of Paul's self and work here?

5. How far does Paul's commission spread?

6. Look at the following references, write down what we learn of Titus...

2 Cor.2:13, 7:6ff, 8:6, 8:16, 8:23, 12:18; Galatians 2:1, 2:3

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7. From what you have read, what can you be prepared to read about in this letter, and why?
8. How might this be helpful/confronting as one of God's people?

Study 2: Titus 1:5-9

Read Titus 1:5-9

Comprehend

1. Why did Paul leave Titus in Crete?
2. Write down all the qualifications that are to be found in an elder appointed:
3. What are the two central reason for such a list of attributes? (vs.7, 9)
4. Does anything strike you about this list of attributes?

Consider

5. What imagery is similar in choosing an elder in Titus as there is in Ephesians and Colossians? (cf. vs7)
6. Looking at verse 9, what similarity is there with Acts 20:25-35?

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7. Do you think this section is descriptive or prescriptive? Why/why not?
8. How might you go about appointing such an elder today

in God's people—where might you look and why?

9. Who defines this type of elder, and why?

Study 3: Titus 1:10-16

Read Titus 1:10-16.

Comprehend

1. What is the problem in Crete, that needs elders appointed? (10-12)

What is the danger? (vs.11)

What is the solution, and why? (vs.10-14)

2. This section finishes with what seems a fairly philosophical observation, and distinction, in vs.15-16. What is the distinction made?

What does it reveal about the danger in Crete?

How is this distinction revealed? (vs.16)

Consider

3. What is the essence of the false teaching described in vs.10-11, 16?

What would a modern-day equivalent be?

How might this be dangerous for us?

What should we do about it?

4. What is the connection made between proclamation and practice, in vs.15-16?

How might we see something similar today, in false teaching?

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5. What is so important about the role of the elder for the health of the household of God?
6. In what way might we be exposed to the same kind of false teaching today? And, how might we deal with it?

Study 4: Titus 2:1-10

Read Titus 2:1-10.

Comprehend

1. What does Paul command Timothy to do? (vs.1)

2. Looking through the next section (vs.2-10), list what is taught to each group in the household of God, and where applicable, why:
 - older men (vs.2)

 - older women (vs.3)

 - younger women (vs.4-5)

 - younger men (vs.6-8)

 - slaves (vs.9-10)

3. Looking back at verse 1, does anything strike you about the 'what is consistent with sound teaching'?

Consider

3. What is the connection made between teaching, doctrine and behavior within God's household?

Does this allow us to separate doctrine from practical living? Why/why not?

4. Culturally, in both our current church culture and our wider society culture, does anything strike you about the “what is consistent with sound teaching”?
5. How is what is taught and lived as God’s household important for the witness of the good news to our world?

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6. Think of your ‘age-group’ in the categories discussed in verses 2-10... Is there anything that surprises you, strikes you, affects you?
7. Think of your ‘age-group’ in verses 2-10... Are there relationships you could foster within God’s household that might be helpful?

How might this affect/change the culture of our church community?

Study 5: Titus 2:11-14

In many ways, the break that we have made between verses 1-10 and 11-14 is false—this is the engine (the ‘sound teaching/doctrine’) that drives the behavior described. The proclamation of the good news affects the practice of the household of God.

Read Titus 2:11-14

Comprehend

1. How does verse 11 begin, and what does that tell you about what follows?
2. What has appeared and what does it bring? (vs.11)
3. What does this ‘grace of God’ do, in verse 12?
4. When does this take place? (vs.13)
5. Who will appear, and how does this link to verse 11? (vs.14)

What is the desire of God’s ‘special people’, and how does this tie to verse 12?

6. How does verse 15 connect all this to verse 1, and what encouragement does Paul give Titus?

Consider

7. Discuss the way the good news just described operates

in the past, present and future...

8. What connection is there between the good news of salvation, the good living of God's people, and the good deeds they are called to do?
9. Is the good news a person, proclamation or practice, or all three? Why/why not?

Contact

10. How has the 'grace of God' changed your life, and life-style?
11. In what way are we known as a 'special people, eager to do good works', BECAUSE of the grace of God?

Study 6:
Titus 3:1-11

Read Titus 3:1-11.

Comprehend

1. What is the command in vs.1-2?

2. What is the reason for this command? (vs.3)

What changed 'us'? (vs.4-7)

3. What are God's people to 'devote' themselves to? (vs.8)

What are they to avoid? (vs.9)

How are 'divisive' people to be handled? (vs.10-11)

Consider

4. Why do you think we find verses 1-3 so hard?

5. What is so good about verses 4-7?

6. What type of 'good works' do you think are the focus of verse 8?

7. What is so important about verses 9-11?

Contact

8. How might you need to repent in response to verses 1-3?

9. How might verses 4-7 change your understanding of yourself?

10. How might verses 8-11 change the way you live in God's community?

Study 7:
Titus 3:12-15

Read Titus 3:12-15.

Comprehend

1. What impression do you gain of the early Christian community through verses 12-13?

2. How is this reinforced through verses 14-15?

Consider and Contact

3. Write down one thing you have learned from Titus...

Write down one confrontation you have had from Titus...

Write down one thing that will change in your life as one of God's people because of Titus...

Write down one prayer point from Titus...