

The Attitude of a Slave & The Gospel

Titus 2:9-15

10/29/25

A quick recap and context overview:

Audience: Paul is speaking to Titus after he was left behind to continue missions work on the island of Crete. (1:5)

Context: We left off going person by person through the church. Paul gave specific instructions to every member and explained what sound doctrine looks like when it is applied to the lives of God's people.

Today's lesson covers slaves and their attitudes towards their masters. This is deeply important as we are all slaves to our Great Master. Paul also reiterates the gospel and its purposes and reminds us that God's grace through the gospel is our motivator for living godly lives.

Read Titus 2:9-15

(vs. 9-10) The opening word today is the word "Bondservent" or "Slave".

It is important that we define this term and who this person is through the lens of Scripture and not through our modern mind or context.

First, it comes from the familiar greek word *doulos*, which we hear a lot applied to Christians throughout the New Testament.

We may see the word "bondservent" or "slave" and think very negatively or be tempted to assume that this person is severely oppressed or treated poorly due to their ethnic background or social status.

Some biblical truths to remember:

- God is not for racial prejudice

Galatians 3:28

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

- God condemns taking people captive as also seen in the Old Testament when Egypt oppressed the Israelites.

1 Timothy 1:10

[The law was written for the lawless, for example:] “the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine.”

- God hates any act that is unloving and unkind towards another person made in His image.

Galatians 6:10

“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

Micah 6:8

“He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Colossians 3:12-13

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”

So now let’s understand what the 1st century Roman and what the surrounding areas would have understood about slaves.

This economic system did not only enslave people based on their race, many would have even been Roman or Greek. Also, slavery was not only used for hard manual labor. Many slaves were very well educated and used for many import roles around households. They could be teachers, mangers and even lawyers. It is very important to also understand that “doulos” was not demeaning. These people were members of the

household. In many cases, slavery was not permanent but something someone could earn or purchase freedom from. Most importantly, we can clearly see how Paul viewed them by how he addresses them in texts like this one and others. He even addresses masters in a way that honors the slave.

Colossians 3:22, 4:1

“Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but with integrity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, ... Masters, show to your slaves what is right and fair, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.”

Ephesians 6:5-6,9

“Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the integrity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart... And masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.”

A big take away we can glean from Paul addressing bondservants here is that no matter your position in life, whether it be very well off or lowly and humble, we are to honor the Lord with how we conduct our lives and how we treat others. Not searching for our own glory or our own worldly increase but being faithful with where God has placed us.

Self Reflection:

Do we, as faithful students of the Bible, take time and effort to fully understand the context of what we study?

Why is it important correctly interpret scripture?

Are we, as no longer slaves to sin but to God, submissive in everything, well-pleasing, not argumentative toward Him? How does seeing ourselves as slaves to Him help us in these areas?

(vs. 11-14) In this section, we see directly into Paul's heart and what is constantly on his mind, motivating every word he writes to Titus and the church.

First, he excitedly and humbly reminds us what appeared that brought salvation for all who would believe - "the grace of God". This is not just any grace, but Jesus Christ Himself. God graciously sent Jesus and through His salvation is obtained. This wording is continued in verse 13 when he moves to the future glory of God and Jesus that will appear and is what we wait for.

This paragraph can be broken down into steps:

Jesus, God's grace, comes and brings salvation



The Holy Spirit now dwells in us, training our hearts to abandon sin and live godly lives



As we live according to godliness because of the hope Christ gave, we await His glorious return

Lastly, in verse 14, Paul reminds the reader exactly how Jesus is God's grace to us... He "gave himself for us", redeeming us for Himself and purifying us to do the good work he has for us.

Since the beginning of this chapter, Paul has given us clear instructions on how to "renounce ungodliness" and what it looks like to "live self controlled, upright, godly lives". And now he has reminded us why we strive for that and constantly need encouragement to run the race well and stick with the good fight. The Gospel is everything to a believer. It

holds the truth that has set us free from a bondage or a destructive slavery to a freedom bought for us by a good and loving Master.

1 Peter 4: 1-2

“Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.”

1 Corinthians 1: 4,7

“I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus,... so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ”

Matthew 20: 28

“even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

1 Peter 1:18-19

“knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.”

How often do you remind yourself of the gospel? How is its sweet truth a motivator as we strive towards purity?

(vs. 15) Paul closes this chapter with a coach’s empowering and official send off. He tells Titus to “declare”, “exhort”, and “rebuke”. What he is saying is to be taken seriously and applied rigorously. Without fear and in full confidence, Titus is urged to speak what Paul is teaching formally, officially and explicitly. These things are determined and are true, leaving no space for opinion. He is also to urge the church to examine itself. They

have received warnings and appeals to live lives in accordance to God's word and are urged to make any necessary changes. Where this exhorting may not be due to present sin, Titus is also told to rebuke when sin is prohibiting obedience. Ungodliness is to be criticized and strongly disapproved of **in love.**

But how does Paul tell Titus to do these things?? — with all authority. This authority is the scripture. It is God direct revelation and is without error. John MacArthur says this “authority to command people in the spiritual realm [concerning Godly lives] comes only from God's word”.

Lastly, Titus is to let no one disregard him. This is to be applied as we see in the next chapter. Believers are held to a biblical standard and when someone of the fold is living in sin and called to repentance over and over again with no correction they are to be no longer considered a brother or sister in the faith and are said to be in, chapter 3 verse 11, warped and sinful, self condemned. So the principle being Christians will not disregard God's instruction and if someone does they are not of God's church.

Are we taking God's instructions seriously? When we read things such as chapter 2 verse 5, “be self controlled, pure, working at home and kind”, do we take that seriously and work fervently to apply those principles to our life? Are we in constant prayer and communion with God, asking Him to grant us grace and growth in an area of weakness?

Take some time to reread all of chapter 2. Pray for humility as you approach God's word and be encouraged as you see the provision and care He has provided for us through salvation and godly living.