Journey Into the Good Life

LESSON 1 . . . Requirements for Living the Good Life (Titus 1:1-4)

We are beginning an exciting study of the book of Titus. This book gives us vital principles for living the good life at home, at church, at work, and in all our relationships. Titus was Paul’s friend and helper. He traveled with Paul on some of his missionary journeys. Though not mentioned at all in Acts, Titus is mentioned no less than thirteen times in Paul’s epistles. He is one of Paul’s most trusted and dependable associates. How does Paul describe Titus in Titus 1:4a?

This suggests Titus is one of Paul’s converts. He plays a key role throughout Paul’s ministry and proves himself a true friend by being at Paul’s side during critical times in his life. While in Macedonia, Paul writes he and his associates had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within (2 Cor. 7:5). Then, what does Paul write (7:6)?

The book of Titus is one of three “Pastoral Epistles” written by Paul. The others are 1 & 2 Timothy. They are called “Pastoral Epistles” because they deal with matters concerning pastors. However, they also describe the kind of Christians God wants us all to be so we can live the good life.

This letter was written about A.D. 65, just after 1 Timothy, near the end of Paul’s life. It was written to Titus, who was then ministering on the island of Crete [kreet]. Crete is an island southeast of Greece in the Mediterranean Sea (see map on bottom of page 10). It is about 160 miles long and three miles across at its widest point. Since it is very mountainous, most people lived in the many coastal towns. The Cretans had a reputation for excessive lifestyles. Paul quotes a Greek poet (Epimenides, ep-uh-men´tuh-deez, 600 B.C.), whom he calls a prophet of their own (1:12a). How does their own prophet describe Cretans in 1:12c?

We may think we live in a difficult world, but this letter reminds us the power of the Gospel can change anyone and enable them to live the good life in Christ. Now, let’s look at what is required for living the good life.
Commit to God’s purpose (1:1).

Paul first identifies himself as a servant of God (1:1a). The word translated servant (DOULOS, doo´-los) means “slave.” It is one who is totally at the disposal of someone else. Paul’s ultimate goal was to fulfill God’s purpose, or will, for his life. Paul’s calling himself “slave” seems to contradict what words of Jesus in John 8:36?

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Paul also calls himself an apostle of Jesus Christ (1:1b). The word apostle (APOSTOLOS, ap-os´-to-los) means delegate, or one sent forth with a message. Paul writes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit with apostolic authority because his message is sent through him by Jesus Christ.

Paul is a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ to God’s elect (1:1c). The word translated elect (EKLEKTOS, ek-lec´-tos) means “selected” or “chosen.” It refers to those God has sovereignly chosen from eternity past to be saved by grace through faith in Christ. The biblical teaching of election gives us security and hope. In Matthew 24:31, what does Jesus say He will send His angels to do at the rapture?

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Paul deals at length with election in Romans 8:28-39. Election, which results in predestination, is presented as grounds for the assurance and security of our salvation. Paul writes those whom God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son and those God predestined He justified and glorified (8:29-30). What does Paul write in the next verse (8:31)?

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Paul was a messenger to God’s elect to share the knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness (Titus 1:1d). Paul was committed to God’s purpose for his life—sharing the truth of the Gospel so believers can live lives of godliness. The word godliness means to become godly, which
means we live holy lives. Paul’s focus in life was not just to see people accept Christ but for them to grow into godliness, or spiritual maturity.

To live the good life, **commit to God’s purpose** and . . .

**Count on God’s promises (1:2).**

Another part of the good life is encouraging other believers. Paul writes: *in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began* (1:2). If God is not the God of truth and honesty, we have no hope. But the *hope of eternal life* is based on the promises of our God *who never lies*. Lying was apparently common in Cretan culture, but Paul makes it clear God *never lies*. God is the polar opposite of the Evil One. How does Jesus describe Satan in the last phrase of John 8:44?

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Trust the character of God is the foundation of our faith. Sometimes living the good life for God can be very discouraging and cause us to question our salvation. When that happens, we need to remember we can count on God’s promises because He *never lies*.

To live the good life, **commit to God’s purpose, count on God’s promises**, and . . .

**Conform to God’s plan (1:3-4).**

Paul continues: *and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior* (1:3). *At the proper time*, the time God chose, He revealed the Gospel and called Paul and others to proclaim it. How does Galatians 4:4a-b describe the coming of the Gospel?

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The fullness of time means at just the right time. God’s plan never moves too slow or too fast. The same is true of God revealing His will for us. God’s plan is always right on schedule.

Paul concludes his introduction: *To Titus, my true child in a common faith* (1:4a). The word common (KOINĒ, coin-ay’) means “shared by all.” The New Testament was written in KOINĒ Greek, the common, everyday language of Paul’s world. Other Greek literature was written in classical Greek, the language of philosophers and deep thinkers. However, God made the Gospel simple, and He wants us to keep it simple so anyone can
understand it. Every Christian should remember this acronym: K.I.S.S. It means “Keep It Simple Somehow.” In a confused and complex world, when it comes to our common faith, we need to K.I.S.S. Why, according to Jesus in Mark 10:15b?

Salvation is received by grace through simple, childlike faith. Complete, intellectual understanding is not required. So, we must “keep it simple somehow.”

Paul continues: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior (1:4b). We can only know God’s peace if we have experienced His saving grace. There are at least five kinds of grace in the New Testament: empowering grace (Acts 4:33), equipping, or gifting, grace (Rom. 12:6), sustaining grace (2 Cor. 12:9), saving grace (Eph. 2:8), and refining grace (Col. 4:6). Believers experience all five, and the result is peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. Paul describes this peace in Philippians 4:7. Personalize and write this verse below:

Peace is always the result of experiencing God’s grace in all its forms. A vital part of living the good life is finding peace by experiencing His grace.

To live the good life, commit to God’s purpose, count on God’s promises, and conform to God’s plan.