

Titus: an Introduction

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[0:00] We're starting an introductory lesson into the book of Titus.

! I've never taught Titus. Great book and planned on covering the first four verses! And we're actually going to get the first one and a half, so we're doing well.

But this is an opportunity to begin a new adventure by studying Paul's letter to Titus. And Paul's authorship of this letter has never faced serious challenge.

And neither has the identity of Titus. He and Paul were long-time associates. And when Paul wrote this letter, it was received by Titus and the churches of Crete where he ministered.

Now the letter to Titus is similar to the two letters Paul wrote to Timothy, which we have just studied. These letters were both written to strengthen and encourage young pastors whom Paul had disciplined.

[1:28] Paul was the spiritual father of both of these men. Both of these men were highly gifted and they served Paul. And by extension, they served the Lord Jesus as well.

Timothy served the church at Ephesus and Titus' various churches on Crete. The letter itself was designed to instruct Timothy to instruct the other elders on Crete as they ministered under his leadership.

Titus had the backing of Paul as to his spiritual qualifications to serve on Crete. And that was a formidable ally in the spiritual battle for the souls of men.

Now, interestingly, the book of Titus is not nearly as doctrinal as some of Paul's other works. But it contains the gem of all doctrines. The great doctrine being salvation by grace apart from any meritorious works.

[2:44] The letter primarily focuses on what is expected of Christians as we live out our lives in this sin-dominated world.

A world that was getting darker in Paul's day. And I wonder what he would say about our day. It seems like the lights are about to go out. Now, in many respects, this is an evangelistic letter intended to aid the churches on Crete to reach the lost.

And in the background with this letter and so many of Paul's other letters, lurking in the shadows was the spiritual battle being waged with false teachers and false prophets that were impacting and infecting much of the Roman world.

It seemed like every time a church was planted, in came the false teachers, in came the false preachers. And we saw that in our Timothy study.

We're seeing that on Sunday mornings in here on our Thessalonian studies. The churches on Crete were small and immature in the faith. They were also spread across the island.

[4:03] Titus needed help in ministering there. And this help is going to come in the form of elders appointed to serve the Lord by serving the churches.

Titus would have to find such men and they would have to meet the spiritual qualifications of elder. Titus had to find such men and their children. And the danger was that the churches on Crete had attracted many rebellious men.

In fact, Paul will describe them as empty talkers and deceivers that taught ungodly doctrines and lived ungodly lives. So this was a formative time for the churches on the island.

And Paul wanted to give Titus the ammunition to get it right. Now, we're not going to study all four verses, but I'm going to read them to you. Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth, which is according to godliness, in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, but at the proper time manifested even his word in the proclamation, which with I was entrusted according to the commandment of God, our Savior.

And as we go through this book in the next couple of months, we must remember that Paul is giving Titus and his fellow pastors on Crete the blueprint to successfully lead the churches there.

[5 : 56] Behind the blueprint was Paul's desire that leaders present the gospel in such a way that sinners would be saved and that the congregations would grow in the power of the Spirit.

So this is really what Paul and Titus were trying to achieve, the salvation of sinners and the spiritual growth as those sinners are brought into the body of Christ so that they would mature in the faith.

Same thing that we're to be doing in our day. And the first thing I want us to look at is this commitment to God's sovereign supremacy.

He says, Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. Any leader in the church, the true church, must be committed to the absolute mastery and supremacy of God.

Paul was thus committed by referring to himself as a bondservant of God. And you read this often in the New Testament, servant or bondservant. And it is unfortunate that over the generations, that word bondservant has been used in place of the actual word slave.

[7 : 25] It is the Greek word *doulos*. And it always refers to the most servile person in that culture. Every believer is a slave to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, we have the misfortune here in America. When we mention that word, we conjure up an image of slavery of African Americans in the 19th century.

And when we do that, we're missing the point altogether. Our bondage to Christ is different because it is complete and it is willing.

We want to be his slaves. Everything about Paul was subject to the Lord. And if you read his books, Paul had no life, really, he could call his own independent of the Lord.

Totally immersed in the Lord. Paul had no will or purpose that was independent of the Lord. And any plans that Paul had, and he had them when he was Saul, were canceled on the road to Damascus.

[8 : 36] They were superseded by those of the Lord Jesus Christ. Personally, I am convinced that Paul, when he was Saul, was on the fast track to become the high priest. I really think that was his goal in life, his desire.

Well, of course, the Lord had other plans. And that all was superseded on the road to Damascus. Paul describes himself as a slave of Yahweh.

And that would have caught the attention of the false teachers and the false prophets on Crete, most of whom were Judaizers.

Now, if you've never heard that term, don't worry, because I'm fixing to define it, but we've taught that in here particularly on Sunday morning as we work through several books. Judaizers were the false teachers or false prophets whose teachings undermined the great doctrine of justification by faith.

Instead, the Judaizers taught a damnable heresy. They taught it to Gentiles that you have to become converts to Old Testament Judaism, place yourself under obedience to the Mosaic law, and then once you work that out, you can become saved in the church.

[10 : 10] And it was heretical. So Paul tells these Judaizers that he is the servant of the Most High God of Israel.

And again, that would have caught their attention. That would have meant a lot to these Judaizers in that century. Paul held a specific office, that being an apostle of Jesus Christ.

The fact that he was an apostle brought increased duties of service, and that demanded great faithfulness, great submission, and of course we know from the life of Paul, great sacrifice.

It also brought great persecution and suffering, which Paul always saw as a blessing. I mean, today that happens and we want to hire a lawyer, but Paul saw it as a blessing.

Most of the church today views suffering and persecution as a curse, a curse from God, a curse from the devil, wherever. Seldom do we look at it as a blessing of God.

[11 : 20] And I know a couple of brothers in here that have dealt with the persecuted, I'm sure in lots of parts of the world. An apostle is a messenger, and it could refer to a slave charged with the duty of carrying messages from his master to others.

But the term was used in the Roman world to express more of an ambassador who was sent by a sovereign with a specific message and who spoke with the authority of the one who sent him.

And of course the scriptures do teach that we're all ambassadors of Christ, right? The authority of the message, therefore, did not derive from the messenger, but from the one who sent him.

So as great as the apostle Paul was, he was speaking for another. He was just a messenger. The message came from the Lord Jesus Christ. In Paul's case and in ours, that's the Lord Jesus Christ. Genuine spiritual leaders in the church have an understanding that they are under divine authority and that reality becomes the dominating, controlling reality of their lives.

[12 : 46] The true servant, put in the word slave, does not have a personal agenda. And I'm going to get real personal now.

He does not serve to gain fame. He doesn't serve to build a fortune, to build an empire. He doesn't name universities after himself.

He is not into private jets or Royals Royces. He has multiple extravagant homes. He is a contented man, humbled and honored with the privilege of being wholly subject to his master.

The master who has chosen him and sent him to do the will of God. You show me a genuine preacher of the word of God and I'll show you a man who stands behind the pulpit in the place of Christ.

He's representing Christ behind that pulpit. And the true servant or the slave is absolutely committed to God's mission.

[13 : 57] The commitment's total. It's total. For the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth, which is according to godliness in the hope of eternal life.

There's the mission. For the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth, which is according to godliness and the hope of eternal life.

Because Paul was absolutely committed to the mastery and sovereign supremacy of God, he had a commitment to God's mission that was unswerving.

It was unswerving, guys. So what is God's mission for his church even down to our day? It consists of three E's. And if you think I came up with these, have I got a deal for you or some land in Alaska that I've been wanting to sell.

The mission is evangelism, edification, and encouragement. Evangelism, edification, and encouragement.

[15 : 19] And the first of these we're going to talk about is evangelism. For the faith of those chosen of God. You know, there are people that are offended by that.

And the Holy Spirit came up with those words. Like Dr. McGregor said, I'm labor. Take it up with me. Management. You know? Management. Upper management came up with those words. Real upper management. God. Paul understood something that I have to say that many in the church in our day largely do not understand.

He understood, rather, and I hope it's not startling anyone in here, but it always startles some people, that salvation is of the Lord.

Taught in the Old Testament, repeated in the New Testament. Salvation is of the Lord. God is the one who saves.

[16 : 28] It's God who saves. I might as well focus my life on holding back the waves of every ocean as I should on personally saving someone.

I can't save anyone. I can tell people how to be saved and pray that God will do a work, but I can't save anyone.

If I could, there's some people I could name that would already be saved and they're not in my family. But Paul understood that in the world there are many of God's elect children.

Now that's that word that the church has hated for several hundred years. There are many of God's elect children who are unsaved. They are as yet unsaved.

Well, what's our responsibility? And what is our privilege? It is the responsibility in the church to bring the saving message of the gospel to those who belong to God.

[17 : 42] They hear the message and the Holy Spirit does His work of regeneration and Christ does His work of justification. So how are we going to find these folks?

How do you find the elect of God? So you give them the gospel. I don't remember. I wasn't there, but Reverend Spurgeon, he said if God had painted a stripe down the back of every one of His elect, my ministry would be walking around London lifting shirts.

God didn't do that, did He? Let me tell you how we do it, fellas. We preach. We teach. We witness. We send missionaries to every creature on the face of this earth. To every one of them. And when one of them gets truly saved, we can say with an absolute certainty, boy, that one's one of God's.

He belongs to God. We can say that with authority. They asked Reverend Spurgeon one time, if you knew that this man over here named Ted, I hope there's no Ted in here, if you knew Ted was unsaved, but he's one of God's elect, what would you tell him?

[18:59] He said, I'd go over and say, Ted, you need to come to Jesus. What about the guy over here named Ned? And you know, somehow God supernaturally revealed to you, which He never does, by the way, that He's not one of the elect.

What would you tell him? I'd say, Ned, you need to come to Jesus. It's the same message. And I've told you before, I love what the old Scottish Calvinistic professor said once when the kid in his class, the hyper-Calvinists, and I've told you this many times, but he said, I'll never witness because I might witness to one of the non-elect.

And the old Calvinistic professor said, son, if you lead a non-elect to Christ, God will forgive you. He said, I promise you God will forgive you if you do that. We preach to every creature.

We're to do this, this way, first, because God tells us to. People always say, well, if God's sovereign and he selects people, why witness?

One, God tells us to. And that's enough right there, right? We don't need any more reasons. But we're to do it because God tells us to.

[20:09] Secondly, we don't have a clue who those people are. We don't know who they are. We witnessed every creature because we don't know who they are. And I tell you, in my experience, if you try to guess, you're going to guess wrong.

I have refused to witness to some men they were so vile and they're now saved and it wasn't because of me. That's an embarrassment on my part. That is an embarrassment on my part.

So we do it because God tells us to, because we don't know who they are. And let me say this, and I don't know how this works.

Somehow, God weaves together our praying for the lost and our witness, He weaves that together to accomplish the mission. And I'm not sure how He does that, but it's not for me to know fully how He does that.

God knows that and in His timing, the gospel is presented and His children hear and respond by the power of the Spirit.

[21:13] I remember a preacher from several years ago I talked to and he said, you know, I preached evangelism 17 Sundays in a row and nobody came forward. Nobody got saved.

Nothing happened. So I just said, well, we've got to move on and I preached the next Sunday on tithing and 17 people got saved. He said, God was teaching me a lesson there.

About a year after Paul wrote to Titus, he wrote his second letter to Timothy, which we just finished up. Here is what Paul said to Timothy and these are the inspired words of God.

He said, Timothy, I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

That's an important verse. I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

[22:25] I prayed that prayer for Jack before he left. I want to pray it when you leave and our brothers leave. That's a great prayer to pray for guys going out on the mission field.

A great prayer. 2 Timothy 2.10 by the way. This really is the offense of the cross. Christ died to give eternal life to those whom he chooses to give it to.

That offends men and why does it offend people? We always want to know what do I do to get myself saved? What's my part here?

I've got to meet him 50. You know, it's got to be 50-50. Okay, maybe it's 60-40. Okay, maybe it's 90-10. What do I do? And this is not something new.

Jesus preached to a crowd of his followers. John wrote about it in the sixth chapter of the gospel that bears his name.

[23:30] Now, I'm using the word follower there not to denote a saved person but a curious person. Someone who's heard about this preacher from Nazareth and they want to see for themselves.

And they were following him around and it was a massive crowd. Thousands. thousands. And they were following him around for two reasons. They were interested, curious, if you will, but more importantly, a couple days before this sermon, he fed them.

5,000 men. Doesn't include the wives. Doesn't include children. Could have been 15 or 20,000. We don't know.

And really what you saw there was the creative power of God and he fed them. They got full. So, hey, this is a guy, you know, I can hitch my wagon to.

You come to his service, you're going to get fed. You're going to get fed. So, Jesus is talking to this crowd, thousands, and he says to those that are gathered, all that the Father gives me will come to me.

[24:50] And whoever comes to me, I will never cast out. Brothers, have you come to Jesus? Because if you have, he's never going to cast you out.

And you know what the Scripture say happened when he said that? The Jews begin to grumble. This is 6th chapter John, starting around verse 37 and then keep going.

They began to grumble. And if you look closely at it, some were mumbling in their minds, some were mumbling under their breath, and some were whispering to the person next to him.

I could just hear, what did he say? What did he say? And let me tell you, a lot of them, most of them are thinking bad thoughts in their mind without any verbalization.

But you know what, fellas? It didn't matter. Jesus heard all three types of communication. I read one guy, and he said, Jesus knows what you're thinking down to the subconscious level.

[26:00] I said, well, that didn't bring me much joy. You know? Jesus heard all three types of communication. So, can you imagine this guy? He's grumbling in his mind, and Jesus looks at him, and this is what he said in verse 43.

Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. That's what he said to this massive crowd of grumblers.

And this, that message, and I encourage you to go home and read it in the sixth chapter. By the way, if you're visiting here tonight, I have one goal, and most of these guys realize that.

I want people to be Bereans, go home and look up the scriptures to see if what I said was true. The human race in that message would have brought to crossroads. They're at the crossroads.

They're either going to follow the narrow road marked justification by grace through faith, or they're going to follow the broad road marked justification by meritorious works, and that is the road that leads to destruction.

[27:13] Listen to this exchange, and this should lead us to tears, really. Therefore, many of his disciples, and again, these were the curious, when they heard this, said, this is a difficult statement.

And then they said, who can listen to it? But Jesus, conscious that his disciples grumbled to this, said to them, does this cause you to stumble?

What then if you see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing, the words I have spoken to your spirit and our life, but there are some of you who do not believe.

There were a lot of them that didn't, and one of them was Judas. He was there, and he was saying, for this reason, I've said to you that no one can come to me unless it has been granted him from the Father.

Now, did you catch something in that exchange with the Lord? They not only didn't believe Jesus when he told them that the Father must draw those marked out for salvation, but they didn't even want to hear it.

[28:33] They said, who can listen to this? We don't want to hear this. And why is this so offensive to people? Because we always want to know what we must do to get ourselves saved.

What do we do? And some want to do as many Hail Marriages as they can. If I repeat that, will I be saved? Will my prayer beads get me saved?

If I beat myself with chains and walk around the Kabbalah and Mecca, will that do it? What if I repeat just the right words or read them out of some track that somebody placed in my hand?

Will that do it? If we could ask Jesus these questions today, he would respond this way, he would say, it is the Spirit who gives life. You cannot come to Me unless the Father draws you.

And that hasn't changed in 2,000 years. It's called salvation by grace through faith. That's what it's called. And when Jesus told this crowd of the uncommitted that the only way they could be saved is from the Father's drawing them, we have what is arguably the saddest passage in all the Bible.

[29:48] 666. Now, I don't think there's any significance to that because they put the verses and chapters in later, but John 6, verse 66, and I don't think it had anything to do with downtown

company.

Listen to this. from that time, from that time, when Jesus got up and said, you can't come to me unless the Father draws you, it is the Spirit who gives life. From that time, many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

they left Him. They abandoned Him. They would not see Him again until either He hung in a Jerusalem sky as a prisoner, as a criminal, or they saw Him at judgment, or will see Him at the judgment.

And I want to suggest something to you. When men hear the same message today that Jesus preached, a lot of them walk away. individuals walk away, churches walk away, we have whole denominations in the world that have walked away.

Most people in this world through false religion, through cults, occult, are walking the broad road that leads to destruction.

[31:12] That's the road that most people are on, guys. Why was Paul so dedicated for the sake of the chosen on Crete that they might obtain salvation?

Because Paul understood something that had been revealed to him by the Spirit of God. He understood that he was a slave and an apostle to proclaim the message of the gospel in order that God's children might be brought by the Holy Spirit to faith, which is required to activate the election of God.

He elects before the foundation of the world, but it becomes active when they hear the message preached. Paul said to the church at Rome, faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ.

One author that knew more Greek than I do said by speeches about Jesus Christ. faith. Got a great quote here from Dr. MacArthur. Faith actuates justification.

God's gracious act by which he considers and declares as righteous those who have placed their trust in his son, Jesus Christ. This is Romans 4.4.

[32:31] To the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness. Yet even faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe is a gift by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

By grace you have been saved through faith. This is not the faith that you and I were able to conjure up on our own. This faith, the saving faith, is a gift of God.

It is not of works lest anyone should boast. Ephesians 2.8 and 9. Can you imagine if our works got us saved? Well, I did more than Mike. Yeah, but Johnny did more than both of us put together.

I mean, this is humanity, right? This is humanity. The duties we have to evangelize is summarized as preaching or teaching the gospel clearly and accurately because the Holy Spirit will sovereignly and miraculously cause the elect to believe and be saved.

Such evangelizing is the priority of all servants and messengers of Jesus Christ. We preach Jesus and Him crucified. And the next E is edification.

[33:54] First verse, and the title and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness. Paul viewed the second commitment to fulfilling God's mission was to edify those who believed.

He believed that you accomplish this by teaching them the full counsel of God's word so that they would be sanctified by the knowledge of the truth. Now, the truth mentioned here I think is two types.

It's the truth of the gospel that leads to salvation. Paul contrasted two types of individuals in his letter to Timothy. He told the young pastor there would be the type of individual that would submit to the way of salvation ordained by God.

And you can read that first Timothy chapter 2 verses 3 and 4 they would come to the knowledge of the truth then there would be those that did not genuinely seek God or His way of salvation.

They would always be learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth that saves 2 Timothy 3.7 We studied those. When somebody is genuinely saved he or she has an appetite for God's word.

[35:12] Remember back? I don't know how you lose that over 35 years. You've got this great appetite for the word of God. You can't seem to get enough of biblical truth and there's this desire to grow and mature according to godliness.

I want to put this in two ways that are really one but presented in two manners. Saving truth leads through salvation to sanctification as it produces increasing godliness without which salvation

cannot be considered genuine.

When you are justified a single moment in time you're on the road to sanctification highway. and we all travel at a different speed on that road fellas.

Don't be critical of someone that's behind you or envious of someone that's ahead of you. Let me put it another way. When you are justified by God's unmerited, unearned, undeserved favor, you are immediately placed on the highway of sanctification.

That is a highway that leads us to become progressively more Christ-like. All genuinely saved people travel this highway but we do travel at different speeds.

[36:32] By the way, I've fallen off that road many times and God had to pick me up, dust me off, swat me and say that way. Not that way, you've been there, that way.

God's had to do that for me for 35 years. Godliness is the manifestation of the Spirit's work of sanctification.

I get a lot of people, even in my family, and I'll say, are you sure you're saved? Yeah, I remember. Yeah, I was justified. They use that word. I was saved. No, no, no, tell me today the evidence that you're saved.

What have you done today? And they don't have any. They don't have any last year. They don't have any for the last 10 years. They're depending on a moment in time. Maybe it was genuine, maybe it is not, I'm not their judge, but they can't point to anything today.

Now, here's the rub. What about those who say they are genuinely saved, but have never gotten onto the highway of sanctification? sanctification? They are stuck on the entrance ramp called justification, and they like to talk about their salvation experience.

[37:46] I notice such conversation always laced with the personal pronoun I. Well, you know, in 1910, I came forward, and I took the pastor by the right hand, and I prayed the prayer, and I did this, and I did that, and it's like the old 45 RPM record that gets stuck there.

Those poor guys in the back don't know what a 45 RPM record is. And actually, I had to correct my spelling because I had 45 RMP. Even I'm getting so old I can't remember. According to the Word of God, there is every reason to believe that that type of testimony is not genuine.

I won't call the name. Not many of you would even know if I did, but I remember a guy preached here one time, and I got to where I started making little tick marks, and he used the personal pronoun I like 72 times in a 40 minute message.

True believers are edified by the Word. We cannot obey God's will if we don't know what His will is. To be godly and live a godly life, we must know what God is like and what He expects of those who belong to Him, and that comes through the sanctification process.

Paul told the Ephesian elders that the Word of God would build them up. Jesus prayed to the Father and asked Him to sanctify believers in the truth. Thy Word is truth.

[39:11] And let me add this. It's not in the notes. I won't charge for it. An hour on Sunday morning, an hour on Sunday night, 30 minutes on Wednesday night is not enough.

You're scratching the surface. You've got to be in the Word at home. You've got to be in the Word for you married guys with your wife. You've got to be in the Word with fellow believers.

And it's the Word of God. It's the only book in the world. It's the Word of God. Realize that? All of this comes through learning sound doctrine.

We cannot minimize the importance of sound doctrine. And how ironic that we live in a day when individuals, churches, and even denominations spurn sound doctrine.

Guys, sound doctrine is glue. It holds us together. It unifies us in the body of Christ. We believe certain things about Jesus because it's in the Word, right? There are movements that reject that.

[40:17] I don't think he's God. I think he was a good guy and a great philosopher and a good teacher. I believe in God, but I don't believe in Jesus. How many times have you heard that? There are two Baptist churches in this town that have joined together, I'm not going to mention them, with a very liberal church to have a community celebration.

We've already had it. the statement of faith of the liberal church, non-Baptist church, that denomination, and their statement of faith is we support same-sex marriage, we support the ordaining of homosexuals and lesbians to the pulpit, and when these three churches gathered, one of the women pastors preached the message.

I don't think we can do that. I just don't think we can do that and join forces there. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 4-7, God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.

And as one of the older commentators wrote, a profession of the truth which allows an individual to live in ungodliness is a spurious profession.

It's not genuine. Peter wrote about edification in 1 Peter chapter 2, verse 1-3, Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander like newborn babies long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

[42:03] Lord. Elsewhere, Peter admonishes us to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. How do we do this? Every true preacher and teacher has this divine responsibility.

Ephesians 4, 11-13, for equipping of the saints for the work of service to the building up of the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to a mature man to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

I don't know how many sermons are in there, brother. There's a load of sermons in there. That's sanctification. And what battles against such truth?

Well, in Paul's day, false teachers did. And there's a gaggle of them today. I've told you guys this before, and most of you, not everybody here, but most of you guys know I'm a former FBI agent. And when Jim Jones murdered all those people, the FBI had done a study, and there were 1,600 men in America at that time claiming to be Christ, claiming to be the Messiah.

[43:27] No telling how many there are now. No telling. False teachers come in, false preachers, false prophets. Jesus warned us of the ravenous wolves that would come in and try and devour the flock.

And many a flock has been devoured. Jesus went on to say that every good tree bears good fruit. Bad trees bear bad fruit. By this we can know if a man is truly saved, what kind of fruit does he bear?

In other words, truth and falsehood can be discerned by what they produce. God's truth produces godliness. The transformation wrought through saving faith is visibly manifested in increasingly holy conduct.

Now, holiness should be the direction of your life. You're not going to get it to perfection in this life, but it should be our direction. And I need a lot of swift kicks in the rear to be reminded of that.

Why did the Lord choose some to eternal life? He chose us, here's his words, Ephesians 1, 4, He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him.

[44:49] The evidence of our election is found in our justification. The evidence of our justification is found in our sanctification.

sanctification. The evidence of our sanctification will one day be made manifest in our glorification. That's in heaven. We will see Jesus as he is and be like him.

God's ministers are in the business of proclaiming the word by which the spirit of God edifies the believer and trains him in godliness.

And this is what Paul's telling Titus because he's got churches on the whole island. And the last thing we're going to look at and we'll close is encouragement.

Titus chapter 1 verse 2, the first part of verse 2, in the hope of eternal life. How much more encouraging can you get? Paul saw his third responsibility in fulfilling his commitment to God's mission was to bring encouragement to believers.

[45:55] believers. Those truly say possess a divinely guaranteed hope of life. Now I've said this many times before.

Hope is not like I hope these chairs hold you up. I hope the snow doesn't come through. That's not the hope we're talking about. It's a settled hope. It's a guaranteed hope of eternal life.

We possess as believers a guarantee in our hope of eternal life. One day we shall be glorified and wholly perfected in the visible righteousness of Christ.

We will be like him because we'll see him just as he is. First John 3 chapter verse 2. Until we see him we have hope. And it's not wistful. This is not something the possession of which is possible but not certain.

Our hope of eternal life is guaranteed by God's word. Until that day God has given us of his spirit who is referred to as a deposit to guarantee our ultimate entrance into heaven.

[47:05] He's sometimes described as the engagement ring. You gave your wife girlfriends an engagement ring in the hope that you would be married.

Now I gave my wife a wedding ring in 1978. I gave her an engagement ring last year. I just had never done it so I said well I'm going to do that you know.

Didn't go over quite as well as I thought but it was pretty nice. We were reading it Bonefish Grill at the time. God is he's our he's put an engagement ring on us.

By this guarantee Christ will raise us up on the last day. It is his pledge of our inheritance. We can be encouraged by the great promises of eternal life given us by the Father by the Son by the Holy Spirit.

The hope of eternal life should serve to motivate us for service. What kind of service? Go to Crete. Go to the uttermost part of the world. Go to Asia. It motivates us for service.

[48:12] Remember. By the way go to State Street. Remember. We are building a foundation and if that foundation is on Christ we are building with gold silver and precious stones.

Those shall last into eternity and by them we will be rewarded for faithful service. And the greatest reward you should be striving for is to hear the Master say well done good and faithful slave.

Wouldn't those be great words to hear? Now we are all to be like the Apostle Paul who said I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3.12 And what is the prize? Christ likeness. While we are on earth that is the goal we strive for the hope of eternal life is the greatest hope in the universe.

Let me close with Paul's letter to the Philippians chapter 3 verse 8. I count all things to be lost in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them but rubbish that's an interesting word if you look it up in the Greek among others it's dung so that I may gain Christ and may be found in him not having a righteousness of my own derived from the law but that which is through faith in Christ the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings being conformed to his death in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

[50:12] Well that's powerful. Whomever God has chosen he will justify and whomever he justifies he will glorify and make into the image of his son and he uses us in that process.

This is the glorious hope of eternal life that transcends all temporary pain.

Thank you.