

## Lesson One, Two & Three: From Synthesis to Analysis of Terms

### Lesson One

Mortimer J. Adler and Charles Van Doren wrote, “How to Read a Book: the Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading” which is the classic on reading for real understanding. This is in contrast to much of today’s theory on reading for entertainment. e.g., Wheaton College professor of English Alan Jacobs, “The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction” (Oxford University Press, 2011). Methodical Bible Study (Robert Traina text) assumes and starts with reading for understanding.

**The Three Goals of Reading: Entertainment, Information and Understanding.** From less active reading to more demanding active reading. e.g., reading for *Entertainment* isn’t passive but the content is basic and the goal isn’t to remember every detail or question what is presented. Such readings include newspaper articles, most novels, magazines, comic books. Reading for *Information* suggests a grasp of the content a “bookish” knowledge. The Greeks called such elementary learners, “sophomores.” The reading for *Understanding* is to discover from the content both meaning that advances information but also grows beyond. Methodical Bible Study gains the skills of reading for understanding.

**The Four Levels of Reading: Elementary Reading, Inspectional Reading, Analytical Reading, and Syntopical Reading.** In *Elementary* reading there is a beginning of literacy but still contains a number of skills. Unfortunately this is usually the only level learned in elementary through high school. In *Inspectional* reading (usually learning by experience in college level) the demands of time offer clues to this practice. A college student is under the demands to get the most out of a limited period of time. Such skills as: skimming or pre-reading, table of contents overview; book subject; argument advance. In *Analytical* reading is intensive active seeking by bombarding the text with questions, to understand all that the author is saying. The reader is carrying on a conversation with the author to understand all; the quest is to understand the subject thoroughly. In *Syntopical* reading the demands are even heavier, as the reader thinks through the analytical and merges it with other understandings previously learned. He/she synthesis their knowledge. Obvious both analytical and synthetic reading is demanded in Methodical Bible Study.

**The Four Areas to Observe in Methodical Bible Study: Terms, Structure, Literary Form and Atmosphere.** Methodical Bible Study is divided into three steps of Observation, Interpretation and Application. First the Bible student learns to observe *terms* (not words) recognizing both routine and non-routine words; definition options; and context demands for the tightest definition possible.

## Introduction to the Epistle to Titus

### General Background to Titus

The Lord promised that He would undertake the construction of the Church, stating, “*I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*” cf. Matt.16:18. The Church carries on an onslaught against Hell itself, as if smashing the very gates of the kingdom of darkness and freeing the captives for the Kingdom of God! Yet we must recognize that the local church sometimes does not *prevail* against the *gates of hell*, nor remains a spiritual force to guard itself against the forces of Hell as they infiltrate. At times the forces of evil inflict massive casualties by an offensive attack. cf. Rev. 2, 3; Acts 20:29-32. The local church may suffer by being *defiled* (cf. I Cor. 3:26, 17) which removes the cutting edge of her testimony.

In the Sacred Library of the 66 books of the Bible, the Holy Spirit has provided three special books, known as *The Pastoral Epistles* that give the local church direction concerning leadership,

ministry, and protection from attack.<sup>1</sup> The Epistle to Titus is one of the Pastoral Epistles and the first four verses give us the *Introductory Salutation*, answering three introductory questions: first, who wrote the Epistle? second, to whom did he write this Epistle for? And third, what did he want to communicate to them by way of introduction?<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The designation *Pastoral Epistles* was first used by D. N. Berdot (1703) and popularized by Paul Anton (1726). These three Epistles are not only manuals of pastoral theology, but actually give insight into, “how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.” cf. 1 Tim. 3:15. Hence, they provide God’s summary of what ministry in the local church should be.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting that the greeting of the Epistle to Titus, found in vss. 1-4 is the most lengthy of Paul’s greetings, with the exception of the Epistle to the Romans and the Epistle to the Galatians. Paul goes to great length to establish his Apostolic ministry and what this ministry was to accomplish. Evidently, this was not so much for the benefit of Titus, because obviously Titus didn’t question Paul’s authority, but to lend credibility to Titus himself before the local churches on the

Methodical Bible Study is a cycle beginning with Synthesis and then Analysis, then back to Synthesis and Analysis. Adler and Van Doren call this *Inspectional Reading*, the second stage (Chapter 4).

Synthesis means we work to gain the flow of the book of the Bible, the background, leading to the theme and purpose. This is too often the omitted first step. We recommend series of readings (cf. Isaiah 28:9-10 compare with 2 Peter 1:12-15), along with the following helps.

**MacArthur Study Bible** book introductions, which are brief but carefully true to the history and text theme. (e.g., *The Epistle to Titus*, pp. 1883-1884)

**ISBE or The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia** (either 1939 by General Editor James Orr or the better the 1971 by Geoffrey Bromiley) on the book being studied. This will be more thorough than MacArthur's work. (cf. Orr pp. 2258-2262 of Vol. 4; Bromiley pp. 679-687 of Vol. 3)

**Commentary Introductions** will be much better than the above, if the commentary is an exegetically based exposition. MacArthur, Stott, Hiebert, Kent, Fee, Mounce, Calvin.

**Introductions.** Some works specialize just in the introductory material of Biblical books. e.g., *An Introduction to the New Testament* by D. Edmond Hiebert (3 volumes, Moody 1981); *An Introduction to the New Testament* by Raymond Brown (Doubleday, 1996), etc.

## - The Question of Who – The Author of the Epistle

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 according to godliness. In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began, but hath in due times manifested His word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God, our Savior. (cf. Titus 1:1-3)

Unlike personal correspondence today, the Roman world during biblical times identified the letter's author at the first of the letter. And similar to today's listing of titles and present function or ministry, Paul identified himself specifically by *two selected titles* and *two selected ministries*.

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island of Crete. cf. R. C. H. Lenski. *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to Titus* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1937), p. 1888; William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1957), p. 339.

**Homework Practice:** 1.) Read carefully at least one of the above mentioned introductions to the Epistle to Titus and be able to explain that author's information. 2.) Read from the MacArthur Study Bible the Outline (p. 1884) and think through the development of that outline. This might include 2-3 readings of the whole Epistle to see the outline. 3.) Work through Titus 1:1-4 and circle all the Non-routine terms, needed more definition. (cf. page 6 of notes) And 4.) Read or reread Robert Traina pp. 1-36.

**Paul's Identifying Titles.** Paul calls himself, first of all, "a servant of God" (cf. Rom.1:1; Phil.1:1 he calls himself *a servant of Christ Jesus*) which speaks of absolute surrender and humility. Kenneth Wuest comments on the Greek noun doulos, "the most abject, servile term in use among Greeks for a slave." The Greeks had a different word used for a person taken in war and sold as a slave called an andrapodon, but the doulos slave was one born into slavery, having no personal rights.<sup>3</sup> Wayne Rollins provides us with some historical background to understand Paul's selection of the slavery metaphor to explain his relationship to the Lord.

The distinctive feature of the self-awareness of the Greek is the thought of freedom. The Greek finds his perpetual dignity in the fact that he is free...His self-awareness stands out sharply from anything which stands under the concept of slavery.<sup>4</sup>

To believers on the island of Crete, the slave metaphor would be especially familiar, as Crete was one of the central market areas for slave trade. Gibbon estimates the general population of the Roman Empire at be about 120,000,000 during the reign of Claudius, of which half were slaves! The Romans Empire was definitely a slave satiated society in which slaves performed a major part of the industrial and agricultural production. They were

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<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, the KJV translates doulos, *servant* instead of *slave*. The distinction is important as Webster's dictionary relates they are not synonymous: 1. *servant*. a person employed to perform services especially household duties, for another; a person employed by a government. 2. *slave*, a human being who is owned as property by another and is absolutely subject to his will; bondservant divested of all freedom and personal rights.

<sup>4</sup> cf. Wayne Rollins, *Greco-Roman Slave Terminology and Pauline Metaphors for Salvation*. Rollins points out, "Paul selects this jarring term...to provide an imagine that captures the plight of a person who cannot escape from the inner or outer forces that hold him captive."

doctors, lawyers, manufacturers, traders, businessmen, farmers and harvesters of crops. Hence, the citizens on the island of Crete either were slaves, owned slaves or had one time been involved in the slave industry.

Despite Paul's impressive credentials for Christian ministry, his first claim was one of humble surrender to God!

The second title Paul uses to identify himself is "*an apostle of Jesus Christ.*" As a slave Paul was *submissive*, as an apostle Paul was *authoritative*. As an apostle Paul had delegated authority to speak in Christ's stead! (cf. Galatians 1:1, 6-10; I Cor. 15:9-11) Because he was a delegated spokesman for God, believers were obligated to unconditional obedience to his teaching. Each word from God spoken through His delegated authority issues as an imperative non-optional dictate, to be taken as spoken by the Sovereign God Himself! This is why the early church held to the vital importance of apostolic doctrine.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers...And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. (cf. Acts 2:42-47)

Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (cf. Ephesians 2:19-22)

And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (cf. Eph. 4:11-13)

For we are laborers together with God; ye are God's cultivated field (cf. vss. 5-8), ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth on it. But let every man take heed how he buildeth upon it. (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:9-10)

## Lesson Two

**Helps in Identifying Terms:** 1.) W. E. Vine, "Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words," John R. Kphlenburger III, Editor (Bethany House Publishers 1984) is one of the best. 2.) Bible Dictionary on names, places and doctrinal subjects. 3.) Commentary help gives more precise contextual definitions.

Make sure you work hard at identifying a word in it's precise historical setting. The goal is always, "What would the original audience consider this term to mean?" It is not the contemporary audience, nor is it the easiest to understand, nor the primary definition in a Greek dictionary.

Note: We will await future lessons to learn the identification of verbs and participles time and kind of action, along with other term structures.

**Exercise:** from reading Robert Traina pages 42-43 identify structure in verses 1-3 and circle with major category from Traina. Identify Temporal or Chronological connectives, Local or Geographical connectives and Logical connectives.

**Paul's Identifying Ministry.** The Greek preposition kata (translated *according to* in the KJV) means here, *in regard to* or *to further*. Specifically, the ministry of Paul the Apostle was to further, promote or expand two areas of believer's lives.

**The furtherance of Faith** – "*the faith of God's elect.*" Habakkuk 2:4 informs that "*the just shall live by faith.*" Three NT books emphasize this truth: the Epistle to the Romans, giving emphasis on *the just*; the Epistle to the Galatians, giving emphasis to *shall live*; and the Epistle to the Hebrews, which gives emphases to *the faith*.

The apostolic ministry was to bring others to initial converting faith and to promote their growth in further faith. This furtherance of faith extends to three specific areas: 1. *Bringing unbelievers to faith.* This is basically evangelism and discipleship, where the Gospel is presented by an Apostle and it generates saving faith. (cf. Romans 1:14-17) 2. *Increasing believers existing faith.* By comparing Matt. 8:5-13 with 23-27 it is demonstrated that there are degrees of faith: some showing *great* faith and some showing *little* faith. The Apostolic ministry of Paul included generating in others a trust in God that grows and matures. (cf. Ephesians 4:11-14) and 3. *Motivating believers to obedience.* This refers to encouraging and exhorting others to obey the Lord

in personal conduct. cf. Romans 1:5 compared with Romans 1:8 and 16:19.

**The furtherance of truth** – “*the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness.*” The Greek word for *acknowledging* means to know thoroughly or intimately.<sup>5</sup> The apostolic charge was to bring saints to a furthering intimate personal knowledge of *the truth*. This would produce *godliness* or piety (god-centeredness). Notice that the increase of *faith* and the increase of *knowledge* go together!

And they who know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou Lord, hast not forsaken those who seek thee. (cf. Psalm 9:10)

The apostolic ministry is mentioned in Ephesians 4:11-15, which adds that the same charge is given to pastor teachers!<sup>6</sup> Members of local churches would be wise to identify with the Apostolic ministry and allow the truth to further their faith and intimate knowledge of the truth. The result is *godliness* or a God-centered perspective of living and thinking, described here as the “*hope of eternal life.*” (vs.2)

The Greek word for *hope* is elpis, a confident expectation (W. E. Vine) or as Stott defines, a joyful and confident expectation! The basis of which is the fact that it is *promised* and *manifested.*” (vss. 2b, 3a)

Paul emphasizes the fact that this promise was made by “*the never lying God.*” The fact of God’s *veracity* stands in vivid contrast to the Cretans reputation for lying (cf. 1:10, 12). William Barclay comments on the Cretans reputation for lying:

So notorious were the Cretans that the Greeks actually formed a verb kretizein, to cretize, which meant to lie and to cheat; and they had a proverbial phrase, kretizein

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<sup>5</sup> The compound Greek word is epiginosko, from epi= intensive, ginosko= to know. Hence, to know thoroughly or to really know something in a personal experiential way.

<sup>6</sup> Are *pastors and teachers* (Eph. 4:11) a reference to one function (i.e., “Christ gave some pastors and he gave some teachers”) or two functions in one office (i.e., “Christ gave some pastor teachers” or “pastors who teach”)? Although linked together, the issue is not easily determined. If this is a reference to one function than all gifted teachers in the local church are involved in the same twofold ministry thrust as the Apostles were, without the authority of the office!

pros Kreta, to cretize against a Cretan, which meant to match lies with lies, as diamond cuts diamond.<sup>7</sup>

But God’s veracity stands in contrast!<sup>8</sup> This promise was now being made *manifested* through *preaching* (Gk. kerugmati, a proclamation by a herald or the message proclaimed). And this by the Apostle Paul in his ministry given by “*the commandment of God, our Savior.*” (cf. Gal. 1:1; 1 Cor. 15:9-11) Notice that God the Father is called “*our Savior*” just as God the Son is in 1:4.

### - The Question to Whom – The Recipients of the Epistle

To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior...Grace be with you all. Amen. (cf. Titus 1:4a)

**Titus Paul’s own son – 1:4.** The epistle is addressed to “*Titus mine own son after the common faith.*” Evidently Paul was instrumental in leading Titus to Christ (cf. 1 Tim. 1:2), although the term often only suggested that the two men shared a common master/disciple relationship. Here we would recommend the term refers to the Apostle Paul’s influence in leading Titus to faith, as it would be the primary way to understand this when unqualified somehow in the context.

The Apostle’s associate Titus is not mentioned in the Book of Acts<sup>9</sup> but 13 times in Paul’s epistles. cf. 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6, 13,14; 8:6, 16, 23; 12:18 (two times); Gal. 2:1, 3; 2 Tim. 4:10; Titus

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<sup>7</sup> cf. William Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975), p. 243. He also quotes Polybius, “on account of their [Cretans] innate avarice, live in a perpetual state of private quarrel and public feud and civil strife...and you will hardly find anywhere characters more tricky and deceitful than those of Crete.”

<sup>8</sup> cf. Num. 23:19, “God is not a man that He should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall he not make it good?” cf. 1 Sam. 15:29, “And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man, that he should repent.” cf. Heb. 6:18, “That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.”

<sup>9</sup> Speculation continues why Titus was omitted from the Book of Acts, as he certainly was one of Paul’s key associates. William Ramsey suggest Titus could have been Luke’s brother, so omitting family would be a humble editorial possibility.

1:4. His troubleshooting ministry at confused and carnal Corinth indicates a high level of maturing, wisdom and godliness. It is interesting that Titus was appointed to minister both at Corinth and Crete, which areas were both notorious for immorality. And as the Gentile convert test case at Jerusalem indicates his faithfulness and observable integrity. cf. Gal. 2:1-7. No wonder Titus was stationed to minister at Crete and confront the Jewish errorists!

### Lesson Three

**Identify Names and Places.** Here is where a Bible Dictionary or Encyclopedia is essential. Read the article on the person mentioned in the Bible; read the place and identify it on a map. These are non-routine terms that you will only have to identify once.

**Other believers on Crete – 3:15.** The immediate recipient of this Epistle is not limited to Titus, as the Epistle concludes with the plural pronoun admonition, “*grace be with you all.*” (cf. Titus 3:15) It ends with a plural pronoun (“with you *all*”). No doubt Paul intended Pastor Titus to read this throughout the local churches on the island of Crete. And because of the canonical nature of the Epistle, these words are also addressed to the saints of all ages!

**Example of Value of Synthesis:** The recipients of the Epistle to Titus would be wrongly limited without considering 3:15, which is broadened to believers on Crete. Here is an example where a careful Synthesis then Analysis, will come back to sharpen the Synthesis again.

Unfortunately many commentaries miss synthesis observations like this as they write over long periods of time. Repeated readings or memorization of the book helps careful synthetic observation.

## - The Question of What – The Greeting of the Epistle

Grace, mercy and peace, from God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior. (cf. Titus 1:4b)

**Grace be unto you.** The normal Greek greeting was chairein (Acts 15:23; 23:26; James 1:1; translated greeting in KJV) which with Paul changes into a noun form, charis, and infuses the word with theological meaning: *divine favor*. Although there is no verb in the Greek text, the verb is implied (cf. 1

Peter 1:1-3; 2 Peter 1:2 and Jude 2) as if the Apostle were praying *may grace be unto you*.

**Mercy be unto you.** It is interesting that the noun “*mercy*” is added to the normal greeting of *grace and peace* only in the Pastoral Epistles. (cf. 1 Tim. 1:1 and 2 Tim. 1:1) Obviously, Titus just as a pastor or officer in a local church, needs in a special way, mercy or the outward manifestation of pity to those who are hurting!

Manuscript evidence questions the KJV and NKJV addition of “*mercy*” in Titus. The other two Pastoral Epistles offer strong evidence for it but Titus is questionable.

**Asking Questions.** The careful observer is continually asking question, not only what is there but what is unexpectedly there, i.e., the Apostle Paul seldom inserts “*mercy.*” This surfaces the interpretive question, “*Why?*” Only in the Pastoral Epistles is this true, otherwise his greeting is only “*grace and peace.*”

Another question might involve, “*Why does Paul repeatedly pray for “grace” and “peace”?* Is he just being polite or does he have a definite theological or practical point to make?

**Peace be unto you.** The normal Jewish greeting was eirene, (translated *peace*) which to the Jews followed divine favor resulting in harmony. cf. Numbers 6:22-27. This addition is natural, for when grace is received there is peace; grace is the fountain and peace the stream (Romans 5:1). Union with God the Father and God the Son results in the constant bestowment of divine favor and harmony in all relationships of life.

The terms shalom (i.e., Hebrew) and eirene (i.e., Greek) are rich in meaning, capturing the whole of the tranquil life, mental contentment and even elation for one’s state. And remember “*grace*” and “*peace*” are prayers of the Apostle for Titus, the Christians on Crete and by extension believers in all ages. This is the will of God for both the provision and joy of His people, so it is repeated in each of Paul’s epistles.

## Conclusion

Paul humbly serves the Lord and speaks with authority in the Epistle to Titus to further the saints faith and knowledge of the truth, knowing that

keeping this charge will result in their God-centered living and thinking, where the focus is ever on the hope of eternal life. However this epistle is not only addressed to Titus, but to all those who are the recipients of God's rich grace, mercy, and peace.

**Synthesis, Analysis, Synthesis.** Methodical Bible study works from synthesis to analysis, to synthesis and analysis, both in the broad and in the narrow. Remember good discovery in Bible study is asking questions to the text, either terms, phrases, verses, paragraphs, segments, sections, to "unpack" meaning in view of the theme of the whole book.

### Quotes

Peering into the mists of gray  
That shroud the surface of the bay,  
Nothing I see except a veil  
Of fog surrounding every sail.  
Then suddenly against a cape  
A vast and silent form takes shape,  
A great ship lies against the shore  
Where nothing has appeared before.

Who sees a truth must often gaze  
Into a fog for many days;  
It may seem very sure to him  
Nothing is there but mist-clouds dim.  
Then, suddenly, his eyes will see  
A shape where nothing used to be.  
Discoveries are missed each day  
By men who turn too soon away.

I have six helping men, who taught me all I know. There names are *What* and *Where* and *When* and *How* and *Why* and *Who*.

### Exercise

Titus 1:1-4. Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior; to Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. (NKJ)