

**Lesson 2 – Titus 1:5**  
**Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School**  
[www.valleybible.net](http://www.valleybible.net)

Review

Theme: The characteristics of a mature (ing) believer.

- I. Salutation Showing the Commitments of the Mature Believer (1:1-4)
  - A. The Writer (1:1-3) – Paul was a perfect Hebrew (Phil 3:4-6); persecutor of the Church (Acts 7:54-8:3); dramatically converted (Acts 9:1-6; Acts 9:19-22); then wholeheartedly served God.
    1. Committed to God’s mastery – What are some things that you have not (or have difficulty) surrendered to God’s mastery?
    2. Committed to God’s mission – Does your life show that you are committed to making disciples?
    3. Committed to God’s character – What of God’s attributes do you know with knowledge, but not with your heart?
    4. Committed to God’s word – Do you believe the resources (the Spirit and the word) God has given you are sufficient to solve all of life’s issues?
    5. Committed to Biblical ministry – What do you do with the gospel trust?
  - B. The Reader (1:4a) – Titus was Paul’s true son in a common faith. He was a trustworthy, efficient, and valued co-worker.
  - C. The Greeting (1:4b) – Standard Pauline greeting, then getting down to business.

The Church

We are going to apply the book of Titus to ourselves in our desire to become mature believers. But, clearly the context of this passage is about church elders.

“Church” translates the Greek *ekklesia* meaning “a called out group”. This group is not people who simply profess to know Jesus nor those who identify themselves with a particular Christian group.

<sup>21</sup>“**Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven,** but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*. <sup>22</sup>“Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ <sup>23</sup>“And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’ Matt 7:21-23

The church is the total group of individuals who place their faith in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. When born again, these individuals are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body. The universal church is a united spiritual organism consisting of all members of the body of Christ (Matt 16:18; 1 Cor 12:12-13; Col. 1:18; Eph 2:11, 3:6; 3:10). The formation of the church began at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will come to an end with the Rapture (1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thess 4:13-18). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Cor 10:32; Eph 3:1-6; 5:32).

Purpose of the Church is:

- 1) To glorify God (Eph 3:21)
- 2) to spread the Gospel (Matt 28:19-20)
- 3) to build itself up in the faith through teaching, fellowship, remembering Jesus’ sacrifice, and prayer (Eph 4:11-16; Acts 2:42)

Members of the universal church are to gather together in local assemblies or bodies (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Gal 1:2; Phil 1:1; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:11 Cor 11:18-20; Heb10:25).

Who is the leader of Valley Bible Church? Several answers may come to mind: maybe Dale since we see him up front teaching most often; or maybe no single person since we are led by a plurality of elders. However, the head of the corporate body of Christ is none other than Christ Himself.

<sup>15</sup>He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup>For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup>He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup>**He is also head of the body, the church;** and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. Col 1:15-18

While Christ, the Chief Shepherd, is the head of the body on earth each local body is to be led and cared for by Christ's under shepherd.

<sup>28</sup>"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.** Acts 20:28

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, <sup>2</sup>**shepherd the flock of God among you**, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; <sup>3</sup>nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup>And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. 1 Pet 5:1-4

### Organization of the Local Church

There are three main types of church government:

#### 1. Hierarchical or Episcopal:

- Roman Catholic church, Eastern Orthodox churches, the Anglican Church, Episcopal Church in the United States, and the Methodist Episcopal church
- This system recognizes a bishop, or church leader by some other designation, who has power by virtue of his office to direct the local church. Bishops may also direct churches in a given area.
- Decisions are made at levels higher than the local church.
- The defense of this form of government is usually stated as the position and authority of James in Acts 15, Titus and Timothy's role with several churches, and the idea that bishops were designated to replace the apostles. However, the term bishop is not a distinct office but a synonym for elder. And New Testament history does not show that bishops replaced the apostles – for example, Paul alone did not ordain Timothy, it was a council of elders (1 Tim 4:14).

#### 2. Representative or Presbyterian:

- Presbyterian and Reform churches.
- Recognizes the authority of duly appointed representatives of local churches, usually grouped geographically.
- Elders rule over both local and regional or national churches as representatives of the members. Often representatives of a local group (called a presbytery) of churches come under the supervision and direction of a larger body (or synod) and in turn the synod comes under the larger body of a general assembly.
- While rules and extent of power vary, the idea is that duly appointed representatives constitute the authority of the church.
- For this form of government, Scripture nowhere calls for elders to have authority beyond their local flock.

3. Congregational:
  - The Baptists, the Disciples Churches, Mennonites, the Evangelical Free churches, Congregationalists, and independents practice this style of organization
  - Each local church governs itself by means of democratic structures.
  - The authority remains with the local congregation, and important matters are decided by the congregation without respect to authority of other churches or officials.
  - While local churches may be subject to some degree to higher bodies, committees, or officials, the concept of a congregational church is that a local congregation determines its own affairs, elects and ordains its own ministers, and directs the use of its own treasury. The local congregation has authority, by vote, to lead the church.
  - There is much diversity within Congregational churches: a single pastor (or single elder), corporate board, pure democracy, and a plurality of elders.

### Duties of Titus in Crete (1:5)

<sup>5</sup>For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,

#### 1. Titus was **left** in Crete

59/60 Journey to Rome

61-63 First imprisonment in Rome

*Ephesians, Philippians (Timothy included in greeting), Colossians (Timothy included in greeting), and Philemon (Timothy included in greeting) from Rome*

64-65 Release from Roman imprisonment and “Fourth Missionary Journey”; Apparently Paul visited several cities in which he had ministered including Ephesus, where he left **Timothy**, and traveled through Macedonia (northern Greece) from where he wrote 1 Timothy (1 Tim 1:3) and Crete where he left **Titus** (Titus 1:5). He then traveled to Nicopolis in Achaia (southern Greece) from where he wrote Titus (Tit 3:12).

*1 Timothy and Titus written after release from first Roman imprisonment*

66-67 Visits Troas (2 Tim 4:13) where he was suddenly arrested and taken to Rome (second imprisonment in Rome); Paul sent for **Timothy** to “come before winter”. **Titus** joins Paul in Rome before being sent to Dalmatia (2 Tim 4:10)

*2 Timothy written from Rome*

68 Death (beheaded) in Rome

The fact that he was “left” in Crete and the topics covered in Titus reinforce that he and Paul collaborated on the island with a Great Commission lifestyle by means of the proclamation of the word.

#### 2. He was left in Crete for a purpose – **to set in order what remained**

“Set in order” [epidiorthōsē] is in the middle voice indicating that Titus is personally involved in the setting in order.

Those from Pentecost returned to Crete. The gospel had been shared. People had responded. Groups of people were gathering in various cities. The groups needed shepherds.

The remaining things to be set in order:

- Church leadership and organization
- Unchecked false teachers (1:10-11; 3:10-11)
- Instruction in doctrine and conduct (2:1-10; 3:1-2)

3. The local church has **order** – to have order it must have organization.
4. Titus was **directed** to do this – the appointment of the elders had apostolic authority behind it.
5. Observations concerning “**elders**”.
  - Elders were appointed not elected.
  - Elders is plural, city is singular. There were a plurality of elders. (Acts 14:23; 15:1-5; 20:17-35; 1 Tim 5:17; James 5:16; 1 Pet 5:1-2)

## Elders

The local church is organized (Titus 1:5) with the servant-leaders (Heb 13:7; 17) of the church being elders who are also called overseers or pastors (Acts 14:23; 20:28; 1 Tim 3:1-7; 4:14; 5:17; Titus 1:7-9; 1 Pet 5:1-5) and deacons (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim 3:8-13).

Three terms used to describe the leaders of the local church: elders, overseers (bishops), pastors. The terms are interchangeable (cf. Titus 1:5, 7 and 1Tim 3:1-7 where qualifications are the same but the title is different).

<sup>5</sup>For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint **elders** in every city as I directed you, ... <sup>7</sup>For the **overseer** must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, Titus 1:5, 7

<sup>1</sup>It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of **overseer**, it is a fine work he desires to do. 1 Tim 3:1

Elders are men (1 Tim 2:12-14) who aspire to the office of overseer (1 Tim 3:1) and are set apart and qualified by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28) for prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4).

<sup>12</sup>But **I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man**, but to remain quiet.

<sup>13</sup>For it was Adam who was first created, *and* then Eve. <sup>14</sup>*And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.* 1 Tim 2:12-14

<sup>1</sup>It is a trustworthy statement: **if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.** 1 Tim 3:1

<sup>28</sup>Be on guard for yourselves and for all **the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers**, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. Acts 20:28

<sup>4</sup>But we will **devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.**” Acts 6:4

They must meet specific character and ministry qualifications (**1 Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9**).

They are the caretakers of the church (1 Tim 3:5).

<sup>5</sup>(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he **take care of the church of God?**), 1 Tim 3:5

They rule and exercise oversight (1 Thess 5:12; 1 Tim 5:17; 1 Pet 5:2).

<sup>12</sup>But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and **have charge over you in the Lord** and give you instruction, 1 Thess 5:12

<sup>17</sup>The **elders who rule well** are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. 1 Tim 5:17

<sup>2</sup>**shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight** not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 1 Pet 5:2

They shepherd the flock of God (Acts 20:28).

<sup>28</sup>"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.** Acts 20:28

- To feed (1 Tim 3:2)

<sup>2</sup>An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, **able to teach,** 1 Tim 3:2

- To lead (Heb 13:7; 1 Pet 5:2)

<sup>7</sup>Remember **those who led you,** who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. Heb 13:7

<sup>2</sup>**shepherd the flock of God among you,** exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 1 Pet 5:2

- To protect and watch over (Heb 13:17)

<sup>17</sup>Obey your leaders and submit to them, for **they keep watch over your souls** as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. Heb 13:17

- To care for (1 Thess 2:7)

<sup>7</sup>But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly **cares for her own children.** 1 Thess 2:7

- To equip (Eph 4:11-12)

<sup>11</sup>And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup>**for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;** Eph 4:11-12

They preach and teach the Word (1 Tim 5:17).

<sup>17</sup>The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at **preaching and teaching.** 1 Tim 5:17

### Congregation's Response

What is my responsibility to my elders?

To appreciate and esteem them very highly (1 Thess 5:12-13)

<sup>12</sup>But we request of you, brethren, that **you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction,** <sup>13</sup>and that **you esteem them very highly in love because of their work.** Live in peace with one another. 1 Thess 5:12-13

To obey and submit (Heb 13:17)

<sup>17</sup>**Obey your leaders and submit to them,** for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. Heb 13:17

Be subject (1 Pet 5:5)

<sup>5</sup>You younger men, likewise, **be subject to your elders;** and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for **GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.** 1 Pet 5:5

## Summary

Titus was left behind at Crete for the purpose of setting in order what remained to be accomplished. That included appointing elders (the most mature among us). Elders are men (1Tim 2:12-14) who aspire to the office of overseer (1 Tim 3:1) and are set apart and qualified by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28) for prayer and the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4). They must be qualified (1Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9). They are the caretakers of the church (1 Tim 3:5). They rule and exercise oversight (1 Thess 5:12; 1 Tim 5:17; 1 Pet 5:2). They shepherd the flock of God (Acts 20:28) to: feed (1 Tim 3:2); lead (Heb 13:7; 1 Pet 5:2); protect and watch over (Heb 13:17); care for (1 Thess 2:7); and equip (Eph 4:11-12). They preach and teach the word (1 Tim 5:17). The body is responsible to: appreciate and esteem them very highly (1 Thess 5:12-13); obey and submit to them (Heb 13:17); and be subject to them (1 Pet 5:5).

## Homework

The next class is on November 27. For that class:

1. Read Titus all the way through more than once.
2. What is the over arching character quality of elders?
3. What is the reason this quality is so important for elders? For all believers?