**How To Study the Bible**

**Pastoral Epistles**

**Titus 1:1-4**

In verse 1, Paul describes himself as a servant (NIV). How does your translation have it?

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness-- Titus 1:1 (NIV)

Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to build up the faith of God’s elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness, Titus 1:1 (HCSB)

Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, Titus 1:1 (NASB)

I, Paul, am God's slave and Christ's agent for promoting the faith among God's chosen people, getting out the accurate word on God and how to respond rightly to it. Titus 1:1 (MSG)

**What is the difference between a servant and a slave?**

Over the last twelve chapters, we’ve considered both the biblical and historical basis for this profound paradigm. We have considered the crucial difference between servants and slaves—noting that while servants are hired, slaves are owned. Believers are not merely Christ’s hired servants; they are His slaves, belonging to Him as His possession. He is their Owner and Master, worthy of their unquestioned allegiance and absolute obedience. His Word is their final authority; His will, their ultimate mandate. Having taken up their cross to follow Him, they have died to themselves and can now say with Paul, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal. 2:20). As the apostle elsewhere explained, “[Christ] died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf ” (2 Cor. 5:15) — [**Slave: The Hidden Truth About Your Identity in Christ**](https://kindle.amazon.com/work/slave-hidden-identity-christ-ebook/B003X1X21W/B004774LS4) by John MacArthur

**Repeat after me: I am a slave of Christ. How does that sound to you? How does that feel to you?**

As a businessman, I decided it was time to sell everything to the Lord Jesus, as they say, "lock, stock and barrel!" We, in effect, turned over the title deed of our lives. Vonette and I even chose the use of a written contract as a way of concretely stating our hearts' desire to allow Jesus to be Owner of All. In my heart, I was thinking, Lord, You are the Master of my life; all I own or ever hope to own is Yours; all I am or ever hope to be is Yours; You bought me, I am Your slave. I trust You to take care of me, because I know, now, how much You love me. Read more at location 284 • Delete this highlight

Vonette and I each literally signed the contract with our Lord to be His slaves. We specified that we understood that He owned us and all we had. We surrendered our lives to His decision and control. I know now, with the benefit of hindsight, that this decision was merely a way for me to recognize the joy of what theologians call "spiritual slavery." It is the beginning of the outworking of the joy of our salvation (see Phil. 2:12). I journeyed from being the master of my own fate to realizing the enormity of God's love and incredible plan for my life and wanting to serve Him completely and forever. I wanted to be a slave to such a wonderful Master! — [**My Life Is Not My Own: Following God No Matter the Cost**](https://kindle.amazon.com/work/life-not-own-following-ebook/B003F4OXYC/B0045OW9EM) by Bill Bright

**Would you like Christianity better if it didn’t have the slave part?**

I am afraid many would like Christian living better if it did not involve any serving. It is not hard to understand why. We are steeped in a culture that constantly reinforces the message that work is bad and that happiness comes from leisure and pleasure. We want to rest and be entertained; we don’t to want to work.

Remember the old beer commercials? “It just doesn’t get any better than this.” What were those guys doing? Were they hard at work?

Ever seen a bumper sticker that says, “I’d rather be working?” I have seen plenty that say, “I’d rather be fishing” or hunting, or camping or RVing. Anything but working. Or, how about this one: “Work fascinates me: I can sit and look at it all day long.” We “Thank God Its Friday” because on Friday you have the weekend off from work. We are taught to dread Monday because on Monday we have to go back to work. No one ever saw a bumper sticker that said, “Thank God it’s Monday.”

The irony is this. There is a boatload of evidence that suggests people are actually happier at work. — Josh Hunt. Obedience.

**If you were Paul, is this how you would introduce yourself?**

The mightiest of the saints were known for their humility. Though Moses had served as prince of Egypt and emancipator of the slaves, the Bible says, “Moses was . . . more humble than anyone else” (Num. 12:3 NIV).

The apostle Paul was saved through a personal visit from Jesus. He was carried into the heavens and had the ability to raise the dead. But when he introduced himself, he mentioned none of these. He simply said, “I, Paul, am God’s slave” (Titus 1:1 MSG).

John the Baptist was a blood relative of Jesus and the first evangelist in history, but he is remembered in Scripture as the one who resolved, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30 NKJV). — Traveling Light / Lucado, M. (2006). Grace for the moment® volume ii: more inspirational thoughts for each day of the year. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

**What is the application for us? What do we learn about Christian living from Paul’s example?**

The apostle Paul knew to go low and not high. He was saved through a personal visit from Jesus, granted a vision of the heavens and the ability to raise the dead. But when he introduced himself, he simply stated, “I, Paul, am God’s slave” (Titus 1:1 MSG). John the Baptist was a blood relative of Jesus and one of the most famous evangelists in history. But he is remembered in Scripture as the one who resolved: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). . . .

The greatest example of this humility is none other than Jesus Christ. Who had more reason to boast than he? Yet he never did. He walked on water but never strutted on the beach. He turned a basket into a buffet but never demanded applause. A liberator and a prophet came to visit him, but he never dropped names in his sermon. He could have. “Just the other day I was conferring with Moses and Elijah.” But Jesus never thumped his chest. He refused even to take credit. “I can do nothing on my own” (John 5:30 NRSV). He was utterly reliant upon the Father and the Holy Spirit. “All by myself ”? Jesus never spoke such words. If he didn’t, how dare we?

We can rise too high but can never stoop too low. What gift are you giving that he did not first give? What truth are you teaching that he didn’t first teach? You love. But who loved you first? You serve. But who served the most? What are you doing for God that he could not do alone?

How kind of him to use us. How wise of us to remember. —OUTLIVE YOUR LIFE / Lucado, M. (2011). Live loved: experiencing god’s presence in everyday life. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

**Apostle is not a word we use too much outside of church. What exactly does it mean?**

“Paul, an apostle . . .”An apostle is a person invited by Christ to be with him and then sent out to represent his gospel. . . . That is Paul’s identity. Everything he did and spoke and wrote was a result of being with Christ and being sent out by Christ. . . . He had nothing of his own to say, no good works of his own to practice. He was an authorized and commissioned representative of his Lord.

Kierkegaard once distinguished between a genius and an apostle by saying that the genius impresses us with his own brilliance, the apostle with God’s glory. — TRAVELING LIGHT / Peterson, E. H. (2004). God’s message for each day: wisdom from the word of god. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

**What was Paul’s life purpose?**

Paul furthers the message of unconditional care by explaining the purpose of his apostleship. He is an apostle of Jesus Christ “for the faith of God’s elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness” (v. 1b). This extremely compact language explicitly reminds us of the means of grace. Paul does not tell others what they must do to qualify as God’s elect but rather speaks of the “faith” that characterizes those who are God’s. Those who believe are “God’s elect,” meaning their eternal status is determined by the love of a heavenly heart and not by the work of human hands. — Hughes, R. K., & Chapell, B. (2000). 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: to guard the deposit. Preaching the Word (pp. 276–277). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

**Verse 1. Was Paul’s purpose evangelism?**

Paul’s concern, however, was not just that faith should begin—vital as that is. He wanted to see their faith increase. On the one hand he knew that a growing faith is one of the great keys to Christian usefulness, happiness, and holiness. On the other hand he knew that God is glorified by a growing faith. Accordingly, it was to the nurture or the increase of their faith that much of his ministry as a servant and apostle was directed. He wanted God’s elect to be a people who were strong in their faith, i.e. a people whose faith embraced more and more of divine truth and whose grasp of divine truth was more and more firm.

And that is still one of the great aims of Paul’s apostolic ministry. The man himself is of course no longer here in person. He has been in heaven now for the best part of 2,000 years. But his apostolic work goes on. Through the letters that he wrote and which have been incorporated into the New Testament, Paul continues to speak to us as an apostle of Jesus Christ. And he does so for the nurturing of the faith of God’s elect. — Campbell, D. (2007). Opening up Titus. Opening Up Commentary (p. 15). Leominster: Day One Publications.

**Look at three words in this introduction: faith, knowledge and godliness? How are they related?**

Paul described a process that he wanted to carry out in his ministry. The process began with faith, developed in knowledge, and exercised itself in godliness. He wanted men and women to be mature in Jesus Christ. This was his ultimate objective by which he evaluated all he did.

How would your church evaluate its ultimate objectives? What specific goals does it desire to accomplish? Do the programs, ministries, and service opportunities bring believers to spiritual maturity? Do established members reflect good Christian conduct and desire for Christian service? Are the smaller groups in church reaching out, or are they closed in on themselves? Consider how you can be involved in clarifying and implementing the ultimate objectives of your church. — Life Application Bible Commentary – 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus.