

#### From Titus 1:1-4. THE BRIDGE TENDER

#1. A bridge has been tended between Heaven and earth; between God and man. Men do not have to be isolated from the Creator of all things in any irreversible way. This fact should be the most treasured feature of human consciousness. But it is not.

#2. Only the Almighty can tend a workable bridge between the two worlds. Such a phenomenon is beyond human capability.

#3. Paul and Titus were called into the service of the eternal bridge tender. The apostle became "a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ" v.1 and "Titus, "my true child in a common faith" v.4.

#4. The deists are wrong, their idea being that there may be a God, but if He is there He does not intervene in human affairs.

#5. Here is the bridge:

- (1st) This bridge is anchored in the eternal by the will of God. That is the starting point. There are 4 referrals to "God", "the Father" and "Savior" v.1, 2, 3,4.
- (2nd) The bridge extends into time by the historical accomplishment of Jesus Christ, on the cross, "the Savior" v.1, 4.
- (3rd) It is the word of God, manifested and proclaimed that articulates the bridge. "His word" v.3.
- (4th) "Faith" corresponding to "the knowledge of the truth" grounds the bridge in human life v.1.
- (5th) "The hope of eternal life" v.2 redirects human ambitions.

#6. Time, circumstance and lived experience have no effect upon this bridge and no effect upon the bridge tender. Take out even one of these planks and the bridge becomes useless to us. Believers in particular and the churches in general are to defend the integrity of this bridge.

Hence Titus 2:1 "But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine."

#### From Titus 2:1-15. PARALLEL BEHAVIOR

#1. There is a range of personal behavior that is in fact derived from a close consideration of what is "fitting for sound doctrine" v.1. We may refer to this manifold of behavior as parallel behavior. It is something not specifically stipulated by, yet quite parallel to the meaning of Scripture-- "so that the word of God will not be dishonored" v.5.

#2. Parallel behavior is not relative to the particular situation, nor is it relative to any contemporary sociology. This form of personal behavior is fully indebted to "purity in doctrine" v.7. The purpose of parallel behavior is to "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect" v.10.

#3. The immediate generalization is that thought, speech and behavior are to be made or brought into parallel condition with revelation. This changes our relation to the Bible.

#4. Interpretation of Scripture does not necessarily conduce to parallelism of thought, speech and behavior to the word of God.

#5 All the parallel behaviors exemplified for "older women" (v.2,3), "young women" (v.4,5), "young men" (v.6-8) and "bondslaves" (v.9,10) were exercised in order to prove that "sound doctrine" (v.1) conduces to advanced behavior: "instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age" v.12.

#6. Behavior in parallel to Scripture carries the believer to a more perfected understanding of obedience. In terms of behavior, one does not just compare behavior to revealed commandments, thus constricting personal behavior to those comparisons.

Behavior in parallel advances us beyond human reason to the heart of revealed meaning: "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous good deeds" v.13,14.

#### From Titus 3:1-11. REVEALED ENLIGHTENMENT

#1. Another standard of thought, speech and behavior has been brought to bear on the human condition. It is a new standard, it is exclusory. And it is non-human. "For we also once were foolish ourselves" v.3 -- "But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared" v.4 -- then all the rules changed.

#2. Believers possessed of revealed enlightenment are not preoccupied with the peripheral, nor are they fascinated by the superficial (v. 9-11). "This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men" (v.8.)

#3. This means that revealed enlightenment --> precedes enlightened personal judgment. All human situations, circumstances and states of being are the immediate beneficiaries.

#4. Nothing will remain static in life if the revealed enlightenment is applied to human circumstance. People are repositioned in time "according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" v.5-7.

#5. The people of God have a lot to say to the world, and an enlightened foundation from which to say it.

#### From Titus 1:1-3:11. THE FABRIC OF FAITH

#1. A bridge has been tended between Heaven and earth, between the invisible and the visible by the Almighty 1:1-4.

#2. Overarching cohesion of faith among believers can be achieved by obedience to the word of God 1:5-16.

#3. Parallel behavior pushes revelation into the substance of material existence 2:1-15.

#4. Revealed enlightenment, leading to enlightened judgment, actualizes enlightened action in time 3:1-11.

#5. The purpose of all this is to deploy the supernatural fabric of faith over the entire globe. The fabric of faith consists of (first) revealed truth, (second) the true faith of individual believers and (third) good deeds (1:16; 2:7; 2:14; 3:1, 8, 14).

The fabric of faith is not an abstraction. It is the structure of life for all true believers. More than that, this living structure serves the Lord as a supernatural symbol to the world. "Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful" 3:14. The apostle is clearly concerned about a tear in the fabric of faith. And that becomes an eventuality if faith is distanced from Scripture.

Prevention of such a tear is a shared burden by all; preachers, elders and brethren. The culture and sociology of Crete will test their resolve 1:5, 12.