

AN EXPOSITION, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, OF

THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO

TITUS

This epistle chiefly contains directions to Titus concerning the elders of the Church, and the manner in which he should give instruction; and the latter part tells him to urge obedience to magistrates, to enforce good works, avoid foolish questions, and shun heresies. The instructions the apostle gave are all plain and simple. The Christian religion was not formed to answer worldly or selfish views, but it is the wisdom of God and the power of God.

CHAPTER 1

The apostle salutes Titus. (1-4) The qualifications of a faithful pastor. (5-9) The evil temper and practices of false teachers. (10-16)

☞ Titus 1:1

Vs. 1-4: All are the servants of God who are not slaves of sin and Satan. All gospel truth is according to godliness, teaching the fear of God. The intent of the gospel is to raise up hope as well as faith; to take off the mind and heart from the world, and to raise them to heaven and the things above. How excellent then is the gospel, which was the matter of Divine promise so early, and what thanks are due for our privileges! Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; and who so is appointed and called, must preach the word. Grace is the free favor of God, and acceptance with him. Mercy, the fruits of the favor, in the pardon of sin, and freedom from all miseries both here and hereafter. And peace is the effect and fruit of mercy. Peace with God through Christ who is our Peace,

and with the creatures and ourselves. Grace is the fountain of all blessings. Mercy, and peace, and all good, spring out of this.

Titus 1:5

Vs. 5-9: The character and qualification of pastors, here called elders and bishops, agree with what the apostle wrote to Timothy. Being such bishops and overseers of the flock, to be examples to them, and God's stewards to take care of the affairs of his household, there is great reason that they should be blameless. What they are not to be, is plainly shown, as well as what they are to be, as servants of Christ, and able ministers of the letter and practice of the gospel. And here are described the spirit and practice becoming such as should be examples of good works.

Titus 1:10

Vs. 10-16: False teachers are described. Faithful ministers must oppose such in good time, that their folly being made manifest, they may go no further. They had a base end in what they did; serving a worldly interest under pretense of religion: for the love of money is the root of all evil. Such should be resisted, and put to shame, by sound doctrine from the Scriptures. Shameful actions, the reproach of heathens, should be far from Christians; falsehood and lying, envious craft and cruelty, brutal and sensual practices, and idleness and sloth, are sins condemned even by the light of nature. But Christian meekness is as far from cowardly passing over sin and error, as from anger and impatience. And though there may be national differences of character, yet the heart of man in every age and place is deceitful and desperately wicked. But the sharpest reproofs must aim at the good of the reproved; and soundness in the faith is most desirable and necessary. To those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; they abuse, and turn things lawful and good into sin. Many profess to know God, yet in their lives deny and reject him. See the miserable state of hypocrites, such as have a form of godliness, but are without the power; yet let us not be so ready to fix this charge on others, as careful that it does not apply to ourselves.

CHAPTER 2

The duties which become sound doctrine. (1-8) Believing servants must be obedient. (9, 10) All is enforced from the holy design of the gospel, which concerns all believers. (11-15)

Titus 2:1

Vs. 1-8: Old disciples of Christ must behave in every thing agreeably to the Christian doctrine. That the aged men be sober; not thinking that the decays of nature will justify any excess; but seeking comfort from nearer communion with God, not from any undue indulgence. Faith works by, and must be seen in love, of God for himself, and of men for God's sake. Aged persons are apt to be peevish and fretful; therefore need to be on their guard. Though there is not express Scripture for every word, or look, yet there are general rules, according to which all must be ordered. Young women must be sober and discreet; for many expose themselves to fatal temptations by what at first might be only want of discretion. The reason is added, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Failures in duties greatly reproach Christianity. Young men are apt to be eager and thoughtless, therefore must be earnestly called upon to be sober-minded: there are more young people ruined by pride than by any other sin. Every godly man's endeavor must be to stop the mouths of adversaries. Let thine own conscience answer for thine uprightness. What a glory is it for a Christian, when that mouth which would fain open itself against him, cannot find any evil in him to speak of!

Titus 2:9

Vs. 9, 10: Servants must know and do their duty to their earthly masters, with a reference to their heavenly one. In serving an earthly master according to Christ's will, He is served; such shall be rewarded by him. Not giving disrespectful or provoking language; but to take a check or reproof with silence, not making confident or bold replies. When conscious of a fault, to excuse or justify it, doubles it. Never putting to their own use that which is their master's, nor wasting the goods they are trusted with. Showing all good fidelity to improve a master's goods, and promote his

thriving. If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

◀1612▶ Luke 16:12. True religion is an honor to the professors of it; and they should adorn it in all things.


◀1611▶ Titus 2:11

Vs. 11-15: The doctrine of grace and salvation by the gospel, is for all ranks and conditions of men. It teaches to forsake sin; to have no more to do with it. An earthly, sensual conversation suits not a heavenly calling. It teaches to make conscience of that which is good. We must look to God in Christ, as the object of our hope and worship. A gospel conversation must be a godly conversation. See our duty in a very few words; denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, living soberly, righteously, and godly, notwithstanding all snares, temptations, corrupt examples, ill usage, and what remains of sin in the believer's heart, with all their hindrances. It teaches to look for the glories of another world. At, and in, the glorious appearing of Christ, the blessed hope of Christians will be complete: To bring us to holiness and happiness was the end of Christ's death. Jesus Christ, that great God and our Savior, who saves not only as God, much less as Man alone; but as God-man, two natures in one person. He loved us, and gave himself for us; and what can we do less than love and give up ourselves to him! Redemption from sin and sanctification of the nature go together, and make a peculiar people unto God, free from guilt and condemnation, and purified by the Holy Spirit. All Scripture is profitable. Here is what will furnish for all parts of duty, and the right discharge of them. Let us inquire whether our whole dependence is placed upon that grace which saves the lost, pardons the guilty, and sanctifies the unclean. And the further we are removed from boasting of fancied good works, or trusting in them, so that we glory in Christ alone, the more zealous shall we be to abound in real good works.

CHAPTER 3

Obedience to magistrates, and becoming behavior towards all, are enforced from what believers were before conversion, and what they are made, through Christ. (1-7) Good works to be done, and useless disputes avoided. (8-11) Directions and exhortations. (12-15)

Titus 3:1

Vs. 1-7: Spiritual privileges do not make void or weaken, but confirm civil duties. Mere good words and good meanings are not enough without good works. They were not to be quarrelsome, but to show meekness on all occasions, not toward friends only, but to all men, though with wisdom,  James 3:13. And let this text teach us how wrong it is for a Christian to be churlish to the worst, weakest, and most abject. The servants of sin have many masters, their lusts hurry them different ways; pride commands one thing, covetousness another. Thus they are hateful, deserving to be hated. It is the misery of sinners, that they hate one another; and it is the duty and happiness of saints to love one another. And we are delivered out of our miserable condition, only by the mercy and free grace of God, the merit and sufferings of Christ, and the working of his Spirit. God the Father is God our Savior. He is the fountain from which the Holy Spirit flows, to teach, regenerate, and save his fallen creatures; and this blessing comes to mankind through Christ. The spring and rise of it, is the kindness and love of God to man. Love and grace have, through the Spirit, great power to change and turn the heart to God. Works must be in the saved, but are not among the causes of their salvation. A new principle of grace and holiness is wrought, which sways, and governs, and makes the man a new creature. Most pretend they would have heaven at last, yet they care not for holiness now; they would have the end without the beginning. Here is the outward sign and seal thereof in baptism, called therefore the washing of regeneration. The work is inward and spiritual; this is outwardly signified and sealed in this ordinance. Slight not this outward sign and seal; yet rest not in the outward washing, but look to the answer of a good conscience, without which the outward washing will avail nothing. The worker therein is the Spirit of God; it is

the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Through him we mortify sin, perform duty, walk in God's ways; all the working of the Divine life in us, and the fruits of righteousness without, are through this blessed and holy Spirit. The Spirit and his saving gifts and graces, come through Christ, as a Savior, whose undertaking and work are to bring to grace and glory. Justification, in the gospel sense, is the free forgiveness of a sinner; accepting him as righteous through the righteousness of Christ received by faith. God, in justifying a sinner in the way of the gospel, is gracious to him, yet just to himself and his law. As forgiveness is through a perfect righteousness, and satisfaction is made to justice by Christ, it cannot be merited by the sinner himself. Eternal life is set before us in the promise; the Spirit works faith in us, and hope of that life; faith and hope bring it near, and fill with joy in expectation of it.

Titus 3:8

Vs. 8-11: When the grace of God towards mankind has been declared, the necessity of good works is pressed. Those who believe in God, must make it their care to maintain good works, to seek opportunities for doing them, being influenced by love and gratitude. Trifling, foolish questions must be avoided, and subtle distinctions and vain inquiries; nor should people be eager after novelties, but love sound doctrine which tends most to edifying. Though we may now think some sins light and little, if the Lord awaken the conscience, we shall feel even the smallest sin heavy upon our souls.

Titus 3:12

Vs. 12-15: Christianity is not a fruitless profession; and its professors must be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. They must be doing good, as well as keeping away from evil. Let "ours" follow some honest labor and employment, to provide for themselves and their families. Christianity obliges all to seek some honest work and calling, and therein to abide with God. The apostle concludes with expressions of kind regard and fervent prayer. Grace be with you all; the love and favor of God, with the fruits and effects thereof, according to need; and the increase and feeling of them more and more in your souls. This is the apostle's wish and prayer, showing his affection to them, and desire for their good, and would be a

means of obtaining for them, and bringing down on them, the thing requested. Grace is the chief thing to be wished and prayed for, with respect to ourselves or others; it is “all good.”