

Open in prayer

Read Titus 1:1-4

¹ Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for *the* faith of God's elect and *their* knowledge of *the* truth that leads to godliness, ² in *the* hope of eternal life that God, who cannot lie, promised before time began.

³ *In his* own time he has revealed his word in *the* preaching with which I was entrusted by *the* command of God our Saviour:

⁴ To Titus, *my* true son in *our* common faith.

Grace and peace from God *the* Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour.

Introduction

Meet Titus. He is on the island of Crete. The terrain is rough. The people are rugged. He is not on holiday. Paul has left him behind. Not abandoned, but deployed. The apostle has come and gone. The gospel has taken root. But the work remains unfinished. The churches on the island are immature. The false teachers are loud. And no one has yet appointed elders.

Titus is a Gentile convert. Uncircumcised. A walking controversy. In Antioch, Judaizers stirred up trouble. They insisted a person must receive circumcision to be saved. They insisted a person must keep the law. Titus is living proof that they are wrong. He is a born-again Gentile. He received no circumcision. He has not kept the law. He trusted Jesus Christ and was saved. So when the Jerusalem Council gathers, Titus serves as Paul's Exhibit A.

Paul sent Titus to Corinth, a church in chaos. Sexual immorality, divisions, and pride plagued it. Later, Paul travelled to Macedonia to rejoin him. And heard the good report. The Corinthians repented, and that refreshed Paul's heart.

Now Paul leaves Titus behind on Crete. His job? Administrative. Straighten out what remains unfinished. Appoint elders in every town. Defend the faith against rebellious false teachers. Titus is a trusted man who can handle complex problems with grace. He loves the church. He gets things done. A man of character. A man of courage.

But the task is hard. The opponents are fierce. The young churches are fragile. And Titus stands alone. So Paul writes this short letter, just three chapters. But before Paul tells Titus what to do, he reminds him who he belongs to. God's elect by God's eternal promise. That promise unites Paul and Titus in ministry for the elect's faith and godliness.

And that same promise unites us to them. Benoni Baptist Church's ministry is grounded in the eternal promise of God too. This letter to Titus is a letter for us.

Four points this morning. First, the Master we serve. Who calls us to gospel work? Second, the hope we hold. What anchors us when everything shakes? Third, the Word we trust. What message has God entrusted to us to proclaim? Fourth, the grace we receive. How should this truth shape us?

The big idea is, God's unbreakable promise secures our salvation and fuels our godliness. God settles our salvation in heaven, so we work out our faith on earth.

Let us begin with the Master we serve.

1) The Master We Serve (Titus 1:1a)

Look how Paul introduces himself in verse 1. He calls himself a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ.

A slave. That jars the ear. English translations often soften the word δοῦλος to servant. But the Greek word means slave. Not a hired hand. Not an employee. A slave. The property of his master. With no independent rights. No autonomous will. No personal agenda. His owner defined the slave's existence.

But Paul isn't debasing himself. He is declaring a supreme honour. The greatest heroes of the faith bear the title slave. Moses is a slave of the Lord in Joshua 1:1. David is God's slave in Psalms 89:3. The prophets are God's slaves Amos 3:7. God's secrets are entrusted to God's slaves. To be set apart for God's service. To be a slave is a badge of authority, not shame. Paul is telling his readers, My will is not my own. I belong to Another. And that is why you should listen to me.

I don't want to rush away from this word, slave. Because the New Testament applies the word δοῦλος to every believer. In Romans 6, Paul tells us that we have been set free from sin and have become slaves of righteousness. 1 Corinthians 6 writes, we are not our own; we were bought with a price. Slave language. 1 Peter 2 describes us as God's slaves. What does this mean? It means that just like Paul, our fundamental identity is not found in our careers. Our family roles. Our social standing. Our fundamental identity is found in our Master. We're freed from the tyranny of sin to submit to the rule of Christ as His slaves.

Now, Paul also calls himself a n apostle of Jesus Christ. Paul held the specific, unique office of apostle. This is not sham charlatan apostles that we see on TV today. Paul's qualification was not a seminary degree. Or a successful church plant. According to 1 Corinthians 9:1, Paul had seen the resurrected Christ firsthand. According to Acts 9:15, the Holy Spirit chose Paul. And according to 2 Corinthians 12:12, signs and wonders authenticated Paul's ministry. When Paul spoke as an apostle of Jesus Christ, he didn't offer opinion. Helpful suggestions. Paul delivered the infallible, inerrant Word of God.

If a site manager shows up at a skyscraper construction zone, they don't draw up their own floor plans on the spot. They are bound to the Master Architect's blueprint. They didn't design the building, nor do they own the land. Their commands are authoritative because they submit to the master blueprint. Paul is telling Titus, I am not giving you my opinions. I am delivering the Architect's

unalterable plans.

Paul self-identifies as a slave and apostle, grounding his authority in the divine.

So, we see who is speaking and on what authority. Paul is a slave of God, and he is a sent one of Jesus Christ. But why was he sent? What is this message all about? It isn't just a list of rules to follow. This leads us to our next point. The Hope We Hold (Titus 1:1b-2).

2) The Hope We Hold (Titus 1:1b-2)

In the hope of eternal life that God, who cannot lie, promised before time began.

Paul tells us his apostleship is for the faith of God's elect. Faith. That is his first great aim. Not mere intellectual assent. Not vague religious sentiment. Faith. The kind of faith that lays hold of Christ. The kind of faith that is itself a gift from Christ. The faith of God's elect. God's chosen. This is the language of sovereign selection. Before the world drew breath, before you took your first step, before you chose Him, God chose you. Paul is not embarrassed by election. He does not avoid election. Paul rests in election. The faith Paul labours to produce is the faith of those God has set His affection upon from eternity past.

But Paul does not stop there. His ministry is also for their knowledge of the truth. Faith and knowledge. They go together. You cannot have one without the other. Knowledge is not cold information. Facts stored in the mind. Paul says this is the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness. Salvation looks like something. Salvation produces something. Salvation reshapes our life. God's truth does not leave you unchanged. It presses into your parenting. It confronts your marriage. It exposes your secret thoughts. And it produces godliness. Not performance. Not religious duty. Genuine, Spirit-wrought godliness.

Now, here is the foundation. Faith and knowledge are not rooted in human effort. They are not the product of our striving. They are rooted in hope. The hope of eternal life. Hope anchored in God. God promised it. Before time began. Before the mountains formed. Before the stars scattered across the sky. God promised. And here is what makes it unshakeable. God cannot lie. This is His divine perfection. He is not like us. We make promises and break them. But God is truth. He will not deny Himself. He will not deceive. He cannot fail. And what He promised before time began, He will bring to pass. Eternal life. Not a wish. Not a hope-so. A sure promise.

Think of a father who promises a gift for his child's birthday. The child trusts the father completely. Not because the gift is in hand, but because the father is trustworthy. Our hope is in the character of God. He cannot break His word. He cannot change His mind. He is a Father who always delivers.

Paul's message aims to advance the faith and knowledge of the elect. And this purpose is rooted in God's eternal plan. This is not a plan God invented when humanity fell. This is not a plan B. This was His purpose before time began. And this is what unites Paul and Titus in their ministry. They are not advancing a human agenda. They are not promoting a religious system. They are instruments in the hands of God to bring His elect to faith, to knowledge, and to godliness. God's unbreakable promise unites Paul and Titus, and us, to ministry for the elect's faith and godliness.

So, we have seen the Master we serve. We have seen the hope we hold. Now, how does this hope reach us? How does the eternal promise become our present reality?

3) The Word We Trust (Titus 1:3)

God has revealed his word. We do not grope in the dark for a God playing hide-and-seek. Our God is a revealing God. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the expanse proclaims the work of his hands. That is general revelation. God reveals Himself to all men, through all time, in every place. The psalmist sings, Day after day they pour out speech. Night after night they communicate knowledge. Creation preaches God's existence. That He is powerful. That He is majestic. And so we are without excuse.

But creation does not tell us about salvation. It does not speak of a Saviour. It does not announce forgiveness. For that, we need a different Word. We need special revelation. The Scriptures. The psalmist writes, The instruction of the Lord is perfect, renewing one's life. The testimony of the Lord is trustworthy. The precepts of the Lord are right. The command of the Lord is radiant. The fear of the Lord is pure. The ordinances of the Lord are reliable. The Bible is not an ancient book of myths. It is the very breath of God. And more. Because the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus Christ is the final, fullest revelation of God. The Living Word. The exact expression of his nature. God has revealed Himself. In creation. In Scripture. In His Son.

In his own time, He has revealed his word in Paul's preaching. The living God is a speaking God. And He speaks through His appointed messengers. Paul was

entrusted with this preaching by the command of God our Saviour. Entrusted. A sacred deposit. Paul did not choose this message. He was commanded to deliver it. That is what preaching is. I don't get up here and share my thoughts. This is not a TED Talk. This is not therapy. This is the appointed means by which God advances His kingdom. Paul commands Timothy, Preach the word. Be ready in season and out of season. Correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and teaching. That is the power. Not a show. Not a concert. Not a performance. Preaching. The faithful exposition of God's Word to God's people through God's man.

Think of a lawyer reading a will of a departed relative. The document sits in his hands. It is not his opinion. He did not decide who would receive what. The deceased sealed his intentions. The lawyer's role is to open the document and read it as written. He must not add to it. He must not subtract from it. That is the preacher's work. Paul is not a philosopher offering suggestions. He is not a counsellor dispensing advice. He is a herald. A town crier. A man who did not choose his message but has been commanded to deliver it. God has spoken. He has fixed His will from before time began. The preacher's job is to read the document aloud. That Word is a promise. Which cannot be broken.

This is amazing. God's eternal decree is worked out as Paul obediently proclaims His revealed word. The divine promise of eternal life is revealed in the proclamation of God's Word. God commands Paul. Paul will command Titus. Titus will appoint elders. This is the chain of command. God's unbreakable promise unites Paul and Titus and us in ministry for the elect's faith and godliness. God's plan from eternity moves through God's Word proclaimed. Paul has marching orders. Titus does too. And so do we.

Now, this brings us to something deeply personal. This Word of God, this preaching of the apostles, this message of eternal life. How should it shape us? That is the question. How do we receive it? Not as an abstract truth to be analysed. But as a life-giving gift to be received. We move from the Word We Trust to the Grace We Receive.

4) **The Grace We Receive** (Titus 1:4)

Paul calls Titus *my* true son. Not biological. Spiritual. A child born of faith. The common faith. The faith delivered to the saints once for all. The faith Paul preaches. The faith he pours out in every letter, every sermon, every journey. Titus shares it. And that makes them family. The same blood runs through their spiritual veins. The blood of Christ.

Then Paul prays. Grace and peace. Two words. Simple. Weighty. Not a casual, Hope you're well. This is a petition. A blessing. A declaration of what gospel ministers need most. Titus faces heretics. Straying sheep. A young church in a hostile world. Paul faces imprisonment. Opposition. The daily pressure of concern for all the churches. And so he prays for what only God can give. Grace. Unmerited favour. The kind of grace that sustains a man when his strength fails. And peace. Shalom. Not the absence of conflict. The presence of God. Wholeness. Well-being. The kind of peace that passes understanding.

Not from a committee. Not from a church council. Not even from the apostle. Grace and peace from God *the* Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour. The Father who chose us. The Son who saved us. This is where it all comes from. The source is above all. The source is before all. The source is God.

Think of a father who adopts a son. He goes to the courthouse. He signs the papers. He pays the fees. He brings the boy home. That boy, now a son, has a new name. A new identity. A new inheritance. He did nothing to earn it. He simply received it. And every day, when he looks at his father, he knows he is not a hired hand. He is a son of the house. The father gives him everything he needs. Provision. Protection. Love. Paul says to Titus, you are my true son. But even more, God is your Father. And so every spiritual blessing, grace, peace, mercy, and love, and 10,000 blessings beside, are yours in Him.

Titus is a true son and recipient of grace and peace from God our Father. This is the foundation. The starting point. A greeting of gospel reality. Paul and Titus are not independent operators. They are united. United by the common faith. United by grace. United by peace. United by the Father and the Son. God's unbreakable promise secures their salvation. And that same promise fuels their godliness.

Now, we need to go deeper. We need to see how this greeting is rooted in something far more solid than human affection. We need to see what Paul means by the Father and the Saviour. We need to see the gospel connection.

Connect to the gospel

So we have seen the Master we serve. The Hope we hold. The Word we trust. The Grace we receive. God's unbreakable promise unites Paul and Titus in ministry for the elect's faith and godliness.

But how does that promise become ours? How does an eternal decree reach finite sinners? The answer is the gospel. God promised eternal life before time began. Not a vague wish. An eternal covenant.

And so Christ came. Not as an afterthought. Not as plan B. He came in the fullness of time. He lived the life we could not live. Perfect obedience. Complete righteousness. Then He died the death we deserved. The wrath of God poured out on His Son. The curse borne for us. The penalty paid in full.

Three days later, He rose. The tomb could not hold Him. Death could not defeat Him. The resurrection was God's receipt. The payment was accepted. The promise was secured.

This is the gospel. Not moral improvement. Not religious effort. Christ crucified. Christ risen.

Paul's authority rests on this. He is an apostle of Jesus Christ, sent to proclaim what God had accomplished. His message is not human opinion. It is the divinely appointed instrument through which God's eternal purpose is accomplished.

Faith in Christ is the means. Not faith in our faithfulness. Faith in His finished work. This truth changes everything.

This gospel, Christ's life, death, and resurrection, is the content of the Word we trust. It is the substance of the hope we hold. It is the foundation of the grace we receive. And it defines the Master we serve. The same Christ who secured our salvation now fuels our godliness, because the Spirit applies His finished work to every pressure we face.

That is the argument. And now we ask, how should this truth shape us?

Application for believers

So here is the question. Does this truth sit in your head? Or does it reach your heart? Your home? Your hands? God's unbreakable promise secures your salvation. That is settled. That is finished. But does it fuel your godliness?

You know the pressures. Parenting meltdowns. Marriage tensions. Workplace stresses. They come at you fast. They expose what you really believe. Not what you say you believe. What you actually trust.

So study. Not casually. Deeply. Exactly. Personally. Take the text of Scripture and press it into the chaos of your life. Bring your impatience into the light of Scripture. Bring your anxiety. Bring your bitterness. Let the truth rewire how you think. How you feel. How you react.

Then the godliness comes. Not performance. Not duty. Authentic. Spirit-wrought. Overflowing as patience. Kindness. Grace.

Want to know how to start studying God's Word? Here's a very practical step. After the service today, come up to the front. Diego will be here to help you join the Read the Bible in a Year program. It's a great way to begin to step into Scripture and learn how God's Word touches every part of life. Let the Word do its work within you.

Application for unbelievers

Stop it. The exhausting effort. The endless trying. The quiet hope that maybe, if you try harder, God will finally approve of you. It is not working. It never will. Getting your parenting right. Finances right. Marriage right. Religious duty right. Moral effort is never enough.

God promised eternal life before the world began. Before you took your first breath. Before you committed your first sin. He held out a gift. A gift, not a wage. Not a reward. A gift.

You cannot earn it. You can only receive it.

Renounce your self-sufficiency. Throw yourself entirely upon Jesus Christ. Your only Saviour. His grace. His peace. Freely given. Truly changing.

Come to the front after the service. A member of our evangelism team will be here. They will share more about Jesus with you.

Conclusion

Titus. Left on Crete. Facing heretics. Pastoring a young church in a hostile world. The task is hard. The opposition is fierce. And he stands alone.

But Paul has given him something to stand on. A Master. Not a distant authority. A Master who owns him. Who chose him. Who sends him. Paul is a slave of God. And so is Titus. So are we. A Hope. Not a wish. Not a maybe. Eternal life. Promised before time began. By a God who cannot lie. That hope anchors us. When everything shakes, hope holds. A Word. Not human opinion. The very breath of God. Entrusted to Paul. Entrusted to Titus. Entrusted to us. And Grace. Not performance. Not effort. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour.

God's unbreakable promise secures your salvation. Settled. Finished. Done. But does it fuel your godliness? That is the question this morning.

Believer, study. Deeply. Personally. Press God's Word into the chaos of your life. Let God's truth rewire how you think, how you feel, how you react. Godliness is not performance. Not duty. It is Spirit-wrought obedience.

Unbeliever, stop. Stop the exhausting effort. The endless trying. The quiet hope that maybe, if you try harder, God will approve. It will never work. God promised eternal life before the world began. A gift. Not a wage. You cannot earn it. You can only receive it. So renounce your self-sufficiency. Throw yourself entirely upon Jesus Christ. His grace. His peace. Freely given.

The Master calls. The Hope holds. The Word speaks. The Grace saves. God's promise stands. Go and stand on it.

Amen.

Close in prayer

Benediction

Jude 20-21, But you, dear friends, as you build yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting expectantly for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life.

Homiletic indicators

- The operative word in the sentence is underlined.
- R – Instruction
 - **Body:** Natural, one hand gestures.
 - **Voice:** measured, firm.
- ^ – Uncion
 - **Body:** Forward, expressive.
 - **Voice:** Raised, faster.
- Ø – Fear
 - **Body:** Narrow eyes, still shoulders, lift your chin slightly (exposed posture).
 - **Voice:** Breathy, higher pitch, quick shallow breaths. Speak into the back of the throat.
- O' – Anger
 - **Body:** Jaw forward, stable feet (no shifting weight), sharp hand strikes (karate chop motion).
 - **Voice:** Hard attack on consonants. Drop pitch slightly, but increase volume on key syllables. Staccato.
- P – Happiness
 - **Body:** Relax shoulders, soften the brow. Open palms, wider stance.
 - **Voice:** Rise in melody at the end of phrases. Bright, forward resonance (smile while speaking).
- Å – Sadness
 - **Body:** Heavy eyelids, slight forward slump, hands still or clasped low.
 - **Voice:** Lower volume, monotone descent (each phrase ends lower than it started). Use mostly single-syllable words.
- □ – Disgust
 - **Body:** Wrinkle nose, pull back your head, sharp turning away from the pulpit.
 - **Voice:** Nasal, sharp, with a "negation cadence" (rising then falling sharply on the sin's name). Hard glottal stops.
- ɹ – Surprise
 - **Body:** Eyebrows up, slight backward step or open-mouth inhale.
 - **Voice:** Bright, high onset. Use a sudden upward interval (a leap in pitch on the unexpected word).
- ● – Pause
 - **What it does:** Allows the last sentence to land, convict, or heal.
 - **Length:** 1 second (colon), 2 seconds (period), 3+ seconds (after a weighty statement or call to worship).
 - **Body:** Stop moving. Hold eye contact. Do not smile or nod. Let the silence be uncomfortable.
 - **Delivery note:** A pause feels longer to you than to them. Trust it. Hold one more beat than you think is comfortable.

Paul's greeting (Titus 1:1-4)

i) Identity: Paul self-identifies as a slave and apostle, grounding his authority in the divine (Titus 1:1a).

¹ Paul,

1.) a servant/slave of God [δοῦλος Θεοῦ, a slave of God]

2.) [S] and an apostle of Jesus Christ [ἀπόστολος δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ],

ii) Purpose: Paul's message aims to advance the faith and knowledge of the elect, which is rooted in God's eternal plan (Titus 1:1b-2).

[for 1.] the faith [πίστιν] of God's elect [ἐκλεκτῶν Θεοῦ, chosen, select, favourite]

2.) [S] and their knowledge [ἐπίγνωσιν] of the truth [ἀληθείας] [that leads to godliness [εὐσέβειαν]],

[² in the hope of eternal life [ζωῆς αἰωνίου]] that God, who cannot lie, promised [AMI] [before time began [χρόνων αἰωνίων]].

iii) Outworking: God's eternal decree is worked out as Paul obediently proclaims His revealed word (Titus 1:3).

³ In his own time he has revealed [AAI] his word [τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ]

[in the preaching [κηρύγματι, proclamation] with which I was entrusted [API]] [by the command of God our Saviour]:

Main clause: Paul greets Titus (Titus 1:4).

⁴ To Titus [Τίτῳ],

my true son [γνησίῳ τέκνῳ] [in our common faith [κοινήν πίστιν]].

1.) Grace [χάρις]

2.) [S] and peace [εἰρήνη]

[from 1.] God the Father [Πατὴρ]

2.) [S] and Christ Jesus our Saviour [Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν].

This is how I indicate the function of conjunctions:

- I put a letter in square brackets before a clause to indicate a logical relationship.
 - [S] - SERIES, Each proposition makes an independent contribution to the whole (and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [P] - PROGRESSION, Each proposition is a further step toward a climax (then, and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [A] - ALTERNATIVE, Each proposition expresses an opposite possibility arising from a situation (or, but while...).
 - [W] [Ed] - WAY-END (ACTION-MANNER), Statement of an action and one which tells more explicitly what is involved in carrying out this action (in that, by).
 - [/] [/] - COMPARISON, Statement that clarifies an action or idea by showing what it is like (even as, as...so).
 - [-] [+] - NEGATIVE-POSITIVE, The relationship between two alternatives in which one is denied so the other is enforced, implicit in contrasting statements (not...but).
 - [Gn] [Sp] - GENERAL-SPECIFIC, Statement of a whole and one or more statements which set forth parts of the whole.
 - [Ft] [In] - FACT-INTERPRETATION, Statement and clarifying statement; does not set forth a distinguishable part of the preceding whole.
 - [G] - GROUND, Statement followed by the argument or reason on which it stands; supporting proposition follows the supported proposition (for, since, because).
 - [I'] - INFERENCE, Supporting statement followed by the conclusion drawn from it; supporting proposition precedes the supported proposition (therefore, wherefore, consequently).
 - [C] [E] - CAUSE-EFFECT (ACTION-RESULT), One action and another action which results from the first as an automatic consequence (that, so that, with the result that).
 - [C?] [E] - CONDITIONAL, Like cause-effect except existence of the cause is only potential (if...then, if, except...).
 - [M] [Ed] - MEANS-END (ACTION-PURPOSE), One action and another that is intended as the goal or purpose of the first (in order that, that, lest, to the end that).
 - [T] - TEMPORAL, Proposition and the occasion when it occurs (when, after, before).
 - [L] - LOCATIVE, Proposition and the place where it can be true (where, wherever).
 - [Adv] - ADVERSATIVE, Main clause that stands despite a contrary statement (although, yet, but, nevertheless).
 - [Q] [A] - QUESTION-ANSWER, Statement of question and answer to that question (question mark ?).
 - [S] [R] - SITUATION-RESPONSE, The relationship between a situation in one clause and a response in another.
 - [B] [L] - BILATERAL, A proposition which supports propositions in both directions, rarely used.

This is how I use colour highlighting:

- **Orange**: structure indicator, conjunctions, and prepositions.
- **Yellow**: verbs, Greek, and Scripture reference.
- **Green**: keywords.
- **Red**: repeated words.
- **Pink**: imperatives.
- **Blue**: main idea.

Sermon preparation worksheet

Passage: Titus 1:1-4 **Preaching Audience:** Benoni Baptist Church, average age thirty-five, married, young children, spiritually interested.

1. How has the author organised this passage? a) Sections, b) Strategies, c) Emphasis.

- a) Main clause: Paul greets Titus (Titus 1:4).
- Identity: True son in the common faith (which is what Paul preaches)
 - Prayer: Grace and peace (a result of the salvation God promised)
 - Source: God the Father and Jesus Christ our Saviour (who Paul is a slave and herald of)
- i) Identity: Paul self-identifies as a slave and apostle, grounding his authority in the divine (Titus 1:1a).
- Slave, bond-servant of God [the Father]
 - [Unique] messenger, herald, sent one of Jesus Christ
- ii) Purpose: Paul's message aims to advance the faith and knowledge of the elect, which is rooted in God's eternal plan (Titus 1:1b-2).
- for [first purpose:] the faith of God's elect, chosen, select
 - and [second purpose:] their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness [salvation looks like something]
 - in the hope of eternal life [salvation] that God, who cannot lie [characteristic], promised before time began [a eternal sovereign decree]
- iii) Outworking: God's eternal decree is worked out as Paul obediently proclaims His revealed word (Titus 1:3).
- God has revealed his word
 - in Paul's preaching
- b) I identified the text type as discourse. I used grammatical analysis to identify the main clause (grace and peace to Titus) and then trace the logical flow back through the participial phrases which describe Paul's identity and purpose and outworking.
- c) God's unbreakable promise grounds Paul's authoritative message to Titus.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage? a) Literary, b) Historical, c) Cultural, d) Biblical.

- a) In Titus 1:5-16, Paul instructs Titus appoint elders, describing their character and ministry defending the faith against rebellious false teachers. This matters because, in the greeting Paul lays the foundation Titus is to stand upon when confronting opposition. Paul's authority is rooted in God's eternal promise, meaning Titus' ministry is under heaven's mandate.
- b) Titus is on the island of Crete, overseeing newly established churches (Titus 1:5). Crete had a reputation for moral laxity (Titus 1:12). This matters because, Paul's emphases of the truthfulness of God (Titus 1:2), and the knowledge of the truth which leads to godliness (Titus 1:1b) is a counter cultural message coming with the force of divine authority (Titus 1:3).
- c) Paul describes himself as a slave of God (Titus 1:1a). In the ancient Mediterranean, slavery was common. However, for a Jewish audience and Gentiles familiar with the Old Testament, this title was not one of social debasement but honour. It was the title given to Moses (Joshua 1:1), David (Psalm 89:3), and the prophets (Amos 3:7). This matters because, Paul isn't undermining himself but establishing his apostolic authority.
- c) There are no direct citations in Titus 1:1-4 which inform the meaning of this passage.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

God's unbreakable promise unites Paul and Titus ministry for the elect's faith and godliness.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ? a) Connection, b) Function, c) Significance.

- a) The basis of salvation is God's eternal promise of eternal life (Titus 1:2). This promise is the hope that produces to godliness (Titus 1:1) which is secured by the saving work of Jesus Christ (Titus 1:4). Faith in Him is the means by which the elect receive this promise (Titus 1:1).
- b) This gospel connection functions to ground Paul's apostolic authority and the message he proclaims. The commands and truth Paul delivers are not mere human opinions but the divinely-appointed instruments through which God's eternal purpose is accomplished.
- c) This truth is a deep well of assurance and inspiration. Our salvation does not depend on our wavering faithfulness but God's unshakable promise. And because the knowledge of the truth produces godliness, shaping our marriages, parenting, and community life.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

God's unbreakable promise secures our salvation and fuels our godliness.

6. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Title, b) Outline.

- a) God's unbreakable promise to His elect
- b) 1) The Master We Serve (Titus 1:1a) – Finding our primary identity in submission to God.
2) The Hope We Hold (Titus 1:1b-2) – Grounding our growth in a God who cannot lie.
3) The Word We Trust (Titus 1:3) – Resting in the divinely entrusted message.
4) The Grace We Receive (Titus 1:4) – Living out of gospel peace rather than performance.

7. What applications will you make? a) Christians, b) non-Christians.

- a) Study to gain a deep, exact, personal grasp of gospel truth that rewires how you think, feel, and react in your daily pressures. Do this by intentionally bringing your parenting meltdowns, marriage tensions, and workplace stresses directly into the light of Scripture. Then, allow the truth you've learnt to produce authentic godliness that overflows as patience, kindness, and grace. In point 2.
- b) Stop exhausting yourself trying to earn divine approval through moral effort or religious duty, and instead embrace the free gift of eternal life that God has held out to you since before the world began. Do this by renouncing your self-sufficiency and throwing yourself entirely upon Jesus Christ as your only Saviour, receiving His grace and peace as a gift that truly changes you. After point 2.

On my sermon preparation sheet, these are the questions and an explanation:

1. How has the author organised this passage?

- a) An outline: The author's organization (or structure) is a way of talking about the shape or form of a biblical passage. Beneath the surface of each passage is an underlying arrangement of material and a logic that the author has used to organize the passage. And each part of the passage has a role to play in that structure.
- b) Tools: Identify the text type (Discourse traces argument flow, conjunctions, and grammatical subordination, narrative tracks scene changes, plot development, and character contrasts, and poetry notes stanzas, parallelism, shifts in speaker, or imagery changes), and any grammatical tools used to identify the structure.
- c) The emphasis: The structure will reveal an emphasis that the author is making.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?

- a) Literary context: How do the passage that comes before and the passage that comes after relate to your passage?
- b) Historical context: The historical situation or circumstances experienced by the first audience at the time when the book was written.
- c) Cultural context: The setting in the daily life of the people/characters in the book and how that will have been understood by the first audience. This is distinct from historical context in that it does not relate to a particular audience in a particular place at a particular time, but the details of life that the people/characters in the text had in common. Anything that requires extra-biblical knowledge should be treated skeptically.
- d) Biblical context: Is the author citing or alluding to some previously written Biblical passage? What connections could the author have reasonably expected his first audience to make.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

The author's main point is a way of talking about the aim of a passage as a whole. It can be descriptive or prescriptive. It is not simply a summary statement. But rather, it is the idea of which the author is trying to persuade his audience. As you work on articulating the author's argument, please keep in mind that it needs to be specific enough to the passage that it clearly comes from the particular passage (and not any other passage), it is for the first audience, it should be one single sentence that is both short and clear, and captures the argument of the passage.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

What part of the gospel (the death and resurrection of Christ) is in view? Every part of the Bible, every passage of Scripture, in some way relates to the gospel of Jesus Christ. What parts of the passage connect to the gospel? The connection must be legitimate and textually driven.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

6. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Sermon outline, b) Sermon title.

7. What applications will you make? a) To believers, b) To unbelievers.

The main point of a sermon is the fundamental statement of what you, as a speaker today, are trying to convince your audience today. It will certainly be intimately related to the author's main point for his original audience and it will consider the gospel connection. It should be well reasoned and, perhaps, articulated as the result of proof (so depending on premises and building arguments).

On my sermon preparation sheet, this is how questions relate to one another:

- 1 a) should be driven by the text.
- 1 c) should be driven from the outline in 1 a).
- 2) should be directly relevant to 1 c).
- 3) cannot be disconnected from 1 c), and should be clarified by 2).
- 4) must be found in the text.
- 5) cannot be disconnected from 3), and should be driven by 4).
- 6) should flow from 5).
- 7) should structurally relate to 1 a), and make the argument in 5), and show relationship to 6).