

Thursday, August 17, 2023 • Titus 1:1–5

Questions from the Scripture text: Who wrote this letter? What is his relation to God? To Jesus Christ? For whose faith? And for them to acknowledge what? What does this truth correspond to? In what hope does he speak, and do they believe (v2)? Who promised it? What can't He do? When did He promise it? But when was it manifested (v3)? Through what? To whom was some of this preaching committed? Who decreed this? To whom is the letter written (v4)? What does Paul call him? In what way is he a true son? What three things does Paul wish him? From which two persons? Where did Paul leave Titus (v5)? For what reason? What was he to set in order? What, especially, were lacking? In what places is Titus to appoint them?

Why is ordering the church God's way so important? Titus 1:1–5 looks forward to the second serial reading of in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these five verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **we must order the church God's way, because she depends entirely upon God's eternal election, God's eternal promise, and God's ordering to bring about what He purposed from eternity.**

God's slave. Paul is not writing on his own accord. He is bound as a slave to whatever God commands ("bondservant of God," v1), and he is sent as a representative of Jesus Christ ("an apostle of Jesus Christ"). Therefore, it is not Paul's purpose for which he writes, but God's purpose. And what is that purpose? That God would bring His elect to faith ("according to the faith of God's elect"). That God would bring His elect to know the truth ("the acknowledgment of the truth"). That God would bring His elect into godliness ("which accords with godliness"). Paul's life, Paul's ministry, is devoted to these things: the elect growing in faith, growing in knowing truth, and growing in godliness.

God's promise. Even faith, knowledge of truth, and godliness are not ultimate ends for God's people. These are "in hope of eternal life." There is an eternal promise, an eternal determination of God, that is behind the mission of His slave. The un-lying God promised this eternal life before time began. To whom, then, did He promise it? He promised it to Himself. He promised it within Himself. This verse by itself proves that the one God exists in multiple persons. Eternal life is not just a blessing for the elect, it is the fulfillment in time of the love and the joy and the devotion that exists within the Godhead from all eternity.

God's ordering. This promise, though hidden at first in God, has now been revealed in its own time through preaching (v3a). God has ordered, by His authority, how He will bring salvation ("the commandment of God our Savior"). And He has decided to do this through preaching. And He has decided to whom He will entrust this preaching. He has entrusted some of it to Paul (v3).

But there is work for Titus, and there is work for other elders. Titus's task is to "put into order" (v5a) the things that are lacking, to bring the churches in Crete into conformity with God's ordering in the church. God's ordering in the church is that there would be a plurality of elders in every congregation. God's slave, Christ's apostle, has commanded this ("as I commanded you," v5b).

God's supply. Titus is a true son to Paul, not only because his work resembles Paul's work, but especially because His faith resembles Paul's faith (v4a). God's servants depend upon God Himself, even as they do the work that depends upon God Himself (it's ordered by God).

Titus needs grace from God: God's blessedness in place of the curse that he deserves and God's strength in the place of his weakness. Titus needs mercy from God: the compassionate ordering of things in a gentleness and kindness that are the opposite of what he deserves. Titus needs peace from God: the sure knowledge that God has so reconciled Titus to Himself that all of Who God is has come to be devoted to all that Titus needs.

In all of this, Titus needs to know God as "the Father." And God has given this supply in Jesus Christ, our Savior. The grace, mercy, and peace come from both Him and the Father—yet another proof that Jesus is God! And the text affirms this by calling Him "the Lord."

God our Savior in Christ, God our supply in Christ, has given us His order for how He brings us into salvation and grows us. Elders are His plan and His way. Whether elders or eldered, we will want to pay careful attention to the upcoming verses so that we may rest in the Lord doing things His way to save us!

When was salvation determined? How was it accomplished? How is it announced? How is it applied? Whom must we trust about the ordering of the church? In Whom must we trust as we follow that order?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for determining within Yourself to save us from before time began. Thank You for Christ's accomplishing that salvation, and applying it to us by announcing it to us. Forgive us for when, even though we know that our salvation depends entirely upon You, we are reluctant to submit to Your ordering of the church. Forgive us, and give us the grace, mercy, and peace by which we may rightly follow You, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP2 "Why Do Gentile Nations Rage" or TPH425 "How Sweet and Awesome Is the Place"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Titus 1 1 through 5, these are god's words. Paul a bond servant of god and an apostle of jesus christ. According to the faith of god's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth. Which accords with godliness. And 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.

For this reason, i left you in Crete. That you should set an order, the things that are lacking. And appoint elders in every city. That's all i commanded you. So far the reading of god's inspired and inherent worked. The writer of the letter begins by identifying himself, which was common.

Identify himself as paul. They also identifies himself as in an uncommon way. He calls himself a slave of god. Our English translation, says bond servant, but one who is bound. And is required to serve. It is a slave. He must do whatever god commands. And since jesus christ is also god, which we will find.

When we consider verse 4, Jesus christ, his god has sent him in particular as an apostle. Whatever our office is. That has appointed been appointed to us by god by the lord jesus. Uh, we are slaves of god to do that. So he's a slave of god to be an apostle, Jesus christ, he doesn't have an option and then you joyful and devoted.

Slave by the grace of god, he is eager to be in apostle of jesus christ. And so it must be careful when we don't say. I wish i wasn't still a child who had to obey my parents. I wish i wasn't a pastor who had the pastor these people like Titus.

Might have been tempted by his own flesh to wish. Paul is saying, nope, i'm a slave of god, and apostle of the lord jesus christ, and you're a slave of god and undershepherd of the lord jesus christ. You can say, i wish. I didn't have to parent these children.

Or wish i didn't have to be. Brother or sister in the church to these people. The office of church member an assignment or the role of church member no. This letter is written. By god's slave. We must order the church and god's way. Because it's God's church and we are god's people.

So his god's slave? And yet. Not only is he god slave. Um, But this means that he is serving god's purposes. What is God's purpose? And he would bring his elect to faith. According to the faith of god's elect, what are they elected for? What are they chosen unto?

Well, they're chosen unto a number of things but one of the things they're chosen unto is to believe. If god has elected that, they would believe that they will be brought to believe. And if god's way of bringing them to believe is by sending his apostle, Then the cent apostle better be laboring aiming act their believing.

And so use a slave of god and apostle jesus christ, according to the faith. Of god's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth. So god brings his elect to faith. By bringing them to no. The truth. And not just that, they would know the truth so that they would believe.

But this truth, That they both the by which they believe in the lord jesus christ. Is what produces godliness or it is necessary that godliness would be produced because he hasn't just elected us. That we would say a prayer or elected us that we would hold a doctoral position.

He's elected us that we would be conformed to the image of his son. He's predestined us to adoption an inheritance and glorification In the lord, jesus. And so one of the problems in the churches and crete that will find out. About pretty quickly in this letter. Is that the people are not growing and godliness.

The character, the lord jesus isn't being demonstrated in their lives. But this is what god has elected believers unto? That we would know the truth that we would believe in jesus christ by the truth. And that godliness would be produced in us from jesus christ. Through. Grace. It's a paul's life.

Paul's ministry is devoted to these three things. The elect growing in faith. The electric growing and knowing truth, the electric growing and godliness. And Titus's life, Titus's ministry must be devoted to these things too. And in whatever role god has given us, we should desire. That we would grow in faith that we would grow in knowledge of the truth that we would grow in godliness and that god would use us to help others grow in faith grow, in knowledge of the truth and grow in godliness.

One of the things we should, especially pray for our elders and our ministers, about is the god would use them Christ and use them. To grow people in faith to grow his people. The knowledge of the truth, to grow. His people and godliness. So there's god's purpose. But there's also God's promise.

Because all of these faith truth knowledge of God in a faith, truth and godliness are actually not ultimate ends. The ultimate end is eternal life in hope of eternal life. Which god he cannot lie promised before time began. Well now that is a very interesting say. Who is there before time begins?

God god and only god, nobody else. And so the promise is made by god to god. And so we see that there must be One god in many persons or at least in more than one person. From there, be one. Who does the promising and one who receives the promise?

And now we have a hint at what that eternal life is. Because god promises to god. A life for the elect. That is like, god's life. A life that has no possibility of death. So everlasting a life that is That is. Consumed with Loving god and being loved by god enjoying god and being enjoyed by god.

And so god before time began plans within himself. That there are people to whom he is going to give a life that is analogous to his own. That. Is what god created in order to bring about that is what God has. Uh, superintendent history in order to bring about that, is what god has sent the lord jesus in order to bring about.

And that is what paul's apostleship. And Titus's pastoral ministry and ordaining of elders. And those elders is coming elders as ministry and everything that we do. Is designed to bring. About. So there's the promise. Now, if we are going to get to god's promise by following god's purposes, as god's slaves than we need to do it according to god's order, That's the next thing we see in this passage.

That god in his in its own time. To be more literal has manifested his word. So he makes a promise within himself. And then he does what is necessary to bring about the promise thing. And now he announces to us both that this is something he has promised within himself and But he has accomplished.

What was necessary in order to bring it about. The sentence on into the world. The sun has lived a righteous life. The sun has died in the toning death. His son has risen again with an almighty. Resurrection, his son is ascended and taken his seat to the right end of majesty.

And his son has poured out his spirit by whom he has applying his salvation. And so, all of these things that are That are hidden or kept in the promise of god within god before time, began are now being manifested being Opened up to us revealed to us. And it is god.

Who manifests them through breaching? Now, yes. Paul has been. Um, commanded or or Entrusted with preaching according to god's commandment. The god has in due time manifested his word through preaching, which was committed to me, the preaching was entrusted to me according to the commandment. Of God, our savior.

Uh, so god orders. God ordains. Establishes the way that he is going to bring about his salvation for his elect and his way is through preachers. And so if he entrusts a preacher with a ministry, it's not optional. It's the commandment of god, our savior for me. My ministry, says Paul.

And these implying, of course that Titus's ministry is the commandment of god, our savior and when titus starts training and ordaining and installing these elders that they are to view their ministry as the commandment of god. Our savior And what a good commandment to follow. The one who is your savior?

You know, his intentions, you know, his ability to bring it about There's absolutely no reason to question the command. Is it good? Of course it's saving us. Is it wise? Of course it's gone. It's god's commandment, will it work? Of course, use almighty. He'll make it work. And so there's God's promise god's slave.

Uh, pursuing god's purposes, to fulfill God's promise, according to god's order. And this is why. Verse 5. We are supposed to have elders plurality of elders in every church. Because that's God's way of operating his church. For this reason, he says, verse 5 for which reason Well, because This is the way god is bringing his Salvation that jesus has accomplished and now that the spirit whom jesus's bored out as applying Is by the ministry of elders.

For this reason, i left you in greet, that you should set in order, the things that are lacking and appoint elders in every city. As i commanded you. And so a

And so, the lord establishes. That there is a right. Order in his church. So you can't say, well, you know, you look at the church or many different ways. There's You know, the the anglican kind of church structure ecclesiology. There's the papist church structuricesiologists and much different than Except for it, doesn't have antichrist at the top.

Uh, there's You know, the the methodist or congregationalist kind of like A galitarian congregational driven. Uh, stuff. A lot of baptists like that. And then there's the, you know, there are some elderly elder, ish baptist churches, Um, and then you have the Presbyterian reformed that are The the Presbyterian or the elder overseen.

Churches. So, you know, it's multiple to absolutely not. The proper ordering of a church. With. Elders, selected. According to The christ's given procedure

qualifications. Is part of how god has ordered. To bring his salvation. Can he do it? Over and against our disobedience and disorder. He can and he's merciful and sometimes he does but we have no reason.

To expect him to, it's presumptuous. To do it a different way and say. Lord, please bless this church and save people. Bring them to faith. Grow them in faith. Grow them in knowledge of the truth. Grow them in godliness. When we are not, if you are not using god's order in the church, it's the church equivalent of lord turned this cheeto into a carrot stick on the way down.

Can he do it? No, he well, he can but he doesn't. Really amazing thing is. Sometimes. He does when it comes to salvation for people. But it's presumptuous to ask him to work that way. If we're not following his order, And so, That god's slave is to follow god's purposes in expectation, and hope of god's fulfilling god's promise by using god's order in the church.

As. The the pastor, the elder. And or the believer depends upon god's. Supply, this is where we get to verse 4. To Titus a true son. In our common faith, grace, mercy, and peace. From god, the father. And the lord jesus christ. Titus is a true son to paul, not only because his work resembles, paul's work, the family business or family trade.

Idea that Was very Prominent. And behind. A lot of these true sun sorts of Sayings. But in this case, a true son in a common faith. He's especially a true son to Paul because titus is faith. Resembles pauls. And so god's servant depends upon god himself. For the ministry, god's slave depends upon god himself for what he commands us to do.

And so what do we need? What does Titus need? If he is going to fulfill the roll,

What does Titus need if he is going to fulfill the role that the lord jesus has assigned to him?

He needs grace. God's blessedness. And the place of the curse that he deserves and God's strength. In the place of his weakness. He needs mercy. That god would compassionately superintendent everything in his life. In gentleness and kindness. That are the exact opposite of what he deserves. He needs peace.

The sore knowledge that god has reconciled tightest to himself, so completely That god now bends all of who he is. To be devoted for all that Titus needs god, to be to him. And this is what we each need. We need the grace That our life would be according to the blessedness and strength that are in jesus.

None of which we have in us. That we need mercy. That god would superintend all things to be the opposite of what we had deserved them to be. And we need peace. That god would be entirely for us. And that. He would are, sufficiency would be from him. That we would be in an alliance with god as it were.

And so, he needs to know that the father is his father. From god, the father and he needs to know that god, the son is his savior. The grace, the mercy and the peace are things that come from god. So, it would be blasphemy. To say verse 4. If the lord jesus christ.

Is not god if jesus christ is not the lord. Was only says, grace mercy and peace. From And then there's a joint subject from whom they come.

The grace mercy. And peace. That come. Not only from god the father but also from the lord, jesus christ, our savior because jesus christ our savior is the lord. He is. God. God is our savior in christ. God is our supply in Christ. He has given us his order for the church.

For the means by which he brings us into salvation and grows us in faith. Grows us in knowledge and grows us in godliness. Elders are his plan. Elders, are his way of doing this. So, whether That we ourselves are elders or whether we are as it were elder shepherded.

Overseen. We will want to pay careful attention to the upcoming verses and this letter to Titus. So that we may rest upon the Lord in doing things. His way. And to enjoy his salvation. Maintenance part.

Our father in heaven. We pray that you would bless to us, this portion of your word. That we would see how you are. They never lying god. Who has made a promise within yourself. That is what we are now. Hearing preached, when you send preachers to announce to us, what christ has done?

Help us to trust you and do things your way, help. Each of us. To fulfill whatever role we have in the home, whatever role we have in the church with joy and diligence as following the commandments of our god and savior. Pray that you would give us grace, mercy and peace.

From your father. And from your son, our god, our lord. Jesus christ, our savior. But we ask it in his name.