

7/26/20 - Titus 1:1-4 - "Doctrine & Devotion"

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Preacher: Brenton Beck

[0 : 00] Father, in heaven, we are grateful to be gathered here with your words. It's something that we often take for granted, especially without the coronavirus.

And Father, how much more we are grateful for an opportunity and the privilege to meet together, even if we are wearing masks, even if there is a little bit of uncertainty of threats that surround us.

But Father, we know that you are sovereign over all illness, that you are sovereign over all the political realm of the United States and both sides of the United States in the political realm.

Father, you are sovereign over all. And so we are joyful when we gather today because we are joyfully gathering under your domain, under Jesus Christ's rule and reign.

And so, Father, at this time, I pray that you help us to understand your word, to bring to life the words that we read and apply it into our lives and help us to experience your word coming to life in our own lives right now, here and now.

[1 : 20] And not just something that we leave here in this church building, but something we take with us today. Help to challenge us today by your words, Lord. We pray this in Jesus' precious and his holy, mighty name.

Amen. Amen. So we're going to be in Titus. I really appreciate it. I don't know if Lex is here, our pastoral intern.

I don't see him, but he's probably on the live stream. Thank you for preaching. He did a book overview sermon last week and just bringing to light the encapsulating the themes within the book of Titus.

And it's a challenging thing to do, to say, you have this allotted time and this allotted amount of Scripture to bring to light of why the Lord chose to put this into our laps right here and now.

And so he was challenged by that. I believe that he did well, and I appreciate my brother Lex Prindle for his service here at the church. And so we're going to be looking at verse 1, chapter 1 in Titus.

[2 : 32] So if you're there with us on the Bible app, please join us as it will be on the screen as well. Verse 1 says, Paul, Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began, 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, to Titus, my true child in a common faith, grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Can you imagine that that is one sentence? And I think I'm bad with my writing. Paul creates in this book, Titus is actually set up in a simple letter form.

You have the introduction, the body, and then the conclusion. What I just read is the introduction. That's what we're going to be covering today. And I'm going to do this by taking it sort of section by section.

And I believe that there is great wonder and great things to heed within God's word, within just these four verses, this long run-on sentence that Paul gives to this man.

So the first thing I want to see today, and I'm just going to call them points, we meet Paul. Look with me. How we do it here in Youngstown Metro is just keep your Bible open, keep your finger where we're at, and we might cross-reference a couple things which will be on the screen, but we're going to be in his word and stick in his word.

[4 : 25] So Paul, it says, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. Meet Paul. In humility, Paul identifies himself as literally, some translations call him a slave of God when it says servant of God.

One of two words that he uses to describe himself here is similar to someone who is legally owned by someone else and whose entire livelihood and purpose was determined by their master.

Meet Paul. This draws about the attitude of Paul being anchored into service of God, into the service of God. So if it goes true that if what the mouth speaks is what's within the heart, we can understand that Paul's heart even was encapsulated.

It was chained to service to God, no matter the cost. And Paul knew this well. He knew that his life was not his own.

It's consistent within all of his letters. And I can prove it to you in 1 Corinthians 6, 19, where it says it should be on the screen. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?

[5 : 57] You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. Simply saying, Paul knew he wasn't his own.

It is consistent within his letters, and it's consistent even in his introduction to this man. And we also see that Paul identifies himself as an apostle.

Now, biblically speaking, an apostle is an eyewitness of the life, the death, the resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. That's the definition of apostle and the title of apostle.

And, however, Paul was actually not an eyewitness. He was uniquely called as an apostle. And he actually admitted that in his letter. In 1 Corinthians, back to 1 Corinthians, he says in chapter 15, 8 through 9, he says, So not only does Paul have a humble title of a servant, he's literally chained and shackled to service to God.

We have this man who is also humble in his authoritative, apostolic calling sent by God. And a humble apostle he was.

[7 : 30] Church, what self-title would you give yourself? Think about that for a minute. What self-title would you give yourself? What self-title maybe would others give you?

Maybe that's the question we should ask. Now, husbands and wives, I'm not trying to create marital strife or anything like that. I'm just bringing about some curiosity and thought.

There's an unappreciated saying and a quote that says, If you're the smartest person in the room, you are in the wrong room. Has anybody heard that?

If you're the smartest person in the room, you're in the wrong room. And that quote actually gets funnier and funnier the more you think about it because it starts realizing and it starts pulling out all these layers like, yeah, it actually doesn't represent any type of intellect at all.

This quote is often, I don't think it's appreciated enough because imagine walking into the room knowing that you are the best of the best. You know, you have a reason to boast, you know, push your chest out a little bit, knowing that you're the stuff.

[8 : 51] Yeah. Would that fulfill you, church? Would that make you happy if everyone knew that you were the best of the best?

Would that superiority over other individuals make you complete, being better than everyone else? Maybe massage your ego a little bit and man, you know, I do have a reason to live and I can show you all my trophy shelves at my house.

Truth is, if you think you're the smartest person in the room, you are not only dumb, but you are blind and dumb. Don't think of yourself higher than you ought.

Okay? Paul had every reason to boast. Didn't he? But he titled himself as a servant of God, an apostle of Jesus Christ, and looking back into sort of some literary theology, looking back at the verses before, he actually acknowledges that he's the least of the apostles.

He's got no reason to boast. You can look at Galatians, that he went up, he was out of sight when he was converted. He went for three years or a certain length amount of years before he even made an appearance to Peter to tell him about his conversion.

[10 : 12] He was a humble man. And the gospel and epistles, the epistles, mind you, definitely reveal that to us. As Christians, we have an identity that is not in anything of ourselves.

We have an identity that's not in anything of ourselves. The Lord only, the only thing that we can ever do is to bring our gifts and our talents that we think that we attribute to life and give them back to God.

Because that's where they originated in the first place. And saying, Lord, use these things in service to you. There's no, obviously, no biblical grounds to support the idea of modern day apostleship today.

We know one thing for certain, though. We ought to take our calling serious with an attitude of being a slave to God who are also sent with a mission, just as Paul had, but with an attitude of, not I, but Christ.

Amen? And so we continue in this verse into the second point, which is called to doctrine and devotion.

[11 : 30] Paul continues in this letter, and he says, Paul was a slave of God.

He was an apostle, but he was called with a purpose in this passage, and he reveals that. You want to know what they call that? They call that human responsibility.

And there's actually something interesting in this text. I don't know if it could be up on the screen, just so you can see, or look in your Bible app or in your Bible. It's very interesting here about that.

When you think of fatalism, where fatalism is sort of that idea that God doesn't need me. He's going to work everything out. I can sit and just do a Netflix binge and just not do anything.

He's sovereign over everything. I don't have to do a lick of work. Well, Paul is actually saying the complete opposite.

[12 : 38] Look in this verse. It says, for the sake of the faith of God's elect. And so I want you to see something here that fights against fatalism.

That Paul, so here's the people of faith. Here's Paul coming in with the mission, being a slave and apostle to God, being called with human responsibility for the sake of the faith of God's elect.

But you also have God's elect who are something in the future. So we have here not a dichotomy of human responsibility and God's sovereignty, but what we have here is a proper understanding.

There's no contradiction in this. It's actually a theological disposition where you understand that we also have a role in God's sovereignty to participate in the sovereignty of God.

And we know that this wasn't a thing for Paul because Paul doesn't even try to expound on that in this verse. He just says it as if it's common knowledge. And it's something that we debate on as a church today, like we talk about football teams playing against each other.

[13 : 47] Just a waste of time. It's not a contradiction. And Paul was not a fatalist, the least bit. I love how Spurgeon says in one of his quotes in the Jacob and Esau sermon that he has, he said, he talks about this, how human responsibility and God's sovereignty are actually like friends with one another.

And that we don't need to reconcile the two friends because it's within God's complexity. He says, he saves man by grace. And if men perish, they perish justly by their own faults.

How, someone says, do you reconcile these two doctrines? He says, my dear brethren, I never reconcile two friends. Never.

These two doctrines are friends with one another for they are both in God's word and I shall not attempt to reconcile them.

Within God's word, you have human responsibility. Within God's word, you have God's sovereignty and they are friends and they work together. So this should challenge us here and now because how many times do you fail to realize, church, church, that your neighbor may experience hell and it could be contingent upon you bringing Jesus Christ to them?

[15 : 17] How many times do you fail to realize that your neighbor may never know who Christ is until you bring it to them? You can say and sit on your butt at home, yeah, God's sovereign.

He's got it all. He'll probably bring someone else. Maybe the Jehovah's Witness might bring something that makes sense. Man, how foolish we could be in our calling and our mission within God's sovereignty.

What I'm trying to say is don't mistake your freedom in Christ as freedom from human responsibility. Rather, we must conform our lives in service to God and it should look a lot like Paul's.

The calling of every Christian must be the faith of others and their knowledge teaching them. This series, interestingly enough, is titled Doctrine and Devotion, the subtitle of this series.

And I did this because the theology of doctrine and devotion actually echoes throughout the whole book of Titus. You'll see these themes popping out in various different packagings throughout the book of Titus.

[16 : 26] Titus. But I want us to see that and I titled it for this reason because Paul is enslaved to fulfill on this earth a purpose of stirring up the doctrine of others.

He saw this very, very importance in their life. So faith and knowledge have such a unique relationship.

I want to focus on doctrine. doctrine. The quality of our knowledge will dictate the quality of our faith. What you know will dictate the quality of your faith, of what you believe.

So in other words, the quality of what you know is going to drive that which you believe. What you believe is driven by what you know. Likewise, when the Lord allows the most challenging situations in our lives to occur, we rest upon nothing about what we know and this drives our faith.

It makes me think of like tornado drills for instance. Back in grade school we'd all huddle down into a hallway that somebody assumed would be the best, safest place for a tornado.

[17 : 32] In the case of a tornado and in our house you know when those sirens go off, I think the tornado warning sirens are fake in Ohio. That's just a personal opinion. But when those things go off, what do we do?

We go to our basement or stand outside and put our finger to the wind if you're like me. Oh honey, it's nothing. You know, just a little windstorm as the house is blowing away.

But what do we know? We know that we're supposed to respond in a certain way when this happens. So we believe based on what we know that the basement is the safest place to be.

So that drives what we know. So according to Paul, faith is not a feeling. Faith is not an emotion.

Faith is not an experience. Faith is knowledge. Knowledge drives our faith. Because you think about the most challenging situations that occur in our life, we rest upon absolutely nothing else except that which we know.

[18 : 45] And that gives us faith. This is true doctrine. Sadly, many Christians falter in their faith because they have sadly and unfortunately never been properly instructed to live out their faith.

Chasing after emotions and spiritual highs and energy and things like that. The truth is faith is knowledge.

So, if knowledge and faith equal doctrine, the series subtitle, Paul actually says that our doctrine, so that which we know, let me know if I'm losing you here, that which we know does something.

Look with me in this verse, in verse 2. That which we know accords with godliness. Godliness. Godliness. Godliness. Let me read it in its entirety.

For the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth which accords with godliness. Much of the problem Christians have with living a life devoted to God is actually not a devotion problem.

[19 : 59] It's not like you get a sniffle and you say you have the cold or maybe coronavirus. I don't know what the symptoms are anymore, but just assume you have coronavirus. virus. We just know that if we're having a devotion problem, it's actually not a devotion problem, it's a doctrine problem.

The lack of devotion in our lives is merely just a symptom to poor doctrine of what we know driving our faith. And you want to know the truth about it?

Ungodly living is usually accompanied by a dusty Bible. Most of the time. My son, who is joined with us, Micah, he loves the movie Space Jam, and that's often on our TV, maybe multiple times a day some days, depending on our stress level and everything.

But he loves Space Jam. He actually, one of his role models is Michael Jordan, and I actually shared Michael Jordan as a role model growing up as a young boy as well, and actually Tiger Woods, the 90s Tiger Woods, not today.

But R. Kelly actually has a song in Space Jam called I Believe I Can Fly. You guys know that song? I believe I can fly. Yeah?

[21 : 26] We play it on repeats, right, Micah? You play basketball and you fly. Usually. Jock Jams.

He loves Jock Jams. I like Jock Jams too. He loves the song that I believe I can fly. And, you know, if we're actually misinformed by that song, we might actually believe that we can fly.

So that might, something in that song might compel us to believe something. that we climb to the top of our roof, and man, going off the ledge, spreading our wings and flapping as we plummet down to the grass, singing, I believe I can fly.

What does it result to? Well, death, but also probably a bunch of broken bones and potentially a body cast, right?

And so when you see those broken bones, it actually points to misinformed faith, misinformed belief.

[22 : 37] Those broken bones and that humiliation of walking around in the body cast, saying that you thought you could fly, points back to a misinformed faith, that you thought you could believe you could fly.

And likewise, when we know that our godliness or devotion to God is broken, that something is wrong in our lives, that we are not living a life devoted to God, as this verse says, accords with godliness, we know that it points to a deeper problem within our lives, which is doctrine, that which we know which drives our faith, which drives our godliness.

ungodliness. Another commentator says, a profession of the truth which allows an individual to live in ungodliness is a spurious profession, a phony profession, basically meaning that are you a Christian, essentially?

Looking back to that R. Kelly catastrophe of broken bones in a body cast, what you believe, church, will affect your response and your response will also demonstrate what you believe.

You look at the guy in a body cast and you say, well, he believed he could fly. Or if you want to take it a step further, church, you or she thought a little bit of porn couldn't hurt their marriage.

[24 : 12] Or, you or she thought that maybe a little gossip would help maybe them vent a little bit and make them feel better about a situation with their husband and talk ill of them.

Maybe he or she believed a little anger may have been warranted. After all, the kids were acting a wreck. Maybe I was justified to hit my child or yell at them and tear them half to death.

no devotion, no doctrine. Reverse engineered. If you're lacking godliness in your life, it is not a devotion problem, it is a doctrine problem because the truth is ungodliness in this life is usually accompanied by a dusty Bible.

Furthermore, it's a corruption in doctrine which has catastrophic effects for us. Church, all jokes aside, if we don't move from doctrine, that which we know, to devotion, the lost world are pretty much doomed.

If we are servants, as Paul, if we are slaves to God, if we are sent with a mission that we are embarking on, if we don't move from knowing something within the word of God and it affecting how we live our lives, we are missing something and we might as well just count our witness phony world being doomed.

[25 : 56] If you're a child of God, you are called to live separate in this life. A pure life, a holy life, a godly life.

You can be baptized all you want. You can take the Lord's supper all you want. You can virtue signal your bumper stickers or hashtags all you want on social media.

You can share something that if you share it five times, you'll be blessed. Whatever nonsense that exists out there, you can do it all you want. The problem is if you, being a Christian seems to just turn into a Sunday morning routine, it's literally the epitome of immature Christianity.

Where there is no devotion, there is no doctrine. Where there is no doctrine, there is no Christian. And honestly, I take fault in this.

If there is no Christian gathered here, I am failing miserably at leading you. regardless of our failures as Christians, we know one thing for certain, this verse speaks to our maturity as followers of Jesus Christ.

[27 : 15] And I can definitely get better at this, but how can you get better at this as well? Living a life separate from the world in a godly manner that marks us out regardless of our social media statuses and any virtue signaling that we could do.

I love how this verse continues, and we're going to go into point three today. It continues in his run-on sentence. He mentions in hope, of course with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages, began.

What we see here is sureness of our faith. We see something deeply rooted in our faith that supersedes sometimes any logic and is rooted in the word of God.

Paul draws upon the importance of understanding that our calling and our status in Christ is something very secure. This is the doctrine of what you know which informs our faith regardless of what life brings.

You might not feel like a Christian, but guess what? You're still a Christian. Have faith that you are still a Christian in what you know. We know who we belong to, a Christ, Jesus Christ, a sure and steady anchor, our Savior.

[28 : 52] Or, quoting from Lion King, as Mufasa says to Simba, remember who you are. How often we need those reminders. I want to pull out the sureness of our faith in various sureness within this verse.

First, we see a sureness of hope in this verse. A sureness of hope in verse two. It says, in hope of eternal life. This means the trajectory of a Christian's attitude and attention is always gazing ahead of what lies ahead regardless of what is seen.

This is hope, church. Isn't hope a confident certainty and expectation of something that is not yet but will be yours? That drives us forward in our faith regardless of what we may be experiencing?

This verse says to have hope in eternal life. This hope brings present implications as well as future expectations. In the present, it reveals the infinite grace as a quality of life, meaning forever.

Our days here are numbered and we might acknowledge it, we might experience the fragility in life, but we know that we have a hope of eternal life, something resting ahead, awaiting for us, as Paul actually says in his epistles, an inheritance waiting for us, set aside for us if we are in Jesus Christ.

[30 : 22] And in the present, it reveals here and now a mark of quality, the similar mark of quality like going into Giant Eagle or Sparkle and seeing the meat packages and having that stamp of quality of the type of meat that it is.

We as Christians have a quality stamped by nothing of our own but a righteousness given to us by Jesus Christ alone, through faith alone. Colossians 1.27 talks about this hope, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

This hope is often recognized at various times throughout life. However, what may seem new to us, you might seem this thing of hope and doctrine and devotion and everything might seem new, but this was God's plan all along.

Think about that. Our hope of eternal life is something that our doctrine and devotion rest upon. It's the mindset which we seek and set our minds to things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

And we also see not only the sureness of our hope, but we see in this passage in verse 2 the sureness of God's character. He says in verse 2, God never lies.

- [31 : 40] He promised this before the ages began. The Westminster Shorter Catechism says that God is spirit whose being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.
- All these attributes of God are infinite, eternal, and unchanging. Who God is, is infinite, eternal, and unchanging.
- So what we see here is the sureness of God's character. Paul says to this man, he writes, God never lies. He promised this before the ages began.
- And you want to know the best news yet, church? You want to know the best news yet? God does not change his mind. That is very good news.
- The grace he lavishes upon you, if you are in Jesus Christ, is abundance. And we often are undeserving of any of it.
- [32 : 48] At all. Now in a sharp contrast to the unreliability of man, we sort of see that in Numbers 23, in a little discourse of Balaam and Balak, in Numbers 23, when Balaam is called to sort of reinforce the promises of God that are unchanging for the nation of Israel, we see his character in full scope in Numbers 23, as Balaam says in his discourse, God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind.
- Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it? We know that God is reliable, that he is immutable, meaning unchanging in who he is.
- He's infinite. And he was just that way with the nation of Israel, and how undeserving they were as a nation, and how undeserving we often are as Christians.
- Church, God does not change. And therefore, his words will always come to pass, and his promises will always be fulfilled. Your salvation, the good news of Jesus Christ, that through faith and through his grace, you receive eternal life and relationship, a united relationship with God the Father, your salvation is not an afterthought to God.
- His plan for you reaches back to the foundations of this world, being elect and chosen by God. We also see not only the sureness of hope or the sureness of God's character, but we also see in verse 3, as it continues, the sureness of God's word.
- [34 : 53] It says, at the proper time manifested in his word. In fact, the method of revealing who God is and what God has done comes through special revelation through the word of God.
- At the proper time manifested in his word. And we might ask, like, what does proper time really mean here? What exactly is that dictating? Well, in this sense of the word, proper time, it is unique and specific to a person.
- And that being, guess what? Jesus Christ. That at the proper time of Jesus Christ manifested in his words, this brought about the hope.
- This brought about all that which we know, all that which drives our devotion. And we see in verse 3, we see the mode of this hope being administered through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God, our Savior.
- Preaching. Isn't that interesting? You don't need a social media little thing to know who you are. You need to be under God's word, under the ministry of his word to obtain it.
- [36 : 09] You have to be in study of God's word collectively and individually. Paul is stating in this a deep and rich truth that we need to understand. If doctrine, that which we know, drives our devotion, which both rest upon a hope in our faith, a hope in God's eternal life, a hope in God's character, a hope in his word, then the central means of understanding his redemptive plan for us in our lives is through the administering of his word.
- we look no other places. It is found in his word. The preaching of God's word is the means by which the promises of God are brought to life.
- The word of God refines and strengthens our poor doctrine at times and it also cleanses our lives and our poor devotion to him in our lives.

The word does it all. You want to know the best part yet? The word of God reveals that all the trouble that we walk through in this life because we believe what we believe is worth it.

All the persecution that the disciples endured was worth it. Paul died from being beheaded and if you ask him now, maybe you'll ask him in eternity, was it worth it?

[37 : 41] He would say yes. Obviously, preaching the word of God comes in different packages depending on what church you're at. But regardless of what you've been accustomed to, maybe another place, we rest upon expositional preaching, exposing the meaning of the passage for us and applying it today.

This simply means that when we go to the word of God, we heed the Holy Spirit's intention of inspiring the message. church. And the original message which is applied here is applied in the same manner in our lives today.

We allow the text to drive the life of the church, not the other way around where the church drives the life of the text, which is an often misfortune in the church in our culture today.

This is the very same method Paul utilized in his ministry to other churches in raising up young men. And we see that his call wasn't just an option. Remember we established it, he was a slave of God.

We see it wasn't an option, but it was in verse 3, his call was a command. In this command language, kind of go back to the Great Commission, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded.

[39 : 02] This was a command. not only that, but he was commanded by God our Savior. It's not an option, it is a devotion of God which rests upon Paul's individual doctrine.

Let's review for a minute. I want to take a step back because I know I just, well you can blame Paul for unloading this theological dissertation of just all this theology of who God is and how it applies to us today.

Thank you Paul. And if we thank Paul, we thank the Holy Spirit for inspiring this great message, right? Let's review for a minute the depth of just these three verses.

We've only been in three verses. Guess what? We're probably about 40 minutes into a sermon. Going back to the first point, we see Paul's intention is made clear.

He's been commissioned by God as a slave of God and as an apostle of God. The second point, we see Paul's mission is made clear. to instill doctrine and instill devotion.

[40 : 08] Doctrine being faith and knowledge, devotion being godliness. And those two, I think I've beat a dead horse enough, those two are related very intimately, doctrine and devotion.

And then the third point, Paul's conviction is made clear because it all rests upon what? The sureness of our faith, which is rested in the sureness of hope and eternal life, the sureness of God's character and also the sureness of God's word.

Now, we reach verse 4. And we meet a young man as we continue. And we find this young man realizing that all of these three verses were for a purpose.

as he turns his attention to this young man saying, to Titus. Think about unpacking all this letter and reading this and being like, man, this is really encouraging.

This is exactly what I need to hear. And then all attention being said, turn to this young man reading this letter to Titus. Imagine. for the fourth point in observation this text is meet Titus.

[41 : 27] We're going to be with Titus for quite a few weeks here. In verse 4, it says, to Titus, my true child in a common faith, grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Now, considering the weight and the implications of all the previous verses in this opening letter, Paul turns his attention to one man who is called to quite a task, to replicate Paul's instructions and the mission laid before Titus in Crete.

You do what I'm saying in Crete. He refers to Titus very interestingly as true child, which means simply he's a Christian.

True child. He refers to Timothy the same way in 1 Timothy's introduction. But not only is he a Christian, he says, my true child.

So we can see that there's some relationship established between Paul and Titus. We can understand that Paul was probably most likely responsible for discipling this young man in the faith.

[42 : 33] And furthermore, Titus most likely served with Paul as some commentators believe in the second and third missionary journeys. Titus is mentioned in 2 Corinthians quite a few times and he's mentioned in Timothy quite a few times.

Paul has very good established relationship with Timothy and Titus is a man fit for this task laid before him. something which needed a three-verse introduction of deep-rooted knowledge that can drive his faith saying that, Titus, you can do this.

Rest in the sureness of your faith. Now I have some words for you, Titus, and he says to Titus in verse 4. Paul knew what Titus would be up against to, as he says next week in verse 5, to put what remained into order in Crete.

The letter was a guide for Titus to do just that. And this book is noteworthy for its information on church organization. Where do elders come from?

Why do we do this? Why do we do that? Why is this this way? It brings about deep conviction of church organization. Can you imagine church?

[43 : 53] Just think about that. Reading these this long sentence of just deep rooted theology. And then seeing your name pasted to it.

And then the remainder of the book is instructions that you are to follow in Crete. Can you imagine the experience of the waves of emotion reading this?

Looking at Crete? looking at remains in order and just being like, I thought I was going to, I didn't think I was going to be here. I thought I'd be by the poolside witnessing to sweet old ladies catching up on their hands.

I never imagined putting what remains here into order. can you imagine receiving this letter? Receiving this letter from his teacher and the Holy Spirit brings about this great confidence and mission of God that is laid aside for him.

I have a question. How confident are you being a member of Youngstown Metro Church? Does the weight of being called to a place known as Youngstown maybe bring a little bit of uncertainty?

[45 : 12] Maybe bring some doubt in your life? I can't do this. I believe soon you will realize that unless we as a church are healthy, our efforts as a church will also be futile.

For instance, there is a difference between appearing to have health and actually being healthy. There is a difference between having health and actually being appearing to have health and actually being healthy.

The mission laid out for Titus was somewhat of a renovation project similar to what's in the background of that picture. Take what remained in order and put it in order.

this is similar to the quality of a home being contingent upon the things that lay behind the walls. How often we start these renovation projects in our house and one thing leads to another and we're just so excited to get that drywall up and put that nice fresh coat of paint on and make it look appealing and sit back and just relax and look at it.

but all the while we never took the right time to pay attention to the plumbing work the integrity of the plumbing work we never tested the plumbing work we even skipped a section we'll finish that later but it looks good look at these colors my wife picked out man it's popping in this room the feng shui if that's your thing all the furniture is all arranged well you know we're good vibes in this house and then immediately upon flipping that water on just a complete disaster there's a difference between installing and connecting plumbing up in the walls and actually using nails for those walls or else complete disaster awaits and likewise the effectiveness of a church is dependent upon the health of that church and the health of that church is dependent upon the ministry of the word how often we want spiritual health but we don't want to embark in the process and the time and the labor that it takes to get there building renovations drywall being up we get very antsy in the process the fruit of god is a process and a laborious task as well you want spiritual health individually and corporately it often comes down to something similar is your bible dusty when's the last time that you actually tried to read the word of god within context and apply that within your life as the holy spirit intended you want spiritual health corporately are we simply one day a week sunday event attendees in this church or are we mission participants do we heed paul's instructions titus was to preach the same message paul preached this was the mission of the first century church and the same mission exists today in the 21st century church this is the living and the breathing word of god ladies and gentlemen as we close i know i went a little bit long i'll blame paul church you are a family of god and with that family you are a family of god with paul you are part of the family of god with titus what paul shared with titus we share with him we share with with with with uh timothy we share with peter shares one another our identity at youngstown metro church is being an intentional church family okay and what we have within our identity is doctrine and devotion doctrine being devoted to the hearing of god's word and the devotion aspect and doing god's word we have it all wrapped up in our identity to remind ourselves simply through a simple phrase of who we are and who we belong to and what our mission is within your hands church one book many volumes is the word of god marching orders instruction manual for life you don't need to look to some article or

[50 : 24] some some some wonder worker or something like that to find some lasting hope all you need according to paul is this book the bread of life okay within your hands is god's eternal plan of salvation we are heralds of this sacred treasure being the good news of jesus christ we preach titus's gospel we preach paul's gospel we preach the disciples gospel because you want to know what jesus christ is the center of all of them and he is the center of the gospel that we preach in this church so i gotta ask you if you're not in christ today if this stuff sort of sounds strange to you and you are not a christian what are you waiting for if you're not promised even this afternoon if life is fragile and as we all have experienced in death of other people if you are not in christ what are you waiting for receive jesus christ as your savior your lord and your savior by faith putting your faith in him his grace is abundance and it's waiting is he calling you to faith today but if you are a christian also what are you waiting for if we're merely creating a sunday morning routine that it's just another thing off your list we're missing it we're missing it there's no other message and titus being on quite an intense mission in crete he had all he needed to guide his quest and we do here and now in the same manner let's pray let's pray let's pray let's pray