

Holding Fast the Faithful Word: Titus 1:1-9 Explained

Scriptures for Today

""Titus 1:1-9

Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; 2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; 3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour; 4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. 5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: 6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. 7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; 8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; 9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.""

Introduction to Titus — A Blueprint for Strong Churches

Before we enter Titus 1, we need to understand *where we are in Scripture*.

Titus is written after the end of the book of Acts, during Paul's continued ministry. Titus was one of Paul's most trusted co-laborers — not a pastor, not called a bishop, not called an elder — but a faithful helper whom Paul repeatedly sent to difficult places.

Crete was one of those places — a spiritually dark island with many cities, many new converts, and many problems. Paul left Titus there **“to set in order the things that are wanting”** (Titus 1:5):

- churches needed structure
- elders needed to be ordained
- false teachers needed to be silenced
- doctrine needed to be protected

Titus is a manual for: church order, godly leadership, sound doctrine, and holy living. And in the opening nine verses, Paul lays the doctrinal foundation Titus needs to build strong, truth-centered churches in a corrupt environment. This world is a corrupt environment.

Verse 1 — Paul's Identity and Mission

""Titus 1:1

Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;""

Paul begins with two powerful identities:

- 1. Servant of God:** A servant — commanded and directed by God.
- 2. Apostle of Jesus Christ:** Sent by Christ Himself, carrying divine authority.

Paul's mission is:

- 1.** "according to the faith of God's elect" — to strengthen believers
- 2.** "and the acknowledging of the truth" — to spread truth that produces godliness

Truth and godliness always go together. False doctrine always leads to ungodliness. Our job here at this church is to teach the truth which leads to godliness.

Verse 2 — A God Who Cannot Lie

""Titus 1:2

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;""

This is one of the strongest statements in the Bible about God's nature: **God cannot lie.**

Not "does not lie." Not "chooses not to lie." Cannot lie. Again, God cannot lie. Eternal life is not wishful thinking — it is guaranteed by the character of God. And God has perfect character.

God promised eternal life "before the world began" — before sin, before creation, before humanity. You simply must believe that promise from God to you. He promised you eternal life if you would simply trust in Jesus Christ.

Verse 3 — The Word Is Manifested Through Preaching

""Titus 1:3

But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;""

How does God reveal His truth? Not through mystical experiences. Not through visions. Not through private revelations as many believe.

God manifests His Word through preaching — clear, bold proclamation of Scripture.

Preaching is God's chosen method to: reveal His truth, strengthen His people, expose false doctrine, and spread the gospel.

Paul says preaching was “**committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour**” — a sacred charge he now passes to Titus.

Verse 4 — Titus, My Own Son in the Faith

""**Titus 1:4**

To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.""

Like Timothy, Titus was spiritually trained by Paul. He was: faithful, dependable, doctrinally strong, bold in conflict, able to confront false teachers.

He is not given the title “pastor” — but he is a God-called worker assisting Paul in setting churches in order.

Verse 5 — Why Titus Was Left in Crete

""**Titus 1:5**

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: ""

Two purposes:

1. Set in order what was lacking. Crete had: new believers, unorganized churches, doctrinal confusion, leadership voids. Titus must bring order, structure, and stability.

2. Ordain elders in every city. Plural — **every city** needed elders (pastors), not just one. The qualifications for elders follow immediately, showing how serious God is about biblical leadership.

We see a colon at the end of the verse there. Next we're going to see the qualifications for an elder or a bishop or a pastor in a church.

Verse 6 — Qualifications for an Elder (Part 1)

""**Titus 1:6**

If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.""

These qualifications are not negotiable. A pastor must be: **blameless** — above accusation, **husband of one wife** — faithful and moral, **having faithful children** — his home is spiritually ordered.

Many people will argue over these things. For example, I personally believe a man must have at least one child to be a pastor. Does he have children? If a man has one child and you ask, "Does he have children?" – the answer would be yes. And the children must be faithful.

Leadership begins at home. A pastor is not perfect, but he must lead his home well in order to lead a church.

And please look closely as we don't get to change the word of God. You can see the words yourself. "The husband of one wife." An elder in any church **MUST** be a man: the husband. Last time I checked a husband must be a man.

Verses 7–8 — Qualifications for an Elder (Part 2)

""**Titus 1:7-8** For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; 8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;""

A bishop (elder, pastor) is a **steward** — entrusted with God's truth and God's people. He must **not** be: selfwilled, soon angry, given to wine, a striker, greedy for money. He **must** be: hospitable, lover of good, sober-minded, just, holy, temperate.

This is **character-based leadership**, not talent-based leadership.

Verse 9 — Holding Fast the Faithful Word

""**Titus 1:9**

Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.""

This is the heart of the passage. A pastor must:

- 1. HOLD FAST.** Grip the Word tightly. Do not compromise. Do not loosen your hold. Do not be swayed by culture, pressure, or popularity.
- 2. THE FAITHFUL WORD.** God's Word is faithful. Men are not. Tradition is not. Opinions are not.
- 3. AS HE HATH BEEN TAUGHT.** Not inventing new doctrines. Not chasing fables. Not adding human wisdom. A pastor must remain loyal to **what Scripture actually says**.

4. PURPOSE: Exhort and Convince. He must: build up believers (“exhort”) and refute false teachers (“convince the gainsayers”). A man who cannot refute error is not qualified to lead God’s people.

Application — What Titus 1 Teaches Us Today

1. **Truth is the foundation of godliness.** No church rises above its doctrine.
2. **Leadership must be biblical, not worldly.** Character matters more than charisma.
3. **The Word of God must be held tightly.** Compromise kills churches.
4. **Preaching is God’s method for revealing His Word.** This world needs preachers, not performers.
5. **Pastors must confront false teachers boldly.** Silence is not an option.
6. **God cannot lie — His promises are certain.** Eternal life is secure.

Closing — Hold Fast the Faithful Word

Titus was left in one of the hardest mission fields in the New Testament. But Paul knew one thing:

If the leaders hold fast the Word, the church will stand. If the leaders loosen their grip, the church will fall.

If a church doesn't follow these exact instructions, for example, women pastors, the church will fall. It will not last. It will do no good in the eyes of God. So, you can choose what church you will be a part of – one that is following the words of the Bible or one that is not.

May we — like Titus — be unshakable: in doctrine, in purity, in character, in courage, in holding fast the faithful Word. We aren't here to please men and women. We are here to please God.

Let’s pray.