

## Titus 24-07-10a

Greetings, this is the 10th of July, 2024. We're continuing our new study in looking at the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Titus. We have taken a look at the first couple of verses and an overall survey of its structure.

There is of course, an introduction and conclusion. Within that, there are two primary sections that open with an acknowledgement of a threat of false teaching and close with an exhortation to resist it, to refute it, to counteract it. And this letter is very pertinent and timely for us because we are in a similar situation to those believers on the Island of Crete to whom Titus has been detailed to minister, let's ask God's blessing as we continue this look at the letter and we'll begin.

Father, we're so grateful for this manna from heaven that has the supernatural power to minister to our souls in such a constructive and fruitful way, things that we could never do on our own, that for which we lack any capacity or strength is fully possible and is able to be accomplished through this inspired word in the presence of your Holy Spirit to lead us and to guide us in it. We pray that as we move forward into the early part of this letter that the Holy Spirit will help us to see that it does contain meaningful guidance and helpful insight for us in the day in which we live, the challenges we face, the opportunities that are presented to us. We pray that in all things, the Lord Jesus will be glorified.

We ask it in his name, amen. Paul, a bond servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. As previously mentioned, this idea of bond servant is frequent in Paul's descriptions of himself.

There are five Greek words in the New Testament that describe or designate someone who is rendering service. And it's important for us to understand because they reflect different aspects, different situations, different responsibilities, different limitations. And of the available words, it is notable that Paul uses *doulos* to describe himself.

And you can write these down or you can just listen to the concepts, but there are five different classes or kinds of service that are detailed by these. *Doulos* is the first and the one of interest to us at this point. The second one is *therapon*.

Just think therapy or therapist and *therapon*. It just ends in O-N, but *therapon*. The third one is familiar to you, *diakonos*.

The fourth is *oiketes*. And if you know that *oikos* is the Greek word for house, *oiketes* almost tells you its meaning right off the bat. So the final one is *huperetes*, H-U-P-E-R-E-T-E-S.

And that of course means to dwell under, a hyper, above and below and so on. So we'll

look at these mainly to understand why Paul so frequently brings up the fact that he is a servant or slave of Jesus Christ. And there's been great debate about which of those translations is best.

Should it say a slave of Jesus Christ or a servant of Jesus Christ? Now, this is not just an academic decision or observation because all of us are to serve and we have different capacities of service and different kinds of service. And understanding what it is by way of obligation that we have, what kind of authority we function under and what sort of service we render is really important. When you wake up in the morning and you dress for another day and grab a bite of breakfast or a cup of coffee and sally forth into the world at large, doing whatever, some of us are more stay at home, others of us go out into the world of people and responsibilities and traffic and whatnot.

To be aware and to have a firm grasp on who we are and why we're here is essential to expend our time and energy in a way that pleases God and accomplishes his purposes for us. If you don't know your purpose, you're gonna have a hard time fulfilling it. If you don't know the target, how can you possibly shoot at it and hit it? So understanding that there are aspects of each of these kinds of service that pertain to us and depending on what we're doing, what situation, what circumstance we find ourselves in, we can resort to these types of service to see which one applies to me.

There is a deacon and he's got a certain kind of service. There is an oiketes, he's got a certain kind of service. There is a doulos and he's got a different kind of obligation.

So what are they? Doulos is by far the most common word in the New Testament for a servant and it designates someone who typically was born into slavery. Doulos actually comes from the word that means to be bound. And so you're bound to the master and the emphasis when you talk about a doulos or douloid in the plural, it focuses on their obligation based on their relationship to the master.

This is service that is defined by and colored by how you are related to the master. So it's a permanent relationship, typically only broken by death. Kenneth Wiest has a wonderful set of books.

They're probably close to a hundred years old now, but a word studies in the Greek New Testament. And he says, this doulos is in a permanent relationship to his master, which relationship could only be broken by death, one whose will was swallowed up in the will of his master, one who served his master, even to the extent that he disregarded his own interests. This word was used in the first century world as a designation of a class of slaves that represented a most abject and servile condition.

Now that's not the full picture for this word, but it certainly includes that as a part of its description. So when Paul is talking about being enslaved to sin, this is the word that he's going to use. For example, in Romans 6, 17, God be thanked that though you were

slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

And there is this idea of transfer in Romans 6, 17 from being carnal sold under sin, a slave to sin, an abject servile condition of fulfilling sin's purposes and functions and goals, and being delivered over to a new master. And this slave that normally would have no opt-out clause, no get out of service free card, by God's grace, God be thanked that though you were douloi, you were slaves of sin, you obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine to which you were delivered. Now, what does that tell you? If you obeyed from the heart, the doctrine, who is the master now? To whom or what should we be as dedicated and as defined by as we were when we were carnal and sold under sin? We should now be those who reflect the truth and reflect doctrine, which is the pattern of sound faith, wholesome words that we've seen in 1 Timothy and are gonna see again here in Titus.

So when Paul says, instead of being a slave of sin, he is a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, the service is defined by relationship to the master. And if he is a good and beneficent master, then that slavery is not gonna be abject misery. It is gonna be something into which we can throw ourselves 110% and subsume our will to the will of our master and serve with his interest at heart.

And this is the ideal of what you could call good slavery. So as with Romans 1, 1, that we saw last time, when Paul says he is a bondservant of Jesus Christ, here he says he is a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. But the servility and abjectness of service under sin is, has diminished and disappeared because this is a positive, wholesome, mutually beneficial kind of service, because it is defined by love, not by entrapment.

It is a worthy thing to be the slave of a master who wants only our good and the good of others as the fruit and function of this service, that it is set against the negativity of slavery to sin. And it is different in its effect on the slave. It is different in its effect on others.

And it is different in the objectives that it serves because the master is completely opposite. So Bible writers use do laws to describe the Christian. And there is in retaining this word, an idea of remembering the humility that goes with being a servant, a slave.

So the first point of emphasis is the, the relationship to the master. The second is the humility that is necessary when a servant recognizes that he's not setting the agenda, he's not defining the objectives. He is not a part of some sort of conclave and committee meeting where he gets to chip in on what should be done and how it should be done.

There is a recognition that I must be about the master's business. Just as Jesus said, I must be about my father's business. And that relationship is first, the humility that is

necessary to be a good servant, good and, you know, we all want to hear, well done thou good and faithful servant.

Enter into the joy of your master, your Lord. So when you see bond servant, servant or slave, depending on the translation, these are the ideas that are intrinsic to the word. The reader can see for himself how the classical usage of the word is in exact accord with its doctrinal implications in the New Testament, says Wiest.

For instance, a sinner is born into slavery to sin by his physical birth, and we are born into a loving servitude to the Lord Jesus by our spiritual new birth. As human beings, we are going to be a slave to something. And when you think of the Lord Jesus words in talking about no man can serve two masters, we are going to serve one or the other.

We just can't serve them both. But *doulos* is found many, many places. Some of these are really helpful in grasping the meaning of it.

So we recently reviewed this scene and this word occurs in it. You remember the Roman centurion, and he tells Jesus, you don't need to come under my roof to heal my servant. And he uses the word *doulos*, but later on, he uses a different word that is my boy.

And you can tell that there was a love relationship, a very great deal of concern that the centurion would risk reputation, the thoughts of others, questions from Rome and whatever else to come to the Lord Jesus. But in Matthew 8, 9, when he says, I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. I say to this one, go, and he goes, and to another come, and he comes, and to my servant, my *doulos*, do this, and he does it.

There is a third aspect. If you're keeping track of these, the first aspect of *doulos* is emphasis of being bound to the master, bound by birth. The second is humility, the necessary submission that is a part of that service.

And the third is recognition and submission to authority. There's humility, and there is submissive respect for that authority. In Matthew 10, 24, Jesus said, a disciple is not above his teacher, nor is a servant above his master.

There is submission. There is recognition. I occupy a lower rung of the ladder.

And Jesus goes on to say, it is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher. It is enough that a servant be like his master. So when we are carnal soul under sin, we reflect sin, we manifest sin, we practice sin, we embody sin.

When we are spiritually born and enter into a new relationship, we should be like our heavenly father. In Matthew 13, 27, the parable of the wheat and the tares, when time passes and the field begins to sprout and the servants look out there and they see that there is this mixture of good and bad herbage, the servants of the owner come and say to him, sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares? And

the fourth observation with regard to dew loss is notice in that story how the master responds. He says to them, the master says to his do-loy, to his servants, an enemy has done this.

The servants said to him, do you want us then to go and gather them up? And he says, no, let them both grow again until the harvest. But a good master in a healthy master-slave relationship, and there are people who, as soon as you say slavery and slave and master, start vibrating and human merchandise and trafficking in bodies and vibrate so hard that all further discussion and example is lost. There is nothing intrinsically evil about slavery.

I could get knocked off the airwaves for trying to say this if I were on the airwaves, which I'm not, but we have been successfully brainwashed by political correctness and other things to lose important biblical truths. The Bible never, Old Testament or new, ever, ever comes out against slavery. In fact, it is generally presented in a positive light.

It was a fact of life in biblical times. And we are pictured, Paul the apostle, writing inspired scripture, says, I am a slave. And this is the lowest, most abject form of servitude in the ancient Near East.

The Greco-Roman world is to be a doulos. There is no slave lower than doulos. If it was evil, Paul doesn't say, I am a prostitute to Christ.

I am a, you know, some other, you know, I'm a murderer for Jesus or some other genuinely evil, sinful thing. Anything can be perverted, can be co-opted, can be turned into an occasion for abuse, oppression, rank and gross sin and evil. But slavery in and of itself is not evil.

God enslaved his own people in Egypt and it was for their benefit. And he reminds them of it in the centuries following their deliverance. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt.

Therefore be kind to those who are slaves in your nation. Under the law of Moses, there are regulations for the fair, equitable and kind treatment of slaves, not the abolition of slavery. And if slavery was intrinsically evil, why would God regulate it instead of just banning it? Jesus uses examples from slavery.

We have exhortations that we've already seen in first Timothy and we'll see again, for slaves to be loyal, faithful and good servants. To their masters and masters equally to treat their slaves kindly. Paul doesn't write the letter of Philemon and say, what's the matter with you? Why are you holding slaves? He says, this slave is now a brother and I appeal to you to treat him as such.

He doesn't, in fact, he sends him back into his slavery. He doesn't say, well, you know, slavery is wrong. And as an apostle, I've liberated him and you're not to take him back as

a slave.

It's people just lose their ability to reason when it comes to certain subjects. And we have to understand truth as it is presented by the author of truth, God himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the truth. And there is nothing intrinsically evil about slavery.

There are plenty of opportunities for people to practice evil, to be evil, to be abusive and to be justly condemned for it, but it's not intrinsic to the situation. So you have due loss in Matthew chapter 18 and you come to the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants, his douloi, his slaves. So the Lord Jesus does not compare the kingdom of heaven to a brothel or a house of prostitution.

He's not gonna use something that is intrinsically evil to illustrate the kingdom of heaven. So turning back to Matthew 28, the word occurs, I'm sorry, Matthew 18, occurs several times in this context, beginning at verse 23. A certain king wanted to settle accounts with his slaves, his douloi.

When he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him 10,000 talents. He was not able to pay. His master commanded that he be sold with his wife and children and all that he had and that payment be made.

The servant therefore fell down before him saying, master have patience with me and I will pay you all. I will pay you everything. So the master of that servant was moved with compassion and released him and forgave him the debt.

But that servant, that doulois went out and found one of his fellow douloi who owed him a hundred denarii, laid hands on him, took him by the throat saying, pay me what you owe. So his fellow doulois fell down at his feet, begged him saying, have patience with me and I will pay you all. But he would not, went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

So when his fellow douloi saw what had been done, they were grieved. They came and told their master all that had been done. His master, after he had called him, said to him, you wicked doulois, I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.

Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow doulois, just as I had pity on you? And his master was angry and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So my heavenly father also will do to you if each of you from his heart does not forgive his brother his trespasses." Well, it actually ends with forgive his brother. Trespasses, you can scratch that out.

It was added later. But you can see that it doesn't always get reserved for the depiction of abject grinding slavery. There was a debt.

The master was kind and forgave this enormous debt to his servant. But notice that the

relationship did not produce in the servant the kind of character that is present in the master who has a generous and forgiving spirit. He should be a servant that reflects that character, should have humility, do unto others as I would have done to me and so on, didn't happen.

And so this servant is unlike his master. He is not compassionate. He is not humble.

He doesn't learn from the example of the master. And because he doesn't learn from the positive, he is now going to learn from the negative. And Jesus could have stopped this story earlier, but he doesn't.

He carries it through to the finish and there are dire consequences for not learning and becoming like the master. If we do not forgive, how many times does Jesus teach this? Forgive us as we forgive those who sin against us. And if we do not forgive others, we ourselves will not be forgiven.

And the scariest thing about this story, as I have said many times across the years, is that you can be unforgiven, unforgiven. The debt was removed, but by lack of forgiveness of his fellow servant, the master restores the debt that had been forgiven and the forgiveness is rescinded. That is scary.

What is it that we need to do to somebody else who has wronged us that is worth losing our standing, our relationship to the master? How in anybody's reckoning can it be worth it? It just isn't. We should let it go, disinvest. I freely, happily forgive you.

Don't worry about it. I've buried the hatchet. I've forgotten it.

I'll never bring it up again. I'm not gonna dig it up like an old bone the next time we have a dispute. It's gone, it's over, it's finished.

I have let it go. I can't get away fast enough and far enough from wanting to hold a grudge or hold some wrong against someone in this light. I do not want the Lord God in heaven reattaching me to my failures and my sins because I've got an unforgiving spirit and a recalcitrant heart.

It is so not worth it. What do you hope to gain? It's craziness, but it is a principle of scripture and we would only know it because there is the situation there is the situation of slavery. There are masters and slaves, and it is a human means of depicting the distance between God in heaven and ourselves.

It is not the only one. It's not the defining one. We also are children and he is our heavenly father.

We are related to each other, not only as fellow servants, but also as brothers and sisters in Christ. Sometimes we are brothers and sisters. Other times there are elders and there

are those who are younger.

There are different metaphors and different constructs depending on the situation. And we need to be sensitive to that and aware of that. That's why we're reviewing the different kinds of slave.

Well, I wish I had time to go through all of the passages that use Dulas, but you can get a concordance and go through them yourself. But there are dozens and dozens and dozens. There is a verb associated with it.

Duleo has the same root as Dulas and the same implications to be a slave, to serve, to do service, to obey, to submit. In a good sense, it is to yield obedience to, to obey the commands and render service due to someone. When they have the authority, it is God ordained, God designated, God has delegated, then we should render service, render obeisance, render obedience, render to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, because God has appointed him his place.

You find this, for example, in Acts chapter seven, verse six, God spoke in this way that his descendants, Abraham's descendants would dwell in a foreign land and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them for a hundred years, bring them into servitude. Romans 6, 18, having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. Set free from sin, slaves of righteousness.

So instead of embodying the character of the one, we should embody the character of righteousness. Same thing in verse 22 of that chapter, Romans 6, 22. Now, having been set free from sin, having become slaves of God, you have your fruit with a view toward unto holiness and the outcome, the purpose, the goal, the end, everlasting life.

As we bear fruit to holiness in this life, we are building into the end, the goal and the purpose, which is everlasting life. That's Romans 6, 22. Be not unequally yoked together.

If you come to faith and your partner does not, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7, 15, if the faithless one departs, let them depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage, is not under servitude in such cases. You start out as unbelievers, you come to faith, the other person does not, and they don't want to stay with you anymore.

They say, if you're gonna be one of those Christians, I'm leaving, let them go. You are not bound. This is doulos and douleo with the idea of being bound, being obligated.

You are not bound in such cases. God has called us to peace. This is the principle.

You can try to create rules and well, if this many times somebody says a thing or if you catch them doing this or you find them doing that, that's the law. Paul says in situations where there is a mixture of faith and no faith, those who are brothers and sisters and those who are not, God calls us to peace. Follow the path of peace.

Sometimes the best way to preserve the peace is to put a distance. If somebody is faithless and you are faithful, the best way to maintain the peace is don't be clashing. Don't be arguing and debating and questioning one another and insulting one another about choices and so on.

God has called us to peace. 1 Corinthians 9, 19, Paul says, "Though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all that I might win the more. I have voluntarily placed myself in servitude in order to win, in order to bring over those who will respond to faith.

Galatians 4, 3, similar idea to what we saw in Romans. When we were children, we were in bondage. We were in servitude under the elements of the world.

By the way, don't be in bondage and in servitude to news coverage, to political developments, to world news, to what's happening in this hot spot of the world or that. We are enslaved. We are in bondage to our spiritual Lord, our spiritual master.

That is our dedication. That is where we bear our fruit with a view toward holiness and its end eternal life. Nothing that happens politically, nothing that happens socially, nothing that happens geopolitically is going to make a difference when it comes to, am I serving and pleasing God? And am I a fit instrument for the master now and in the ages to come? And to allow ourselves to be co-opted, to be distracted, to be told narratives and stories and be led down a path of concern and frustration and throwing things against the wall because this frustrating thing happened and this gloriously wonderful thing happened and my guy got elected or the bad guy got defeated or this issue has been temporarily or permanently squashed.

That is bondage. When we were children, we were in bondage under the elements of the world. Any rank unbeliever can be swayed by the news and by social trends and so on.

We are to be free of that. We're gonna see this in this book, Titus 2.3. Older women likewise should be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine. And the given to means not in bondage to, not enslaved to a lot of wine.

And we've got wine coming up in the second session tonight and so we'll save that until then. And finally, 2 Peter 2.19. These false teachers promise their listeners liberty. They promise them liberty but they themselves are slaves of corruption.

For by whom a person is enslaved, overcome, by him he is brought into bondage, into due loss relationship. If something overcomes, it brings you into servitude. So bad teaching can enslave in a bad way.

So that is due loss. We've got four more to cover. The rest will be a little bit quicker because they're less frequent and less comprehensive and less meaningful for us.

You'll be interested to know what a therapon is. You kind of know what a diakonos is and a huperetes. But all of these pertain to us in certain situations at certain times.

And to be a good and faithful servant, we have to know what kind of service it is incumbent upon us to render. So understanding these terms, it's going to give us insight as we go through Titus. It is also going to let us know how we should understand some of the qualifications that are going to come up as they did in 1 Timothy for those who are in an overseeing capacity as an elder or as a deacon.

And yet in overseeing, you are a diakonos, you are a kind of servant. And this is where you get Jody Dilla's great book title, *The Reign of the Servant Kings*. *Servant Kings*.

But that covers Doolas, so let's pause here and take our break.