

## Being an Example: the Greek Word Tupos and the Marks of Good Teaching (Titus 2:7–8)

- Three marks of **good teaching**:
  1. **It magnifies the grace of God.**
    - Our entire existence, salvation and life are based on the Grace of God, and not by adherence to the law. (Eph 2:8–9; Tit 2:11; Joh 1:14-17).
  2. **It focuses on the person of Jesus Christ.**
    - Knowing Him is the believer's ultimate goal. (Php 3:8-10; Joh 17:3)
    - How we come to know Him: (1Jn 2:2-4; Eph 3:17-19)
    - Paul reminds every teacher that the foundation is **Jesus Christ**, and that each teacher's work will be tested by fire on the day of judgment. (1Co 3:10-15)
  3. **It's going to challenge us** to move forward in faith.
    - Good teaching will exhort you, motivate you to increase in your spiritual life, and become mature. (1Th 4:1; 2Ti 4:2)
- **Three tests** for discerning whether what you are hearing is true, tied back to Tit 2:1:
  1. **It must be coherent** - understandable, not dressed up in impressive-sounding words or jargon that obscures rather than clarifies. (1Co 2:1-5)
  2. **It must have correlation or application to life.** To the life we live.
  3. **It must be consistent and in context**  
If there are variations in teaching, variations in messages, it will cause confusion and can lead to the splitting of churches and ultimately the destruction of souls.
- **Remember our purpose and the charge:**
  - We are to hear from pastor-teachers, and discern it for truth.
  - We are to become mature.
  - We are to stand in that truth and be Godly.
  - We are to reflect that truth in our decisions and actions (good deeds).
  - We are to be an example to others, reflecting Christ in all things.
- **Tit 2:7-8** The recurring New Testament pattern of a **command** followed by its **purpose**, tying it into being an **example**.
  - **1Pe 2:12**
    - command: "Keep your behavior excellent"
    - purpose: observers, seeing the good deeds, "glorify God in the day of visitation."
  - **1Pe 3:16**
    - command: "keep a good conscience"
    - purpose: "those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.". Peter coincides with Paul here in Tit 2:8.
  - **Eph 4:29**
    - command: "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth"
    - purpose: "it will give grace to those who hear."
  - **Php 2:14-15**
    - command: "Do all things without grumbling or disputing"
    - purpose: "prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent... appear as lights in the world."
  - **Tit 2:7-8**
    - command: "show yourself to be an example of good deeds... sound in speech"
    - purpose: "the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."
  - This same pattern goes back to the Lord Himself in the Sermon on the Mount, immediately after the beatitudes: (Mat 5:10-16)

## **Bondslaves: the History of Slavery, the New Master and Father, and Onesimus (Titus 2:9–11)**

- **The history of slavery** (secular background).
  - Slavery predates written records and was a massively widespread practice, traceable to the rise of agriculture in the Neolithic period (c. 10,000 BC), which created surpluses and a need for large workforces.
  - It also arose from three other routes:
    - Conquest, Debt, Crime - slavery imposed as a sentence.
  - Slavery was very widespread and commonplace, and was a part of everyday life in the past.
- **Two types of servitude in the Old Testament.**
  - **Debt-slavery (indentured servitude)** was contractual and temporary.
    - Israelites worked off debts, or were sold by family for a limited time, often six years, with rules for humane treatment and release (like the Jubilee, where slaves were released to their own family and property after a certain period).
    - Israel was really the only nation to have these types of rule; (Deu 15:12-18)
    - Laws against mistreatment (Exo 21:1–6; Lev 25:39–46; Deu 23:14–16).
  - **Chattel slavery** involved permanent ownership
    - Defined as enslavement in which the slave is seen as a commodity, or property. Such enslaved persons were referred to as human chattel (“chattel” is defined as a possession owned which was not real estate), and the practice meant slave owners had far more control over enslaved peoples’ lives than in other forms of servitude.
    - Was much harsher with little hope of freedom.
    - It was primarily for foreigners or war captives - though the law still restrained extreme abuse.
- **Slavery in the Greco-Roman world of the New Testament.**
  - New Testament Slavery was a pervasive institution in the Roman empire, and early Christians operated within it, unable to overturn the system immediately.
    - Slaves in the Roman Empire were also considered permanent property, but their status wasn't always lifelong, as manumission was possible, allowing some to become citizens.
    - Others faced permanent enslavement or death sentences in harsh conditions like mines, or as gladiators.
  - Over a third to a half of the population in Rome were enslaved, split broadly into two types:
    - **Domestic slaves:** working in a household setting, generally treated somewhat better, expected to serve in a capacity unseen and unheard; though some were cherished like family members (Luk 7:1–10).
    - **Public slaves:** Worked as civil servants for the state. For example, a public slave would provide free labor as a security officer, doctor, educator, accountant, etc.
  - People entered slavery by several routes:
    - The majority became slaves from being a prisoner of war.
    - Children born to an enslaved mother inherited her status.
    - Clearing a debt or criminal sentencing were the other main routes.
  - This was not a race-based system - anyone could become a slave.
  - Becoming a believer in Christ while enslaved did not release them from earthly slavery. (1Co 7:20-21)

- **Exegesis of “Bondslave” in Tit 2:9:**
  - The Greek word ***doulos*** translates "Bondslave", meaning a slave (**literally or figuratively**, involuntarily or voluntarily; frequently therefore in a qualified sense of subjection or subservency): a bonded (man), servant.
  - Since we see that in Greek-Roman territories, chattel slavery was the norm, or the majority, we can make the argument that “bondslave” here can mean either involuntary or voluntary slavery, but more likely in this setting, involuntary, enslaved against their will.
  - The same word is used **figuratively** elsewhere:
    - **1Co 9:19–23**: Paul describing his own evangelistic posture.
    - **Tit 1:1**: Paul calls himself "a bond-servant of God". But, this sits in the gray area between literal and figurative, as it was Paul's Spiritual reality...
    - **Rom 6:20-22**: But also every believer's Spiritual reality: "freed from sin, we became enslaved to God, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life."
- **Paul's mandates and their opposite.**
  - During this time period, slaves were owned as personal property, captives, prisoners of war. It would have been very easy to be bitter and hostile towards their masters.
  - And what does Paul command in this situation? He gives them a mandate:
    - **Subject themselves in everything**
      - Opposite: Being disobedient and rebellious
    - **Be well-pleasing**
      - Opposite: Being displeasing, unpleasant, disagreeable, offensive.
    - **Not argumentative**
      - Opposite: Being quarrelsome, pugnacious, antagonistic.
    - **Not pilfering**
      - Opposite: Pilfering, stealing, or looting.
    - **Showing all good faith**
      - Opposite: Not being faithful, trustworthy or respectful to their masters, or not reflecting their faith and Godliness in their servitude.
  - Applied to today: the employer/employee relationship, or any relationship with someone in authority over you, is where this mandate lands.
    - Yet it is precisely this Godly conduct, even under an unreasonable boss, that adorns the doctrine of God and finds favor with Him (1Pe 2:18–19).