



NT10: TITUS

[PRAY]

Today we begin our ten year survey of the NT, something I am incredibly excited about---b/c you are going to LEARN something through this THAT many have forgotten---and that is TO SEE the forest before the TREES...

IOW: WE will be looking at EACH BOOK first from the TOP DOWN---the BIG PICTURE before the smaller details...

And that will ALLOW us to do TWO THINGS:

- 1) Interpret the individual passages as they were meant to be interpreted ---as the author intended!
So often the approach today is ATOMISITC: drill down into a few verses and try to figure out what they are saying by looking at predominately the grammar---and very little at the overall movement---or THRUST of the book. And what happens is "we miss the forest for the trees"---IOW: We give to those passages meaning WHICH has nothing to DO with WHY the original author said them (or where the book is going). And though what we may say in that interpretation may be orthodox, IT is completely WRONG as it relates to that PASSAGE (that -iow---is NOT what the author is trying to communicate!)---which means that WE NO longer have the WORD of GOD---it is only the WORD of GOD---when it is interpreted correctly. WE must (then) FIRST pan back and understand the BIGGER picture....WE MUST (first) see the forest and then we can begin to navigate our path through it (and correctly identify its individual TREES).
- 2) Move much faster than traditional exposition today.

We are going to be just as expositional with the TEXT as any today---HOWEVER---because we will be taking things in bigger CHUNKS (which is what inevitably happens when you take the TOP DOWN approach) we will GET through the material quicker---AT A PACE which is MUCH more conducive for truly understanding the book---since the slower you GO---the more you forget (as it relates to what was already covered)

-(Ex. MacArthur took something like 10 years to get through Matthew---how many people do you think---including MacArthur himself---remember what he taught at the beginning once he got to the end?---AGAIN we lose the forest for the trees when we take this approach.

BTW: This is not the pattern through history (Calvin as well as many others preached larger chunks and were able to get through the entire bible in their ministry) This is ALSO not how the books of the BIBLE were read when they were first delivered to the saints (nor are they how we read them today)---and the reason why we don't read them that way---is b/c it would be almost impossible to comprehend what was being said---if we did that---YET that again is what is being attempted by those WHO go so slow---with the result (once more) of making the text say something it is NOT.

So this will be our approach---to SEE the BIG PICTURE of the BOOK and then USE that to help us to interpret its smaller details.

And what will AID us in that PROCESS is AN ACRONYM that (from now on) I want you to be thinking about everytime you attempt to study your BIBLE (or determine its meaning)....

And that ACRONYM is "B.U.S.I" (BUSI!)

"BUSI" represents The STEPS in the process I have just DISCUSSED with you –and therefore what we should follow...IT is essentially what I follow EVERYTIME I STUDY my BIBLE.

AND (here) then is what that ACRONYM stands for and means...

"B" stands for BACKSTORY = The background and story behind the book. This will include knowing things like:

- (Author) Who wrote it and what do we know about him
- (Audience/Recipient) Who was it written to and what do we know about them
- (Date) When it was written
- (Location) Where is the audience, author or content of the book pointing
- (Occasion) What was going on at the time the book was written

---Some of this information you will find in the pages of book itself , some in other Scripture, and some you will not find in either place--but instead through additional resources (Bible Surveys, Encyclopedias, Histories and Study-Bibles).

--Anytime you read your BIBLE (and most especially) if you are endeavoring to understand what it is saying, you need to know the BACKSTORY of the book you are READING--b/c it WILL provide valuable insight and information regarding what the UNIFYING THEME of the BOOK is (which is what next letter stands for)...

"U" stands for Unifying Theme = What is the dominant/overarching idea/message which is supported by (not only the BACKSTORY) but also the Specific Subjects in its contents ?—which is what the NEXT letter stands for...

"S" stands for specific subjects =those individual topics which the book gives us INSIGHT/INSTRUCTION in---which is (then) what our last letter stands for...

"I" stands for Instruction. Romans 15:4 tell us that what is written DOWN as Scripture is there for "our instruction"---which means that THERE is something being TAUGHT in every TEXT---whether it be in the form of NARRATIVE or POETRY or LETTERS of correspondence---ALL of it is there TO ESTABLISH PROPOSITIONAL TRUTH which is invaluable to KNOWING GOD in a saving way and living before HIM in a way that is pleasing to Him: to being His people and CHURCH.

And when I say "ALL OF IT" I mean (literally) ALL OF IT!!!!

There is nothing (iow) in your BIBLE which is non-essential or THERE as JUST filler....

Even the salutations and closing remarks contain VALUABLE instruction!

And so that is HOW we want to look at it---AND we want START with the BACKSTORY---which is WHERE we are NOW READY TO GO---in relation to the BOOK of TITUS---the book I told you to start reading and thinking about LAST week...

What (then) is the BACKSTORY of this book? (we again need to know this---if we are to discover what it is about)...

B1 = The author is the apostle and missionary, Paul.

-He was probably the greatest missionary to ever live. The book of Acts (13-28) records three of his missionary journeys. He served in that capacity for essentially 20 years (46/47-66/67 AD), covering 2 continents, over a 2,000 miles on foot and planting at least 6 churches (Lystra, Derbe, Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus).

*BTW—the word “missionary” never shows up in the Bible—and that b/c the term used is instead “evangelist”.

-Support: (Act 6:5 w/8:5ff and 21:8) (this then is what Eph 4:11 is talking about)—not guys who travel from church to church hold gospel meetings and tent revivals! They are instead pastor/elders who are sent abroad to plant additional churches—something we are going to talk MORE about once we get into chapter 1 of TITUS.

B2 = The recipient is Titus, who was also a missionary/evangelist.

-(2Co 8:23)

-Had been with Paul almost from the beginning (at least by 48/49 AD) since Paul mentions him at Jerusalem council (which took place around that time) ((Gal 2:1-3))

-He was not a Jew (Gal 2:3), which means he wasn't from Jerusalem or Samaria (since in those regions they were only speaking to Jews and half-Jews-Samaritans about the gospel)---it wasn't until ANTIOCH that the gospel was shared with Gentiles (non-jews) (Act 11). Which means that (ML) this is where he was from—meaning he was a part of the church that Paul was first a pastor AT according also to Act 11.

-So he was a member of Antioch Baptist Church... was with Paul almost from the beginning as a missionary (two yrs later at most)...and went to Jerusalem council---

--WHICH also MEANS he was ONE of the “others” not mentioned by name in 15:2 ---((Act 14:26-15:2))

-This further MEANS that by the time the BOOK of TITUS is written, TITUS has been a missionary for close to 15 yrs...

B3 = The date of writing is between 62-64 AD.

—It was written after Paul's first ROMAN IMPRISONMENT under Nero (Act 28) (and just before NERO'S edict of EMPIRE-WIDE persecution against Christianity---the most horrific and bloody persecution against Christians in the history of the world).

-Support: the letter mentions obedience to authorities BUT nothing more. You would expect some mention of persecution by them—or persecution in general as Paul does all over 2 Timothy which he wrote while suffering in a prison cell under that persecution in 66/67 (2Ti 1:7-8, 2:3, 8-13,3:12, 4:6, 18).

-(BTW) this persecution may be why Paul says that some had deserted him—including TITUS himself—see ((2Ti 4:10---elipsis)---which means we very likely HAVE a book written to a man WHO eventually apostatized from the faith (“he loved this present world”). And even if he didn’t (nor Demas or Crescens)---there is nonetheless a powerful LESSON that is communicated through this:

-ASSURANCE OF SALVATION is NEVER to be found in PERSONAL EXPERIENCE but rather PERSEVERING FAITHFULNESS

-(Consider Titus’ life—if anyone had reason to find assurance in their experiences it was him): he not only had the personal experience of being a missionary partner w/ the Apostle Paul—but also --- knowing that a book of the BIBLE was written w/his name on it! Yet all of that meant NOTHING when he died and stood before the Lord (Mat 10:21; 2Ti 2:11-13).

-Paul knew this (and so) NEVER “rested” in personal experience (i.e. Damascus road) : ((1Co 9:24-27))-- ἀδόκιμος –this word is only used when speaking about those that are damned to Hell.

Q: What about the sovereignty of God in salvation? What about faith in the finished work of Christ?

-If we are truly saved, we WILL NEVER apostasize---b/c God has NOT only made us a new creation which will be faithful to Him (Jer 31; Eze 36; 1Jo 3), but HE has also ORDAINED that we will “gain the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ” (2Th 2:14)---which means WE WILL PERSEVERE to end (Jud 24)!

-However, the only WAY we know such things is by examining our lives—are we persevering when things GET tough (or the Word of God challenges us in a way we don’t like—Joh 6). Those who are truly saved will (by God’s grace and sovereign work in their lives) continue to FIGHT the good fight (not perfectly—Ex. Peter)---BUT faithfully (iow: this NOT failure will be what characterizes our life---this was true even for Peter—he repented and stopped being a coward).

-In relation to having faith in the finished work of Christ (as our assurance): NOWHERE in the BIBLE does it ever say to LOOK to Christ’s finished work on the cross---or just keep trusting that what He did was sufficient—as the means to personal assurance of salvation---DO YOU KNOW WHY?---B/C that TRUTH (Christ’s work was sufficient and able to save to the uttermost) HAS NOTHING to DO with why most people are questioning their salvation! IT’S NOT an issue of whether it was complete –BUT whether that completed work has been APPLIED to my life! IOW: Whether or not I truly have saving faith!!!! Which brings us full circle---since the way YOU KNOW you have saving faith is that you possess an enduring/persevering faithfulness to Christ (no matter what). It is our behavior WHICH REVEALS what we truly believe (2Pe 1:5-11; Mat 7).

-AGAIN (as it relates to TITUS) we don't know for sure whether Paul's words refer to something that was permanent (he deserted and never repented and came back)---OR (that) it was only temporary.

-If I had to guess, I would say he repented (like Peter) and was faithful again—Support (Tit 1:4)--
γνησίω --true is a bad translation—this word literally means genuine or legitimate.

B4 = The location is Crete.

-(Tit 1:5)

-What we know about Crete (during that time):

-It was/is a very small island (40 miles wide and 150 miles long) in the western portion of the Mediterranean Sea which Scripture (Act 27) only mentions Paul going to once around (60 AD) on his way to Rome.

-It was a culture so filled with rebellion, lying, evil and laziness that those professing faith in Christ needed MAJOR discipleship and tough leadership/love ((Tit 1:12-13))

(which leads us directly to our FINAL YET most important piece of back-story INFO---the occasion for writing)...

B5 = The occasion for writing is unfinished missionary business in Crete.

-(ML) the island had been evangelized by Paul (since Acts 27:9) makes it clear they spent a “considerable” amount of time there. YET PAUL HAD to go—leaving things UNFINISHED....

-This is when AND WHY (then) he “dropped off” TITUS--- ((Tit 1:5))—(lit.) “set in order what is lacking (meaning---in relation to the missionary work!)”

--THERE WAS FAR MORE LEFT TO DO!!!!

(For instance):

-There were (as I already mentioned) a lot of believers WHO needed major discipleship (and tough love)

-There were ALSO (at this point) NO CHURCHES on the island.

(Notice Paul doesn't tell Titus to est. elders in the churches---BUT rather “every city” —very different from what is said in ((Act 14:23)). If there were churches, no doubt Paul would have said so (as it does in

Act 14)...AND when we get to these verses I will EXPLAIN more of WHAT is going on—BUT at the VERY LEAST—what WE need to take NOTE OF (now) is the FACT that there were NO churches....

-AND finally, there was a whole bunch of “PR” work to be done with the local authorities (Tit 3:1)

AGAIN—FAR MORE MISSIONARY WORK left to DO (and lots of instruction regarding that very thing in this letter)...from how to pick elders and train disciples to how to establish good relations with foreign authorities...

WHICH MEANS WHEN YOU PUT ALL of that TOGETHER:

Paul —a missionary---writing to another missionary ---about the work and responsibilities of a missionary in a new mission field---WHAT YOU END UP WITH as the unifying theme of the BOOK—that which all the specific subjects in the chapters and verse will SUPPORT and be tied TO is this...

U= The Missionary's Operation Manual

-THAT (I believe) is THE MAIN/UNIFYING THEME of the book...

-THAT (IOW) is WHAT the BOOK IS!!!

-IT is the uniquely COMPACT YET content -laden, power-packed, field guide and operations manual for those desiring to either raise up missionaries, or become one themselves.

-Therefore, this is the book every CHURCH and every person aspiring to be a missionary for GOD must know...

--AND that (then) is why God gave us this little book, so that there would be NO GUESSING as to the WHAT, HOW and WHY of this very important ROLE.

--Which MEANS that we don't need to turn anywhere else---or buy some book from the local Christian bookstore---to understand what it means to be a missionary....GOD'S WORD is fully sufficient to provide the answer!---AND DOES in TITUS.

--This should be the BOOK missionaries and mission boards and churches sending or supporting missionaries are looking to as their GUIDE and AUTHORITY in this AREA (the book of TITUS).

--Which FURTHER means that UNTIL a CHURCH/CHRISTIAN has read and understood this book THEY have no business even thinking about MISSIONARY endeavors!!!!

SO (AGAIN---this (I believe) is the UNIFYING THEME (the BIG PICTURE view) of TITUS...

IT IS the Missionary's Operations Manual---the place where we find the WHAT, HOW and WHY of biblical missionaries and missions.

AND (then) is what we are going to SEE supported by the SPECIFIC SUBJECTS of each CHAPTER---starting w/chapter ONE—

WHICH MEANS as you READ that chapter this WEEK (which is your next assignment) I want you TO THINK ABOUT it UNDER this HEADER, "The missionary's operations manual"---which means whatever you come up with—as SPECIFIC subjects and instruction (under those subjects) SHOULD BE things which you would EXPECT to find in a MISSIONARY'S OPERATION MANUAL.

So be reading and thinking about that THIS WEEK—now KNOWING what the main/unifying theme is--- AND (if) you have trouble with that---give me a call---or just wait until next week---and YOU can see HOW I unpack it...

AND TRUST ME---once you do see HOW I am doing all of this—not only will it forever change the way you look at/study your BIBLE---but it will EXCITE you to DO it!

I guarantee it!!!

Well with that (then) let's close our time TODAY---and we will pick up with chapter one NEXT WEEK.

Let's Pray

[PRAY]

S1 =