

Titus 1:1-3

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[0 : 0 0] over the last few weeks, you know, what do I do? You know, I've had the opportunity to speak and give messages here at Grace Bible Church, but they've been, you know, maybe just once, you know, a one-time, one-off thing, or I think at the most maybe three or four weeks in a row.

And so, you know, you can only do so much during that time, maybe do a—I think we did a short three weeks on forgiveness, things like that. But when you have a bunch of weeks in a row, you know, it's a whole different story.

And one of the things that I really enjoy doing and I think is good for churches is to just teach through the Bible. And so there's kind of two approaches you can take, two general approaches you can take in teaching and giving messages at church.

And one is more topical, so you take a topic and you kind of expand on it and you kind of bounce around all over the Bible and try to gather all the information on that topic.

And that's really great and helpful because, you know, you get to see what the Bible says all over the place on one specific thing. And the other approach you can take is to just teach verse by verse through the Bible.

[1 : 1 1] That's called expository preaching. And one of the benefits of that is you cover over everything in the Bible. You know, and sometimes as a preacher or a pastor or a Bible teacher, you know, there might be certain parts that you want to skip over because, well, you don't understand it or maybe it's too controversial or something like that.

Well, with expository verse by verse preaching, you don't get to weasel out of the verses that, you know, are more controversial or that you don't like or that you don't understand. And so, but both, I think, topical and going verse by verse are both valuable.

But I think, at least for right now, I'd like to focus on verse by verse. So, we're going to start here in the book of Timothy, or not Timothy, Titus. And I picked Titus, one, because it's a pretty practical book.

There's a lot of practical things in there. And the other is that it's short. So, we can kind of get through it and see, well, how did that work?

And in a short period of time. I don't know how short. You know, sometimes, you know, you can, it's three chapters. And you can get through three chapters in three weeks, or you can get through three chapters in 20 weeks, depending on how fast or slow you go.

[2 : 3 1] We're going to start kind of slow because I think the first part of Titus is pretty dense. And there's a lot to discuss. So, I think we'll start out slow and we might speed up here. But if you've got your Bible, whether it's one of these types of Bibles, or some people have got iPads and other devices that they can pull up the Scriptures on, which is all great.

Open up to the book of Titus. So, Titus is an epistle written by Paul, Paul the Apostle, to this guy named Titus.

And Titus isn't a super well-known individual in the Bible. Timothy, which we have two books or two epistles or letters written to Timothy, is a little bit more well-known than Titus is.

But Titus was a companion, a co-laborer with Paul in his ministry. Interestingly enough, where we find out most about the ministry of Paul and what he did is in the book of Acts.

In the book of Acts, we read about many of Paul's compatriots. Barnabas was one of the first ones. Silas, John Mark, anybody name any others? I'm trying to, those are the ones I can think of off the top of my head.

[3 : 48] But also, Timothy was another one. There were other people, there were a bunch of ladies, right, who helped him out in certain things. Lydia. Who was the couple?

Priscilla and Aquila, right, they helped out Paul. So we had a lot of people that worked with him. Interestingly enough, Titus is never mentioned in the book of Acts.

And, you know, why is that? You know, who knows? But I'm sure that there were lots of people who worked with Paul, right, that are never actually mentioned in the book of Acts. The Bible doesn't always mention every single detail of everything that happened during the time period in which it records events.

But just a quick overview of this book of Titus, this letter to Titus. It's really about instructions. Paul is giving instruction to this younger man.

We don't know how old he was, but he was a younger man, at least probably in comparison to Paul, about how to order the church. Titus had been commissioned to set in order, the church or churches, in a place called Crete.

[4 : 57] Crete is an island. And in Crete, there was some kind of work that had been done there. Evidently, Paul had gone there. And it's interesting, the book of Acts actually never records Paul really spending any time in Crete other than just passing through or passing by the island.

So a lot of people think that, well, I wonder if this is a ministry that he had, that he went to Crete and established a work after the period of Acts. Because Acts, if you read Acts, it's interesting.

It kind of just ends abruptly. As Luke is recording, Luke is the author of Acts, and it just kind of ends abruptly. So some people think that his, what the work that he established, the ministry that he did in Crete, may have been after that.

Of course, it's possible that maybe the time that he spent in Crete or what he established there was during that period, but just isn't recorded, or maybe not in detail.

But the contents of the book of this letter to Titus, in establishing order in the church, he talks about the church and the members of the church and the roles that they play.

[6 : 17] That's a huge theme. He talks about elders or pastors, the leaders in the church, and their qualifications, and how they ought to run and order things. He talks about men and the roles that they play, and he divides men up into two groups, the older and the younger.

So I don't know what the dividing line is, but some of us might identify as older men, and some as younger. For some, it's easier to discern. I feel like I'm kind of in that transitional period.

But a lot of times, right, people, you know, somebody will say to me, oh, you're just a young man. But then my boys look at me, Dad, you're old. So then he gives instructions to women in the church, and in the same way, older women and younger women, and how they should participate in the church.

And then he gives instruction to those who are servants or slaves, and the role that they have and how they should operate in the church. And then interspersed throughout all this instruction is teaching about God's, it's really doctrine, it's teaching, spiritual understanding about the work of God and what he's doing in the world.

You know, Paul, typically in his letters, it's very common for him to start the first half of his letter with some teaching about Christ and what Christ has accomplished and who we are in Christ and this, what we might call orthodoxy.

[7 : 53] It's teaching. And then he'll finish up the book with a lot of practical teachings, how we ought to practice the faith in our families, in our churches, in our day-to-day lives, in our interactions with those around us.

And this book, this letter to Titus, is kind of more broadly practice-focused, but interspersed throughout is these teachings about Christ and what God has done for us.

So Titus, like I said, he's only mentioned, or he's not mentioned at all in the book of Acts, yet he's mentioned actually fairly frequently throughout Paul's other letters, specifically in 2 Corinthians.

So if you do a search, I have little apps that I use to be able to search the Bible, and you can search the word Titus, and there's many mentions in the book of 2 Corinthians. He talks about Titus several times, sometimes just in passing.

But then the only other time that Titus is brought up is at the very end of 2 Timothy. And it's just a reference in passing to Titus. But Titus actually plays this key role in the New Testament period.

[9 : 12] It's a pivotal role, and without that role, I think there would be a lot of confusion today in the church.

Because Titus was a Greek. He was not Jewish. Now Timothy, who was another young man who was mentored by Paul, he was half and half.

His father was a Greek, but his mother was a Jew. But Titus, from what we know, the Bible actually specifically says that he was a Greek, and so we imagine that he's a full-blooded Greek, no Jewish heritage at all.

But there was this pivotal thing that happened right in the middle of the book of Acts, where there's a transition. And Pastor Marv has been going through this for the last several months to try to nail this point down, because it's a piece of context in the New Testament period of the Bible that is so important to understanding all the rest.

And so there was a contention in which Paul was spreading the gospel to the Gentile people, because Paul had been commissioned to the Gentiles, preaching Christ and him crucified, that Christ died for your sins.

[10 : 38] And along came some Jewish believers, not unbelievers, but Jewish believers, it seems, in Christ.

These were people who trusted in Christ as their Messiah. But they saw these Gentile people coming to faith, and they said, oh, you Gentiles, you need to follow the law, and especially what?

You need to circumcise, right? And so this circumcision specifically became this huge controversy in the New Testament period, specifically in the whole storyline of the book of Acts.

Do the Gentiles need to circumcise like the Israelites have, like the Hebrews, like the Jews have circumcised for thousands of years? It started with Abraham. God commanded Abraham, you need to become circumcised yourself, and you need to circumcise your children, your boys, as well.

And that will be a part of my covenant with you. And there are places in the Old Testament where God says that if you do not become circumcised, I will cut you off from my people.

[11 : 58] This is a serious thing. It was no laughing matter. It wasn't something, oh, I'll get to that later, or maybe I will, maybe I won't. For a Jew, circumcision was a central part of your faith.

And it was so not as a tradition, but as part of the law of God. And so you can imagine this new thing is happening, and you've got these Gentiles becoming believers, joining the family of God, and while they're not circumcised, what's going on?

You ought to do this. This is what God has commanded us for thousands of years. Let's turn, we haven't actually read anything in Titus yet, but so if you've turned there, we're going to actually turn to Galatians chapter 2.

This is where Titus comes to the forefront. You know, an interesting fact on circumcision, you know, circumcision is this actually really big Bible topic, and it's kind of a bizarre thing, right?

Circumcision is this weird thing that you do with babies that's kind of gross and bizarre. But it's this huge thing in the Bible, and so if you don't understand circumcision and all the ins and outs of where it came from and the controversy behind it, you can really get lost as you read the Bible.

[13 : 26] But I actually did this as well. I did a search for the word circumcision and all of its different, you know, circumcising, circumcised, all those words with the root word circumcised in the Bible, and I found that in the Old Testament, that word in all its forms is in the Old Testament 33 times.

33 times. That's, you know, quite a bit. In the New Testament, that word is found 55 times. Isn't that kind of surprising?

You think circumcision, that's an Old Testament thing, and it is. But because of the controversy and the thing around it, it was actually a huge issue in the New Testament.

So 33 times in the Old Testament, 55 times in the New. In Galatians 2, Paul talks about this controversy, and he says, then after 14 years, this is chapter 2, verse 1, then after 14 years, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas.

Barnabas was a Jew, who had joined with Paul, and actually was quite an encouragement to Paul, and helped him start his ministry, actually.

[14 : 43] But he said, he went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and he also took Titus with me. So I went with Barnabas, and I also took Titus. Now, I bet you he took a bunch of people. But he only mentions Barnabas, and then he mentions Titus, and we'll find out why here in a second.

And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who are of reputation, lest by any means I might run or had run in vain.

Now, there's some kind of, there's a little bit of disagreement, but many people, including me, think that the event being spoken of here that Paul's speaking of is the same event described in Acts chapter 15, something we call the Jerusalem Council, in which there was a controversy.

Paul came back from his first missionary journey. He started in Antioch, went around the world, at least the world, the known world at that time. He made this big journey, came back to Antioch, where it was his home base, his home church, and said, you know, God has, one of the things he said at the end of that was God has opened up this door of the gospel to the Gentiles, or door of faith, I can't remember exactly what he says, but God has opened up the door to the Gentiles.

And that was his first missionary journey. But immediately after that, this controversy arose up about circumcision. These Gentiles that are coming to faith, do they have to be circumcised?

[16 : 15] So this Jerusalem Council was this big ordeal in which Paul goes down, or up, he says here in Galatians, goes up to Jerusalem. Maybe it was higher elevation, I don't know. Goes up to Jerusalem, and he kind of hashes it out with the leaders who were in Jerusalem.

The original 12 disciples, or at least who was left, because we know that at least James had been killed by this point. And here he says, let me see, go back to verse 2.

And I went up by revelation, so by revelation, that means God sent him. God sent me, specifically. It wasn't, I didn't just decide to go for, you know, just for my own decision, or my own choice, but God sent me for a reason and a purpose, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles.

Paul wanted the Jewish believers there, the apostles, those 12 apostles and the leaders in Jerusalem to know what he was preaching to the Gentiles, that good news that he was preaching to them.

And then he said this, he says, I told it privately, I didn't just tell a whole big group, but I told just a few people, just the leaders, to those who are of reputation, so the leaders, lest by any means I might run or had run in vain.

[17 : 39] Because Paul's saying here, there's a risk. If I just proclaim this out in public, there might be a huge outcry. And so I need to just communicate this privately, get the whole thing out on the table, let them know, because if I talk to this in a public setting, you know, there might be a stir that you can't quell.

So I'm going to just let the leaders, let them know. But he said this in verse 3, yet not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.

And then he explains this, well, why would he be compelled? And so he explains it afterward. He says, and this occurred because of the false brethren secretly brought in who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage, to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

So Paul here is talking to the Galatians, so when he says the truth of the gospel with you, he's explaining to them because in Galatians here, this was a big controversy.

The Galatians had been deceived by these Jews who were saying, and if you really want to be the people of God, if you want to really be saved, or maybe if you want to be a really good Christian, then you'll do what we do and do what Abraham did and Isaac and Jacob and all of Israel and become circumcised.

[19 : 11] And Paul got really upset and agitated and animated about this and he said, no way are you guys going to get circumcised. We're not doing it.

Why? Because you are not under the law. And if you put yourself under the law, it's a huge mistake.

It's going to negatively impact your Christian life. So that was the controversy. And Titus was the test case. And Paul brought Titus up to Jerusalem.

He says, here's this young man and he's not circumcised. And if we can get out of there with him unscathed, we'll have won the battle. We'll have won the controversy.

And that's what happened. That's what he's teaching. He took Titus as a test and Titus walked away whole, unscathed. And that was a victory for Paul because there was this thing happened, this transitioning happened in which God was working with the Jewish people and he had the Messiah, Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

[20 : 23] And a whole, had a whole kingdom plan for them. But then, if we read carefully in the book of Acts and in other places, we see that because of the rejection of their Messiah as a whole, or at least the leaders, God cut off this people Israel and the covenant that they had with them.

And he put it, some say, use the word in abeyance, kind of temporarily on hold. And God said, you know what? I'm going to go to the Gentiles. But when I go to the Gentiles, I'm not going to go to them in the same way I did with the Jews.

It's going to look different. And for a purpose. And Paul says in Romans 11, he teaches, I'm going to do something really special and really kind and really favorable for the Gentiles, even more favorable than for the Jews.

That's where that word grace comes in. That word grace means favor. And so he brought favor to the Gentiles. And all you have to do is trust in Jesus Christ and what he accomplished for you.

No law required, no circumcision, no special diet, none of these things. And you can have eternal life in Christ.

[21 : 38] And the purpose behind that was what? Because God still had a purpose for the Jews, but he wanted to make them jealous. And so this whole program, the Bible talks about, well, this is actually a secret.

God had hid it. He didn't reveal it. So for some, it was kind of sudden. What's going on? What's happening? Peter went to the house of Cornelius. I'm not supposed to be here with you Gentiles. But he sees, and we read in Acts 15 that Peter says, you know, I went to Cornelius' house and God is doing a work here.

And God didn't really share what he's doing with the Gentiles. He evidently is just sharing that with Paul. But I know that, but Paul is legit. Paul is not some whacked out guy who's coming up with his own ideas.

This is from God, and we ought to listen to Paul. And so Paul walked away with a letter. We read this in Acts 15. And the letter was from the Jerusalem church, the Jewish Jerusalem church, to the Gentiles out among the nations.

It says this, we have commanded or we accept that you do not have to keep the law. And so, there were a few other things, but that was the basic premise.

[22 : 53] So that is the big picture context. Who is this guy Titus? Titus was this important test case. Are they going to make Titus get circumcised or no?

And Titus was not circumcised. And so, that was kind of an important role that Titus played in the story in the New Testament.

So we're going to go back to the book of Titus here, and we're just going to read. I think we'll get through the introduction today, which is dense, like I said, and has a lot in it. But let's go ahead and read.

Titus chapter 1. Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledgement of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, but has in due time manifested his word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior.

To Titus, a true son in our common faith, grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior. So this is really just the introduction to his letter.

[24 : 12] But man, he packs a lot in. And if you're familiar with Paul and what he writes, sometimes he will say 15 different things in one sentence. And so sometimes it behooves us to really dig in and maybe spend a lot of time on just one little verse or one passage or one section of scripture because there's a lot to pull out here.

And so we're going to do that here in this first part of Titus. Oh, one thing that I didn't get to, I skipped over here, is Crete.

The location where Titus is ministering is this island of Crete. Crete. And I guess I did talk about it briefly, but later on we'll find out a little bit more about the Cretans, they call them.

Has anybody ever heard that term Cretan? Is that a positive word or is that a negative word? It's a very negative word, isn't it? If you call somebody a Cretan, that's a slam or you're deriding somebody.

And it actually comes back here to the Bible because as he says later on, the Cretans are not known for being an upright and godly or righteous people. They're known for being immoral.

[25 : 28] So that's a little bit more context, but I guess we'll get to that maybe next week. So back here to this greeting. So starting with verse 1, Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ.

I think it's interesting here that Paul, he's telling who he is. And in one sense, as you read this, you think, well, Paul's writing to his companion who he's probably known for many years.

I don't know how many years, but this is one of the last letters that Paul wrote. I think a lot of people say this and then 2 Timothy. 2 Timothy was probably the last, but this was the second before the last that he wrote.

Very late in his ministry, he'd probably been working with Titus for a long time. So when you write a letter to a close friend, do you explain, like, who you are and your background? Not usually, right?

It's just kind of awkward that he would do that, but he's doing that here. And why is that? Well, because is Paul just writing a letter to Titus?

[26 : 26] No. He's writing a letter for us because we are reading this later on. And that's what this book or this letter is intended to do, to be instruction for us in Titus at that present time, but also for us.

And so this background, even though it wasn't very helpful maybe to Titus, is super helpful for us. And that was the intention when Paul wrote this, and God's intention when Paul wrote this, that we would understand some of this background.

And it's repeated many times in many of Paul's letters. He explains who he is and where his message came from and all that. But he says here, Paul, a bondservant of God, an apostle of Jesus.

So he gives kind of two roles that he plays. One of his roles is he's a servant or a bondservant. That really is a slave.

Somebody who would sell themselves into slavery back in those days. You know, you can't do this today. Well, in some ways you can, but you could sell yourself into slavery.

[27 : 33] If you were going through a rough time in your life, you just couldn't figure life out. You couldn't hold a job. You're just in constant, constantly struggling to make it through life.

Or maybe you had huge debts or something like that. You could actually sell yourself as a slave to maybe a wealthy family or something like that. And it could be temporary or it could be permanent.

We call the temporary thing like indentured servitude. You might call it today. But the Jews, they were only allowed to do it for up to seven years was the maximum. They could sell themselves into slavery.

But if you were a, a Gentile, you could actually sell yourself to a Jewish family for life. So, he calls, anyway, he calls himself a servant or a slave of God.

And then he says, and an apostle of Jesus. You know, in some places he calls himself an apostle of God. Or in some cases he calls himself a servant of Jesus.

[28 : 37] Some people try to make a difference. You know, well, Jesus isn't really God because it says, why would he make a difference here, right? Why would Paul say, well, I'm a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus.

That's, that's not what Paul's trying to communicate. Jesus is God, the son, right? And so, he is a servant of God. In other places he says, I'm a servant of Jesus Christ.

He says that in other places. And in other places, here he calls himself an apostle of Jesus. In other places, he calls himself an apostle of God. He uses the terms interchangeably. But these are the two roles he's playing and that he wants to emphasize.

I'm a servant of God. I am under authority. I put myself under submission to God, our creator. But, I also am an apostle.

God gave me a message and he gave me the authority to preach that message, to get the word out. And so, I'm submitted to God but I have authority.

[29 : 40] God has given me authority to preach his word to get this message out to the world. And apostle, apostle is a, is a, in one sense, just the word by itself.

Apostle just means a sent one. Anybody can be a sent one but typically it's a sent one. Somebody who is sent with somebody else's authority, a king, might send a messenger to send a message, right?

And that messenger, as far as the message is concerned, has authority to speak for the king, right? He doesn't have authority outside of that but as far as that message is concerned, that messenger has the authority of the king.

And you know what? It is really important when God gives us authority that we exercise it. And sometimes it can feel uncomfortable exercising authority but all of us have some kind of authority in our lives, some kind of role of authority.

Parents have authority over our children, right? Moms and dads have authority over their children. And what happens if parents decide that, well, I'm just going to be buddies with my kids.

[30 : 58] We're just going to be friends. And I'm not going to exercise authority over my children in bringing correction and discipline and instruction. And it's cool to be buddies, right?

Cool to be friends and things will go well, right? I'm seeing a shaking of heads. It will be a complete and utter disaster, right?

When parents do not exercise authority over their children, their children implode. their lives turn into destruction. And so, it's important when we are given any kind of role of authority, whether it's authority over the Gentile church, in this case with Paul, over a church, over a family, whatever your role of authority is, that role is for a purpose.

And sometimes, for many of us, it can be difficult, right? You don't feel comfortable in that role. But we need to exercise that authority in the proper way.

And when it comes to authority, there are different jurisdictions. And sometimes, people can step outside their jurisdiction, and then they're doing something else. They're exercising authority where they don't have it.

[32 : 17] And the Bible talks about, I think the Pharisees specifically, lording it over people, uses that term, lording it over. And that's going past your authority. That's trying to exercise control or authority where you don't have it.

We see that a lot with what today? The government, right? That happens a lot. The government, the government is actually instituted by God to exercise authority over the citizens, right?

To bring peace and justice in the land, to make sure we establish order. But so many times, and it's not just here in this country, and it's not just this time in the history of the world.

It's been throughout the whole history of the world. People who have authority or power tend to abuse it. And that's unfortunate. But authority is God's idea.

Not the abuse of it, but authority in and of itself is God's idea. And so, if you have a position of authority in your life, you need to take it seriously and exercise it and exercise it well.

- [33 : 26] Not lording it over people, but as a servant of Christ. And we see this with Paul. He said, I'm a servant to God, but I have this authority as an apostle to preach the message. So you need to listen to me because God gave me this message and it's ultimately from him. So if you're rejecting me, you're rejecting him. And then he says this, So Paul, upon servant of God and apostle of Jesus Christ, this is my service to God and my authority, the position he's given me.

According to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgement of the truth which accords with godliness. Now this is kind of an odd phrase, according to the faith. And really, and I think other translations get closer to maybe what the, or at least to a better meaning.

The ESV, in fact, the ESV says this, for the sake of the faith of God's elect. So God has given me authority as an apostle to get the word out about this faith, about this faith that I'm teaching you.

And so he gave me authority to be a messenger to, with respect to this faith that I'm teaching you. And he says, he uses this term, he says, according to the faith of God's elect.

- [34 : 47] Elect. And that's not a word that we use, at least by itself. Usually we use it as a verb if we use it today, right? You're going to elect somebody president, something like that.

But we typically don't call somebody an elect person. I guess we will call sometimes someone president-elect, right? You have the time period between somebody is elected as president and the time they actually fill their office.

And during that time period you call them the president-elect. So I guess in that way we will use that word. But the word elect just means somebody who is elected or chosen is a much more simple word that we might use.

And I'm going to spend a little bit of time on this because this concept of election in the Bible and who are the elect brings so much confusion and there's a lot of controversy around it.

So what does he mean by elect? You are elect. There are some who teach that election is this whole concept where God just chooses people before the world was even created.

- [36 : 04] He maybe looked into the future or just made a decision based on his creation or something like that that there were some people that he was going to have be his people who would have eternal life and that there was these other people over here and they wouldn't get eternal life.

And it has nothing to do with whether they chose him or not or anything like that whether they did good or evil but God just chose before the foundation of the earth. Yeah, and it's commonly called Calvinism.

So that's a common name for that kind of a teaching. And so typically it comes with, you know, there's a lot of focus on predestination that everything is predestined.

And so even our salvation is predestined. And so it's our job kind of as people who are interested in the faith to maybe figure out are we the chosen ones or are we not?

And there are different ways that you can maybe figure that out. Now, it doesn't always get parsed out that way. For many people who hold to this view, they still say, hey, no, you've got to preach the gospel and then some people will believe and they will actually be saved.

[37 : 23] But they're not really believing. God is just giving them the faith. He predestined for them to have the faith to believe. And so there's a lot that you could go in into that, but I just wanted to talk about this whole concept of election from a different perspective because that's a pretty common view that this whole concept of election is that God has chosen before you were even born whether you would be, have eternal life, be a child of his or not.

But there's another group of people that God calls the elect in the Bible and who is that? The Jews. Yeah, the Jews were God's chosen people.

And so, but it doesn't stop there. Did God choose anybody else in the Bible? There's all kinds of people that God chose. There's people, there are prophets that he chose.

Jeremiah says that God called me specifically. Even from the womb. Paul even says that, that he was chosen. There are kings that God chose, right?

There are, there's a specific tribe that was chosen for a specific purpose to, to oversee the service in the temple. The tribe of Levi, very good, was a chosen tribe.

[38 : 50] And so, these were all, these are all part of God's elect. God chose them for a specific purpose. And it, so election one is not always about salvation.

Sometimes the election is to just some kind of a task. Noah was chosen, right? He was chosen to build a boat. And he accomplished that purpose. But did you know that there are times in the Bible where people were elected to a certain thing and they refused to do what they were elected to?

It happens many times in the Bible. And so, just because you are elected to do a certain thing, you are chosen, sometimes you can be unfaithful.

And we see that actually with the whole nation of Israel, right? They were God's elect. They were God's chosen. But do you think that when all is said and done and, you know, all of God's people are in heaven, that all the Jews that were part of God's elect will be there?

No, many of them rejected God even though they were part of God's general elect. Isaiah 42, 1 says this, Behold my servant who I uphold, my elect one.

[40 : 08] Oh, sorry, that's the wrong verse. Isaiah 45, 4, For Jacob my servant's sake, Jacob is a reference to Israel, and Israel my elect, I have even called you by your name.

I have named you though you have not known me. He calls Israel his elect. So why would Paul use this word elect? Well, this transition happened where God's people was the Jewish people who the Jewish people, they knew, what?

We're God's people. We're the circumcised ones. We're the ones under the law. We're the children of Abraham. And so I think some people, and you kind of read this in Paul's letters, got the idea, well, I mean, we're God's people, so I mean, God wants us to do this or that, but I mean, hey, I'm a child of Abraham.

And is that sufficient? Was that enough? No. And so God did this work. He did this transition, and he changed who the chosen people were towards no longer the Jews, but now it's the Gentiles.

God is doing a new thing. He's going to the Gentiles, and the Gentiles, in general, are now God's elect people. Now, it's not like the Jews couldn't be saved anymore, more, but now there's this new group of people called the body of Christ, we call them, and it's not a Jewish thing.

[41 : 43] There is no Jewish thing going on anymore. It's this Gentile group, these uncircumcised believers. And so the election that we have today is not an election according to whether we're children of Abraham or not, or at least children of Abraham by birth or by biology.

In Isaiah 42, 1, it says this, Behold my servant whom I uphold, my elect one in whom my soul delights, I have put my spirit upon him, he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

Can anybody guess who that's talking about? Jesus Christ, the Messiah. He is called my elect one. Jesus is God's elect.

In fact, there's a TV series, or I guess you can stream it. Do they call it TV anymore? I don't know. But there's a series, a video series, we'll call that out, about the life of Jesus.

Does anybody know what it's called? The Chosen. And that comes from this verse. He was the chosen one. He was the chosen. Has anybody seen that movie, by the way? Isn't it good?

[42 : 58] I've seen some nods, okay. We've been meaning to check it out for a while, but we haven't gotten to it. So, Jesus is the elect one. And it says this in Ephesians chapter 1, verse 4 and 5.

It talks about this idea of election. And it says this, and some people get confused. In fact, sometimes I wonder if people leave words out. But he says this, just, and actually here, let me just go to a passage.

Ephesians chapter 1. I guess just a tiny bit of context.

Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That's verse 3. So he's blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.

Just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. So some people read this verse and this whole section and think, oh, well, God chose certain people to become Christians and then other people he just didn't choose.

[44 : 15] But there's two words that a lot of times get overlooked in this verse. Anybody know what those two words are? In him.

Just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Who is the elect one? Jesus. He is the elect one. And if you join yourself to him, you'll be elect too.

You'll be part of the chosen group. And that is the election spoken of here in Ephesians and the election that Paul is referring to in this letter to Titus.

And so we get to decide, are we going to be God's elect? God chose Jesus and everything is found in him. In fact, if you look up that phrase in him, especially in Ephesians, in fact, that was in verse 3.

[45 : 19] We are blessed, he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. When we are in him, in Christ, in whom, you read these passages all throughout the Bible.

And if we're in him by trusting in what he did for us, that's all it takes to be in him, then we are part of God's elect. And so Paul is writing to this Gentile Titus, and he talks later on about the circumcision, about the confusion that they're bringing in.

he's telling Titus, don't let that stuff go, you have to address it. Because there's a lot of people that think they're the chosen people. But you know what? You are part of God's elect because you are in Christ.

So when you read the word, look at that word elect or this concept of chosen, it's not how many people portray it.

verse 2, in hope of eternal life. So sorry, let me go back to Titus. Paul, a bondservant of God, an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgement of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life.

[46 : 44] This whole thing is about eternal life. That's what this whole gospel is about. Will we have life forever or death?

It's life or death. That's the big question. That's what the Bible is all about. Life or death. Choose you this day. Will you choose life? Will you choose death?

Sometimes when evangelizing, talking to people, trying to get them to read the Bible. Some people, yeah, I've looked at it once or twice. This is a book about who lives and who dies.

Do you think that's worth reading? Yes. This is an important book. Everybody should read it. That's the major part of the story.

God is at the center. We are a part of it. We are at the center with him. Will you choose life or will you choose death? So this gospel that Paul is preaching is about eternal life.

[47 : 45] That's the core of it. That's the crux of it. That's what it's all about. You know, I think all people, regardless of their religion, regardless of their faith, even people who are atheistic, who would say, I don't believe in God, there's a yearning inside all of us that we want to live.

Life is so temporary. The Bible uses the term of a vapor. Life is like a vapor. It's here and then it's gone. But so many of us, all of us, most of us, we want to live.

We don't want to die. We want to live forever. And God has made a way that we can do that. And that is what the gospel is all about. God. Ecclesiastes 3.11 says this, that God has put eternity in our hearts.

There's something on the inside of us. There's an eternal aspect to us, this spiritual aspect to us, where we have this desire, this longing. The animals don't think about tomorrow.

They don't think about, oh, what's going to happen when I die? But so many of us, God created in God's image, do think about that. In 2 Corinthians 4.16, Paul's talking about the believer, and he says this, he says this to the Corinthian believer, therefore we do not lose heart, even though our outward man is perishing.

[49 : 15] Our outward man is temporal, it's mortal, it only lasts so long, yet the inward man is being renewed, day by day by day.

Because if you have trusted in Christ, you have eternal life, there's one sense in which you'll get eternal life later, right, because we'll get new bodies, we'll have immortality, but there's also a sense in which we have eternal life now, because life is knowing God, and we've already started that, haven't we?

We've already started it. And also in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 53, it says this, for this corruptible, it's talking about the resurrection of the dead, for this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality.

So when this corruptible has put on incorruption and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. So God made us to live forever, and really the choice is, will we live in life or will we live in death?

Will we live united to him? The Bible says that life is knowing God, and death is the opposite. So in this hope of eternal life, so he's called to be an apostle for this faith that he preaches, verse 2, in hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lie, promised before time begins, concept, there's a lot of debate about what this means, before time began, or in some, I think the King James says before the world began, the language here is basically there's this age in which we live in, and then before that, and in fact there was one commentator, Adam Clark, says that this seems to be actually talking about before the Jewish age, but there's a time in the past in which God promised salvation, right?

[51 : 15] and where is the very first inkling of that, where there was this promise made? Yes, about Satan's seed and the woman's seed, right? It's just this little tiny inkling, and if you were back then you probably wouldn't understand what that even meant, but looking back, right, it becomes more clear, God and the promises have grown in clarity and clarity ever since.

And why does it say a God who cannot lie? More literally, it's the unlying God. God is not a liar. God is one who keeps his promises.

But to the Cretans who worshipped false gods, the gods that they worshipped, did they keep their promises? No, they would just lie to your face. They would promise something and then turn around and do something else.

But is that the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob? No. He is the God who is committed to the truth, committed to keeping his promises. Then he says this in verse 3, but has in due time manifested his word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior.

So in due time, so eventually God is bringing about revelation over time, but right now, especially with Paul, he's manifesting, bringing forth evidence of this word through preaching.

[52 : 44] In Romans 3.21, Paul talks about the law and what God did through Israel, and then he says this in chapter 3, verse 21 of Romans, So there was all this time period of the law in which God revealed some things about himself, but the true answer to eternal life found through Jesus Christ came later.

But now we know about this righteousness where we can have union with God without anything in the way, no middle wall of separation through Christ.

Galatians 3 says this, Galatians 3.24, Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

There's this indication that before and then faith comes, the message comes, the message about Christ and what he did. And we can trust in that message. And as he says here in verse 3, the time has come for him to manifest his word through what means?

Through preaching. And I'll finish up with this. Preaching is the way that God gets the word out. Paul was a preacher. In Romans 10, it talks about how beautiful are the feet of who?

[54 : 15] Of those who preach the good news. And is that just Paul's job to get the word out about the good news of Jesus Christ? No, God used him greatly. He got the word out in spades, didn't he?

He turned the world upside down, the Bible says. And we individually may not turn the world upside down, but we can turn our families upside down.

Sometimes our families need the gospel. Our friends, we can turn their life upside down, in a good way, right? Sometimes the word upside down is a negative thing.

But when people's lives are broken, when they're in rebellion against God, turning them upside down might be putting them right side up, right? And so we can have an impact in our community and where we live and in our circles of influence to preach because that is how God manifests his word through preaching.

And it was committed to Paul, but it's also committed to us. I'm out of time, so I'm going to end there.

[55 : 25] I guess I wasn't prepared. You know, I really love how Pastor Marv has done the questions after the service. I didn't leave any time. And you know, yeah, just like Pastor Marv, right?

So we won't do that today just for the sake of time. We want to get out on time. But I also should say in the beginning, hey, let's take questions after the service because sometimes it's good to have that in mind.

You can write down questions or thoughts, comments too. So if you have any questions or comments, we'll bring them next week and we'll hopefully, unless I pull a Pastor Marv, we'll get to them at the end of service next week.

Let's close in prayer. Father, thank you for your word. There's so much depth to all of this. We ask that you would continue each and every day, open up the scriptures to our understanding that we would not just read this just to read it and do a duty, but actually understand.

Know what you would want us to know, what you intend for us to know through these scriptures. In Jesus' name, amen.