

## Season 8: Titus

### Episode 8: Titus: The Best News for the Best Life

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**Felicity:** This season has been sponsored by New Growth Press and we've really enjoyed reading and recommending their books. The most recent one I've picked up has been Parenting Ahead by Kristin Hatton. I love the way in which she helps the reader think, not just about parenting in the moment, but looking ahead to the time when these little people become teenagers. She underpins everything with real, tangible hope as she presents it all through the lens of heaven. And then she gets into the nitty gritty of thinking through the way we parent. Grab a copy at [10ofthose.com](http://10ofthose.com).

**Sarah:** Welcome to the final episode of season eight of Two Sisters and a cup of Tea. My name is Sarah. I live in the UK. This is my sister Felicity. She lives in the USA. And today we're reflecting on the whole letter of Titus. Felicity, good to see you. Good to see you, Sarah.

**Felicity:** Can you believe it, the end of Titus? I mean, I feel like it's gone swiftly, but also it's big, isn't it? Even though it's short. A mixture of short and big and powerful.

**Sarah:** Oh, yeah. It's so short, though, isn't it? I mean, it really feels like it's been a breath. And we're done.

**Felicity:** What's in the cup today, Sarah?

**Sarah:** Well, I have to tell you, I have a delightful cup of tea today. Well, it's preceded by the fact that our kettle died of death this weekend.

**Felicity:** Oh, no.

**Sarah:** At times, all to do with the hard water living here. But then we got a new kettle. Wonderfully. Very thankful for a new kettle and decided to go all out and buy a water filter as well. So I have a filtered cup of tea and there's no scum on the top. There's nothing that looks greatly like lime scale and tastes beautiful.

**Felicity:** Wow, that sounds like a roller coaster. From a broken kettle to the new world.

**Sarah:** And the broken kettle happened on our home group night. And so I was, like, busily trying to serve cups of tea, and five or six later I was like, no, this is not happening. All I could offer people was water or milk.

**Felicity:** Going back to primary school, having your.

**Sarah:** Cup of slightly warm milk, no one took it. What have you got? Just a normal I gray.

**Felicity:** But this is my Earl Gray cup. It's a pleasing kind of smaller, floral one, actually, one that you gave me. And I'm pleased with the cup. The rim is just right.

**Sarah:** It's important, isn't it? Important safely. During the whole of the season, we've been thinking about some questions of what it looks like to get the Bible open with a friend. And our final question is, where could reading the Bible with someone lead to?

**Felicity:** I mean, there's so much that happens when we get this powerful word open with someone else. And so where it could go I mean, that's unfathomable in some ways, isn't it? There's a journey that's begun, I feel, in that. But I think one of the big things is the depth of relationship that comes from being around the Word together. And as the Word, as God goes to work on our hearts through His Word, doing that in community with someone else means that you're kind of having your hearts kind of turned over together, and there's something that there's just an honesty there and a depth of spurring one another on. I think that on a one to one basis, that is just much more able to happen, I think, because there's no one else to steal the limelight, it's just the both of you chatting those things through. So I think that's been one of the greatest rewards for me. What would you say?

**Sarah:** It's just so precious, isn't it, that the time when you realize that something eternally significant is happening as you open up the Word, even if it's in the midst of chaos, of small children, even if it feels like it's on the hoof at some points? I heard someone say this weekend that she prays every day that the Lord would lead her to have conversations that are eternally significant that day. And I just thought, wow, what a prayer. And actually, when

we're intentionally opening the Bible with someone, that is what's happening, isn't it? And I love that, and it just spurs me on. And I think we've been seeing entitled, haven't we, the kind of the healthy church culture of speaking the truth in love to one another and what that looks like to be living side by side, just living life together and also choosing to teach one another and model opening up the Word to one another in that way.

**Felicity:** Yeah, I think that's right, isn't it? As the church family is characterized by that, then there's nothing bad about that. That is a good thing, I think, as well. Another thing is just confidence in the Word, like doing it, like reading it together on a one to one, just yeah, there's more opportunity to just give it a go, like, try and understand the Bible for ourselves and sharpen each other in that. And I feel like you come out.

**Sarah:** The other end and see God at work in that other person. That is amazing, isn't it?

**Felicity:** That is just joy.

**Sarah:** Oh, I feel like we could get on and on here. Okay, we're not there. We're going to stop there. We hope these questions have been helpful to kind of delve into, as people think about it, doing for themselves blissy today. We're going to take some time to reflect on the whole letter to Titus before we get into that. Why do we take time to reflect at the end of each season? What are we hoping to accomplish?

**Felicity:** Yeah, I think what we try and do each episode is kind of take a bit of a deep dive, don't we, into those verses that we're in. And when you're in those verses that can be the kind of the world in which you operate and actually reflecting means just taking a step back and looking at the letter or the book as a whole, because the writer has written it as a whole. And so I think it's really helpful to just take a step back, reflect on kind of everything that we've spoken about or that the writer has brought to our attention and kind of work out well, where does it all sit? How does it all hang together? What is the big overall punch of this letter? And I think that really helps to apply it kind of rightly to our hearts, because we're not just kind of cherry picking, but we're like, okay, this all of Titus, why is it in the Bible? What do we reckon? Where is it hitting? What would you say, Sarah? Would you add to that?

**Sarah:** Yeah. And I think, as you're saying on me applying, it just actually taking time to pause and ponder with where the Lord really has been at work, what's the particular things that really I want to take from this letter and continue praying through. I think it's very tempting, and I feel this in my Bible read through at the moment, it's very tempting to kind of tick off the book once I finish, like, oh, wow, I'm nearly the end of Isaiah. Amazing. And then on to Jeremiah. But actually the danger is you just lose the power of how the Lord's been at work in that particular book. And so just taking that time and slowing down for a moment, I think is just a really fruitful thing.

**Felicity:** Yeah. Really helpful. Well, should we kick off on we've just got basically three questions that we're going to consider as we reflect on Titus as we've been in Titus. Sarah, how has your view of theology grown?

**Sarah:** Well, I just really appreciated Natalie's conversation with us a few weeks ago. I just thought it was gold dust. And particularly the fact that theology isn't just for the academics, but actually anyone who trusts in Jesus has a theology. And actually the responsibility that we've seen in Titus is to have a sound and healthy theology because that impacts all of life. And I think just really seeing that clearly worked out in Titus, that's really grown my desire to grow deeper in my theology. Like, I've really noticed to myself in the last few weeks a real hunger to want to go deeper, to want to read more. I feel like I've got this kind of appetite growing and growing because I really see the value and the importance that Paul has placed on it and the overflow of that theology to the rest of life. And I think just seeing it distilled in this letter has just been really beautiful and exciting. And yes, I feel like my theology has grown, but my view of theology has grown and my desire for it has grown.

**Felicity:** As well just give us a couple of moments in Titus that's kind of like getting you to that point, beginning.

**Sarah:** Of chapter two, when all of the Titus two relationships are flowing out of sound doctrine. And the importance of that in complete contrast to those who don't have sound doctrine and their good works are not works at all. They're not at all good. There's nothing good about them. So I think just seeing the real importance for sound theology, deep good theology for the rest of life worked out. And I'd also just coming back to the kind of bit in

chapter one about the elders and just the importance again of them being steeped in the gospel for the overflow into church life and how they serve in that way.

**Felicity:** No, I think absolutely. And I think also the kind of the gospel sandwich we had there's a beautiful end of chapter two. And then kind of near the start of chapter three, you have this just glorious picture of the gospel. And I just think the fact that he's in such a short letter gone for two megapictures of Jesus, that kind of is the anchor of the sound theology, isn't it? And so we're kind of brought back to that at the end and everything is underpinned by that. And so that's where it's at, definitely.

**Sarah:** How's your view of theology grown?

**Felicity:** Yeah, I think exactly what you were saying. And Natalie really helped us with this. I think that kind of seeing that theology, everyone has a responsibility as we know Jesus to seek to love him more and to know him better. And we know that that's such a part of the Christian life. But to kind of characterize that as theology is just really helpful because it moves the theology from being something that's just kept in books or in further education, whatever it may be. Actually, I want to be theologically astute like I want to dig down deep because that is going to impact my life rather than just being some sort of brain exercise. And I think we really see that in Titus. As you say, it overflows into every aspect of life. And I just thought it was a really helpful adjustment to my definition of theology, I think, and therefore the power of that theology.

**Sarah:** Yeah, definitely. How about your view of church? How has that grown?

**Felicity:** I mean, I feel like we have in Titus, everyone's in the picture church, obviously, we have the elders being very clearly kind of explained, but we also have older women, younger women, younger men, older men. Like every corner of humanity is kind of included in this. And I think that has expanded my view of where church happens, rather than just kind of thinking, if I turn up on a Sunday and then an elder is going to sort us out and then we just go away and that's it, we're kind of sorted because we've been to church on a Sunday. I feel like this has challenged me to be more intentional with the way that every relationship happens, because these relationships all contribute to healthy church family, if that makes sense. I mean, I think that chapter two, that picture of everyone being involved is just really encouraging. It's exciting because we're kind of included in it. And it's challenging because you think, what am I doing with my relationships? Am I being intentional with the way that I'm speaking to people and building up the church through that? What about you, church?

**Sarah:** Yeah, I think I guess it flows from the last question, doesn't it? Like, actually, the fact that knowledge of the truth, growing knowledge of the truth, our theology does impact our church life. And I think it's a really simple thing to say when you say it like that, doesn't it? But how often do I really believe that day by day, week by week, that actually we have the opportunity to impact our church life just by nature of kind of growing in our knowledge of the truth? But I think particularly what struck me and I think what's kind of stayed with me from the beginning of Titus and I say this having kind of studied this with women at church over the last few months as well is just the necessity and the importance of praying for the elders and really seeing that as a primary way that I can serve at church is praying for the leaders and praying for their hearts to be nourished by the gospel because everything flows out of them. Being able to serve us with the gospel rightly and well, doesn't it? And I think my view of church feels like it's grown just in seeing my responsibility as a church member to pray and to have a desire to grow and encourage others to keep growing. So very unimpressive, really, that looks like in practice, but I think powerful when you consider what it is you're doing as you commit to praying for those leaders and you commit to seeking to have those eternally significant conversations wherever it might be, in whatever context, but actually having that kind of mindset.

**Felicity:** Yeah, you're right. It looks like invisible things, doesn't it? But actually the eternal significance. And I think that all the way through, we've had this kind of refrain. We see it in chapter two, verse five, so that no one will malign the word of God. And I think the impact of church family done well so that it would make the word of God attractive, that word that is theology, that is going to lead to Godliness is the saving word. So the way in which we do church and these relationships and the prayer.

**Sarah:** And all of these have an impact.

**Felicity:** Yeah, I just think that's been really evident all the way through.

**Sarah:** So, final question, then. How is your view of good works grown? Because it's good works. It's kind of talked all the way through, isn't it? And it's a word and it's a phrase that we kind of shy away from, I think, sometimes in Christian culture, in talking about good works. But tell me, how is your view of good works grown?

**Felicity:** I think it's just an unavoidable outbox. Like we can't separate good works from knowing and trusting Jesus. It leads to Godliness, doesn't it? And actually that association. Godliness to be a Godly person is to do good works. And so I feel like the impetus that is God's design for us is to do good works. And I think you're right, we kind of shy away from it because we don't want to be all about kind of moral goodness, I think. But actually knowing and trusting Jesus should then just naturally bring about these good works. Not that we don't need to strive to do the good works.

**Sarah:** No, I think you're right. I think it's going back to what we were thinking about in Deuteronomy, actually, isn't it? That actually, as our hearts are circumcised and as our hearts are focused on loving the Lord, our natural response is and should be to love our neighbor. That's the law summed up, isn't it, as Jesus says, and this is that lived out. It is. Fix your eyes on Jesus, this glorious salvation that we have and therefore love your neighbor, therefore look outwards because it has a missional impact, as you do that. And it's so simple when you put it like that, isn't it? But it's glorious that actually our hearts that are gripped by grace, that could overflow and does overflow into good works. And I loved Sally Clarkson on that. I loved just hearing her, the value she's placed on opening her door, bringing a cup of tea to anyone and everyone seeking to get to know people for eternity's sake and the good work that she has kind of committed herself to doing over decades. And I just thought that was really inspiring, kind of going right back to the beginning of the season, just yeah, just good works take on so many different forms, don't they? But actually her kind of priority on loving her neighbor and just that very simple, powerful cup of tea, that's it, isn't it?

**Felicity:** It's powerful. And the good works are powerful. They help to make the word of God attractive. And as we do that, people are pulled back to Jesus. And why wouldn't we want to be a part of that? I think in the start of chapter three, when we get that in chapter one, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, that's it, isn't it, really? And having eyes to see that, I think this has prompted me to pray more, to have eyes to see the good that I can and just having.

**Sarah:** That exactly, having that prayer, isn't it, that actually, Lord, help me to be able to see today. What it is that I can do that is good overflowing from a heart gripped by you. Felicity, would you pray for us to that end as we wrap up Titus?

**Felicity:** Absolutely. Heavenly Father, we praise you so much that you have given us the knowledge of the truth that leads to Godliness, that we have that hope of eternal life and that you are powerfully at work through that truth that it does lead to good works, that it leads to a delight in you, that it leads to these relationships that we've been seeing in Titus, the church that operates in this way. And Father, we pray that you give us eyes to see the people around us and the eyes to see the good works in which we are to walk. Father, we pray that you would keep us anchored in that truth of Christ. And that we would be those who love to lead lives that make this word of God attractive, that are Godly. Father, please, would you prepare our paths that we might go before you and do those things for your glory? Amen.

**Sarah:** Amen. Well, that's it. Titus wrapped up or just kind of begun in terms of how it then impacts our hearts. We will be back for season nine in the autumn. In the meantime, head to our show notes and sign up to receive our newsletter, if you haven't already, as we've got some exciting news to share later on in the summer and our newsletter subscribers are always the first to hear. Until then, we look forward to being back in your earbuds in the autumn.

**Felicity:** Looking forward to it. See you then. This season has been spawn new growth press.