Bond-Servants as Brothers:
How the Gospel Transforms
All Relationships!

September 8, 2024 – Titus 2:9-10

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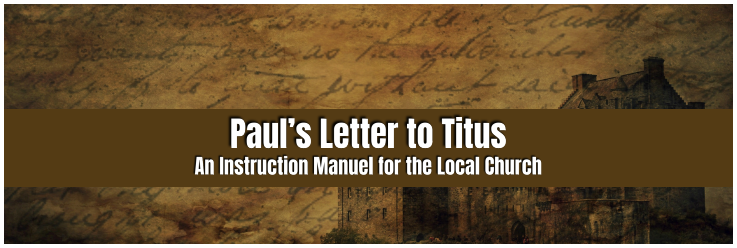

Notes:

Point 1: Summarizing what we've learned so far about Christian relationships: dying to ourselves, surrendering to Christ, seeing everyone from a 'divine point of view' (II Cor. 5:16)

Point 2: Bond-servant believers need to show what obedient service really looks like (Titus 2: 9-10)

Point 3: Reversal of Situation: the weight of the Gospel teaching for those who are in charge (Philemon 1-7)

Point 4: The delicate balance for Paul as mediator—honoring the contract but appealing to a higher 'contract' (Philemon 8-16)

Point 5: The vulnerability of letting the Christ-relationship take priority over all else (Philemon 17-25)

Discussion Questions:

1. What insights into how Christians are to relate to one another and treat one another do you glean from re-reading Titus 1:1-2:8?
2. How does the distinction between the notion of 'chattel slavery' (such as was practiced in the American South before the Civil War), and 'bond servanthood' (doulos) in the New Testament context, allow us to navigate Titus 2:9-10 appropriately?
3. In the broad context of contractual obligation and employment, how does the warning against 'not talking back' and 'not stealing' and 'showing you can be trusted' still resonate in a contemporary context?
4. What is Paul's rhetorical approach (rhetoric is simply the 'art of persuasion') to persuading Philemon to reconcile with Onesimus?
5. What does it mean to say that our relationships as brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ should be the most powerful of all bonds that we share?

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his Native Land.
Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain-road.
He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand!--
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
And fell into the sand.
And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
And the ocean rose to view.
At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds
Beside some hidden stream;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.
The forests, with their myriad tongues,
Shouted of liberty;
And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,
With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep and smiled
At their tempestuous glee.
He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day;
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,
And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away!

September 2024

Week 1 Starting Sept 2	Week 2 Starting Sept 9	Week 3 Starting Sept 16	Week 4 Starting Sept 23	Week 5 Starting Sept 30
Day 1: Hebrews 6	Day 1: John 1	Day 1: John 5	Day 1: John 9	Day 1: John 13
Day 2: Hebrews 7	Day 2: John 2	Day 2: John 6	Day 2: John 10	Day 2: John 14
Day 3: Hebrews 8	Day 3: John 3	Day 3: John 7	Day 3: John 11	Day 3: John 15
Day 4: Hebrews 9	Day 4: John 4	Day 4: John 8	Day 4: John 12	Day 4: John 16
Day 5: Hebrews 10	Day 5: John 1:1-18	Day 5: John 1:19-34	Day 5: John 1:35-51	Day 5: John 2:1-12

[1] Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To God's holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus:
[2] Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
[3] Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Ephesians 1:1-3 (NIV)