

## *Walking With the Father Through Titus*

*Over the years, I've found my life changing and my faith deepening as I meet with our heavenly Father in His word. This has been especially true as I've been writing these devotionals and having to live what I write.*

*I long for you to be able to say the same as you read through this letter.*

*As I've gotten to know Paul, James, Peter, Jude, and John through their letters, I'm overwhelmed by how they were changed by knowing and walking with their Lord. How much they must have longed for us to know Him as they did.*

*As John wrote in 1 John 2:3-6, he wants us to walk as Jesus did and believed that it was absolutely possible to do so. So how did Jesus walk? That's one secret our Father shares with us.*

*Blessings on your time as we take another walk with the Father,*

*Margie Martin*

## *Walking With the Father Through Titus*

Paul wrote to Titus around the same time that he wrote his first letter to Timothy (61-63 A.D.). Titus seems to be Paul's go-to guy when a local church was having trouble. He went to Corinth to find out their response to Paul's harsh letter. He went to Jerusalem with Paul and so was involved in a conflict there. And Paul sent him to the believers on Crete, a people that had the reputation of being "liars, evil brutes, and lazy gluttons," to lead that growing church.

For more background on Titus, see these passages:

2 Cor. 2:12-13  
2 Cor. 7:5-7  
2 Cor. 7:13-15  
2 Cor. 8:1-7  
2 Cor. 8:16-18  
2 Cor. 8:22-24

2 Cor. 12:14-18  
Galatians 2:1-3  
2 Timothy 4:9-10  
Titus 1:3-5  
Titus 1:4-6



### **New Testament World**

As you spend time in this letter, please take the time to talk with our Father about what He's showing you so you're not just gathering information. As you pray, you can use the space on each page to journal your thoughts or write Him a note.

# Walking With the Father Through Titus

## Titus 1:1-4

*“ . . . for the faith of God’s elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness”*

Have you every thought about why you do what you do? Is it for personal satisfaction? Recognition? Approval? Significance? Paul tells us that he’s a servant of God and an apostle (sent one) of Jesus Christ for our sakes—for our faith and godliness. What a standard he’s been given!

Let’s look at why he may be saying this. His letter is addressed to Titus as this young man is dealing with the church on Crete that seems to be having a multitude of problems. The church members are quick-tempered, drunks, violent, and pursuing dishonest gain. And Paul tells Titus to find men who are not this way but who have the respect of the believers who live there!

So how should Titus proceed? I think his marching orders, so to speak, come from Paul’s greeting. Paul says that faith and knowledge rest on the hope of eternal life. If we believe in an afterlife that reflects the life we live *here*, then how we live now has ramifications for how we live *then*. We’ll live with eternity in sight if faith and godliness are rewarded and faithlessness and evil are condemned.

We’ll choose to have **faith** and **live godly lives** because God is in charge of now and then. He’s the one who has the final say, and He’s worth wanting to please.

How do we know what a godly life looks like? The best way is to know truth as it’s revealed in the Scriptures. A knowledge that is not just intellectual, rather a knowledge that changes how we think, talk, act, pray, minister, and feel. This truth is not only found in words—“do this, don’t do that”—but it’s also found in how Jesus lived, how Paul and his co-workers lived, and how the Old Testament saints walked with God.

The knowledge I’ve been hearing myself talk about is God not being limited by time. He sees the end from the beginning so He can be trusted in what He brings along.

What truth are you talking and living? Is it the world’s truth or God’s truth?

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# Walking With the Father Through Titus

## Titus 1:5-16

*“They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny Him.”*

I think we’ve all been in a relationship where we’ve said or felt, “Words are cheap; **live** what you say.” I know I experienced this conflict with guys during my dating years. For too long I believed words too much.

But during a study program I was in a number of years ago, I did a word study on *believe* in the Gospel of John, and I made an interesting discovery that I still depend on.

- In the first third of John’s Gospel, Jesus said to believe Him *because of His actions*.
- In the second third of the Gospel He said to believe Him *because of His words*—and His words totally agreed with His actions.
- In the last third of the book He said to believe *Him*—we don’t have to require actions or words from Him because He’s already proven Himself; we can have confidence in Him just as an archer would have confidence in the arrows in his quiver (which is the background of this word *believe* that Jesus used).

Because men I had been dating didn’t have lives that matched their words, I longed for this consistency. My longing led me to find this quality in Jesus, and my trust in Him deepened. When I met Barney and found this consistency in him as well, I was delighted and couldn’t wait to marry him. I still find it in him and know I can trust him.

So I have to ask myself, do *my* words and actions agree? Am I someone people can trust just because of who I am? When at times I honestly have to answer “no” to this question, I know that I’m depending on myself and not looking to and trusting God. If we really know God, we’re in the process of becoming like Him, and our actions will prove this out.

Have you found Jesus to be this trustworthy? Because if you haven’t, you’ll never be able to be what you want to be for others. Paul says that we’ll be *detestable, disobedient, and unfit for doing anything good*.

So do you claim to know God, or do you *really* know Him?

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# Walking With the Father Through Titus

## Titus 2:1-15

“You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine . . . so that no one will malign the word of God . . . so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us . . . so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive . . . These then are the things you should teach.”

I think we’ve all known of people who, in the name of Christ, have done things that really bother us; or we know of politicians who make a show of going to church during an election year just for a photo shot; or we’ve learned about greedy men who went on the Crusades during the Middle Ages just to bring back riches they stole during war.

But have you ever thought that how *you* live your life may draw or repel those around you from knowing Christ? It’s not just the words we say but *how* we live in our homes, our neighborhoods, the gym, the coffee shop, and the workplace. So let’s list how we are suppose to live.

- Older Men:* temperate; worthy of respect; self-controlled; sound in faith, in love, and endurance
- Older Women:* reverent in how they live, not slanderous or addicted to much wine, teach what is good; train younger women to do what is in the following paragraph.
- Young Women:* love their husbands and children, be self-controlled and pure, be busy at home, be kind, and be subject to their husbands
- Young Men:* self-controlled; do what is good; in teaching show integrity, seriousness, and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned
- Slaves/employees:* do what the job requires, try to please bosses, respect bosses and don’t talk back (free to discuss until you’ve been given a directive), don’t steal (items or time), be trustworthy

Are you “*eager to do good*” (vs. 14) and show God for who He really is to a world that needs to know Him? Or do your words say one thing and your actions another? Do you malign the word of God or make it attractive?

What do you need to start changing today? Please *confess* this area to the Lord, *depend* on Him to change you, and *begin acting* the way you know you should. If you wait for your motives to change, you’ll never change. It’s a walk of faith, remember?

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# Walking With the Father Through Titus

## Titus 3:1-11

*"At one time we too were . . .but when the kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously thru Jesus Christ our Savior."*

I don't know where you are in your journey with Jesus or how long you've been walking with Him, but I've found that one of the best things I can do is to remember where I've come from and what I've been saved from. And while my actions were certainly far from His standards before I knew Jesus (I moved to San Francisco in the early 70's to be a hippie—with the lifestyle that went along with it), what I've been having to face up to the past few years are the attitudes, fears, insecurities, foolish thinking, and hard-headedness that were the foundation of my actions.

But God—two of the most wonderful words in the Bible—reached out to me in His mercy. It took a while for me to hit bottom so I could hear His offer of rebirth and renewal, but hear it I did. And this lowa-born girl found what she was looking for.

Have you found what you're looking for? Have you experienced God's mercy? Is the day of your rebirth the second birthday you celebrate every year? Do you know what actions and attitudes you've been saved from? Do you experience renewal? What is your "*but God*" story?

Maybe today is a good day to review the real facts with God and thank Him for His mercy. Maybe today is a good time to ask Him for the opportunity to share your journey with Him with someone who needs to hear a "*but God*" story the way I did so many years ago on a bus going to work in San Francisco. Maybe today is a good day to thank the person who told you his or her "*but God*" story.



"Thank you, Brian Burgess, for talking to me on that bus so many years ago!"

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# Walking With the Father Through Titus

## Titus 3:12-15

*“Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing good, in order that they may provide for daily necessities and not live unproductive lives.”*

*“Devote themselves to doing good . . . provide for daily necessities . . . live productive lives.”* Did it strike you as strange that Paul would include these directives in the middle of his final remarks? It’s as though his concern about the believers on Crete not changing their lifestyle keeps creeping into his thoughts and then leaking out as words when he speaks of something else. Have you ever been so preoccupied with concern over someone that you keep hearing yourself speak about them as you talk about something else?

I wonder how Paul could keep on going with what was in front of him as he worried about the churches he had started and others were leading. And I wonder how we keep on going with what’s in front of us as we worry over a whole range of things that we can’t fix: family, health, the economy, kids’ future mates, the spiritual life of our spouses.

I have a feeling that Paul had to constantly remind himself of the truth of who God is, who he (Paul) is, and Who those he worried about belonged to. I think this is why he included such amazing truths in three passages in this letter (1:1-4, 2:11-14, and 3:3-7); he knew that he needed to remember truth to battle his own feelings of failure, depression, and despair. And if he needed to remember these truths, he knew Titus would need to remember them. And if Paul and Titus needed to remember these truths, we certainly need to remember them as well.

So, if you haven’t reread these passages yet, let me encourage you to do so right now; because if you don’t need them for viewing your own life and circumstances, you’ll probably need them for someone else’s benefit.

Did the truth of today’s section help you? It sure helped me! Did you see another truth that you need to hold on to because of what you’re facing today?

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