

Three Remarkable Titles

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Titus 1:1

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In Paul's opening salutation he is inspired to mention three remarkable titles and three remarkable purposes for Christian ministry.

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ to further the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness...

I. The titles:

A. Paul first declares he is a bond-servant (slave) of God.

Servant: (Gr. Dulos, *doo'-los*) 127x

a slave, bondman, man of servile condition

1b) metaph., one who gives himself up to another's will, those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing His cause among men

1c) devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: "Moses my servant is dead. ... (Joshua 1:1-2a)

"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. (2 Samuel 7:8-9)

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. (Philippians 3:4-7)

For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. (2 Corinthians 4:5)

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God,

did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage;

rather, he made himself nothing

by taking the very nature of a servant,

being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:5-8)

Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. (Romans 6:16-18)

B. Second, he declares he is an apostle of Jesus Christ.

Apostle: (Gr. Apostolos, *ap-os'-tol-os*) 81x
a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders

1a) specifically applied to the twelve apostles of Christ

1b) in a broader sense applied to other eminent Christian teachers (Barnabas, Timothy and Silvanus)

Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection." (Acts 1:21-22)

The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

"Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name." (Acts 9:11-18)

C. And he declares his ministry is to the elect of God.

Elect (Gr. Eklektos, *ek-lek-tos'*) 23x

1) picked out, chosen

1a) chosen by God,

1a1) to obtain salvation through Christ

1a1a) Christians are called "chosen or elect" of God

1a2) the Messiah is called "elect", as appointed by God to the most exalted office conceivable

1a3) choice, select, i.e. the best of its kind or class, excellence preeminent: applied to certain individual Christians

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will—to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves. In him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of His glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:3-14)

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. (John 1:12-13)

“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard the Father and learned from Him comes to Me. (John 6:44-45)

But to this day the Lord has not given you a mind that understands or eyes that see or ears that hear. (Deuteronomy 29:4)

...as it is written: “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that could not see and ears that could not hear, to this very day.” (Romans 11:8)

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way, no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. (1 Corinthians 2:10-14)

Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.” (John 10:22-30)

It is not as though God’s word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham’s children. On the contrary, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.” In other words, it is not the children by physical descent who are God’s children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring. For this was how the promise was stated: “At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son.”

Not only that, but Rebekah’s children were conceived at the same time by our father Isaac. Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” Just as it is written: “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses,

“I will have mercy on whom I have mercy,
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” (Ex. 33:19)

It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy. For Scripture says to Pharaoh: “I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

One of you will say to me: “Then why does God still blame us? For who is able to resist his will?” But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? “Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’” Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?

What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction? What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory—even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? (Romans 9:6-24)

For this is what the Lord has commanded us:

“I have made you a light for the Gentiles,
that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”

When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. (Acts 13:47-48)

II. The purposes:

A. To proclaim / establish faith in God’s chosen ones.

Faith (Gr. Pistis, *pis'-tis*) 244x

1) belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it

1a) relating to God: the conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestower of eternal salvation through Christ

1b) relating to Christ: a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God

1d) belief with the predominate idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, arising out of faith in them

2) fidelity, faithfulness

3) With a definite article (the faith) refers typically to the collected truths of Scripture that leads a person to believe and remain faithful, the religious beliefs of Christians

B. To teach God's Truth so that it might be truly known and experienced.

Knowledge (Gr. Epignosis, *ep-ig'-no-sis*) 20x

1) full, precise, complete and correct knowledge, used in the NT of the knowledge of things ethical and divine

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge... (2 Peter 1:5)

For this reason we also, from the day we heard about you, we have not ceased praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding... (Colossians 1:9)

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. (Ephesians 1:17)

Truth (Gr. Alethia, *al-ay'-thi-a*) 110x

1) objectively what is true in any matter under consideration

1a1) truly, in truth, according to truth, of a truth, in reality, in fact, certainly

1b) what is true in things appertaining to God and the duties of man, moral and religious truth

1c) the truth as taught in the Christian religion, respecting God and the execution of His purposes through Christ, and respecting the duties of man, opposing alike to the superstitions of the Gentiles and the inventions of the Jews, and the corrupt opinions and precepts of false teachers even among Christians

2) subjectively, truth as a personal excellence

2a1) that state of mind which is free from affection, pretense, simulation, falsehood, deceit

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. (John 8:31-36)

Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do His will. (2 Timothy 2:15-16)

By His sovereign plan he gave us birth through the message of truth, that we would be a kind of firstfruits of all he created. (James 1:18)

C. To see faith and knowledge produce godliness (Christlikeness).

Godliness (Gr. Eusebia, yoo-seb'-i-ah)

- 1) reverence, respect
- 2) piety towards God

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by His own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:2-11)