

Titus

I. Setting

Titus is the 17th book of the New Testament and 12th among the Epistles. The Epistles, or letters, are the primary doctrinal portions of the New Testament.

It is not that the Gospels and Acts do not contain doctrine, but that the purpose of the Epistles is to explain to churches and individuals how to appropriate the teachings of Jesus

Jesus' earthly life models ministry. In every area of ministry we must apply the example of Christ. He was filled with the Spirit, sought to honor God, put a high value on people, and lowered Himself as the servant of all.

Once He ascended to heaven, He poured His Spirit out on believers, and the New Testament church was formed. Acts focuses upon the birth, establishment and furtherance of the work of God in the world through the church.

The Epistles are written to the church to further explaining doctrine.

- A. Titus concludes a section among the Epistles commonly known as "The Pastorals", and includes 1Timothy, 2Timothy and Titus. This term first became widespread at the beginning of the 18th Century.
 1. The Term is helpful because it reminds us that these letters are written to those in ministry.
 2. The term however is somewhat limited because the message of the letter is designed for the whole church.
 3. Two things make these letters unique among Paul's writings.
 - a. First, they are his last writings and contain his "Swan Song" for the church.
 - b. Second, they are addressed to individuals rather than churches.

Titus

- B. Paul's death took place around 67AD, placing the writing of Titus around 64AD, probably written at the same time as 1 Timothy.
1. It seems clear that after his release from prison Paul sailed from Rome into Asia stopping at the island of Crete along the way. It was there that he left Titus "to set in order the things that were wanting." Paul then continued on to Ephesus, where he left Timothy, and then to Macedonia, where he wrote 1 Timothy.
 2. Paul's travels continued to Nicopolis in South Western Greece, where he wrote to Titus. (It is possible that Paul continued on in his missionary endeavors. We know from his letter to the Romans that he desired was to visit Spain.) Paul was arrested not long after he penned this letter to Titus.

Paul was ultimately put to death in 67AD

- C. Titus was one of Paul's converts, traveling companions and interns to whom he taught the ministry.
1. **Titus 1:4** "To Titus, a true son in our common Faith. . ."
 2. **2 Corinthians 8:23** "If anyone inquires about Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren are inquired about, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ."
 3. **2 Corinthians 12:18** "I urged Titus, and sent our brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps?"
 4. Although never mentioned in the book of Acts, Titus is mentioned eleven times in the New Testament: eight times in 2 Corinthians, twice in Galatians, once each in 2 Timothy and Titus.
 5. From these references we gather that Titus was a Gentile convert to Christianity who came to Christ through Paul's ministry. He accompanied Paul on many of his travels, proved himself a faithful pastor and was sent on many missionary errands for the

Titus

Apostle. Most of his ministry opportunities involved quite sensitive situations.

- a. Titus 1:4 “My true son in our common faith.”
 - b. From this it is clear that Titus came to Christ through the ministry of Paul. Two possible scenarios have been suggested:
 - i. Titus was from Antioch and was converted during Paul’s tenure there; recorded in Acts 12.
 - ii. Titus was from Galatia and came to Christ on Paul’s first missionary journey
 - c. **2 Corinthians 8:23** “Titus is my partner and fellow worker.”
 - i. Titus proved himself a faithful companion of Paul and remained with him until the end of Paul’s life.
6. Titus seemed to be uniquely gifted to deal with difficult situations. Each time we read about him he is confronting a serious problem within the church.
- a. **Galatians 2:1-5** The earliest reference to Titus.
7. Fourteen years after his conversion, Paul made a trip to Jerusalem to meet with the Apostles and discuss the Gospel as it relates to the gentile world.
- a. Prior to this, Peter had preached in Cornelius’ house and saw gentiles trust in Christ and be filled with the Spirit in the same way the Jews were.
 - b. Paul had also traveled through Galatia and seen many trust Christ and become born again.
 - c. Some of the Jewish Christians from Jerusalem traveled through these areas teaching the Gentiles, that along with

Titus

trusting Christ, they must also be circumcised and keep the dietary laws and observe the Jewish feasts.

- d. A meeting was convened in Jerusalem, in 49-50 AD to discuss this controversy.
- e. Paul took Titus along with him as an example of a gentile who trusted Christ, was born again, and was faithfully serving the Lord.

8. **2 Corinthians 7:5-16**

Later, during his 3rd Missionary journey, Paul was in Macedonia (Northern Greece, probably Philippi) and undergoing great personal difficulty. He writes of being comforted by the arrival of Titus.

- 1. Titus brought word from Corinth regarding the state of the Corinthian church.
 - a. It seems Titus delivered the first letter to Corinth and remained to help minister to the church and bridge the gap created between them and Paul. This gap was created by their immoral behavior and Paul's strong rebuke.

9. **2 Corinthians 8**

Titus was sent back to Corinth bearing the 2nd letter and given instructions regarding a financial gift that was being offered by the gentile churches in support of the church in Jerusalem. It is from the details of this gift that we can best understand the principles of New Testament giving.

- 1. It is clear the Corinthians made promises regarding giving, but had failed to follow through with them. Titus was sent to encourage them to complete the giving they had started.
- 2. Concerning Titus, Paul writes, **2 Corinthians 8:17** "For he not only accepted the exhortation, but being more diligent, he went to you of his own accord."

Titus

10.2 Corinthians 12:18

Titus not only traveled to Corinth to deal with problems, but he seems to have served as their pastor during this season as well.

D. The Book of Titus

1. After his release from Roman imprisonment, Paul continued his missionary endeavors. It seems from the record of 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus, Paul traveled from Rome by way of the Grecian Island of Crete where he preached the Gospel, started Churches, and left Titus behind to care for the new converts.
 - a. It is probable that a church had existed on Crete for many years since some of the first Jewish converts to Christianity were from there. They had come to Christ when Peter preached his first sermon recorded in Acts 2. (**Acts 2:11**)
 - b. This ministry was particularly difficult.
 - i. The great number of people on the island and the need for many churches and church leaders.
 - **Titus 1:5** “For this reason I left you in Crete that you should set in order the things that are lacking and appoint elders in every city...”
 - ii. The rising number of false teachers making their way into the churches.
 - **Titus 1:10** “For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, whose mouths must be stopped...”
 - iii. The moral condition of the Cretan people
 - **Titus 1:12** – “...Cretans are always liars, evil beasts and lazy gluttons.”
 - c. Paul wrote to Titus to encourage him to complete the work in Crete, but also to invite Titus to join him in ministry in Nicopolis, a city in south western Greece.

Titus

- d. This is the last place we know for certain that Paul did ministry. It is possible things were heating up and Paul once again needed the comfort and aid of Titus to complete the work.
- e. It is also possible that from here Paul was arrested and sent to Rome where he awaited execution.
- f. **2 Timothy 4:10**
The final reference to Titus is found in Paul's final letter. He refers to Titus as having left for Dalmatia. Although the wording is somewhat ambiguous, it seems that Titus remained with Paul in Rome for some time before he was sent out on another errand, this time to Dalmatia a coastal city in modern Croatia.

E. Church History

- 1. Church tradition states after Paul's death, Titus returned to Crete where he ministered for many years as the bishop or pastor of the church.
- 2. At least 4 things mark the ministry of Titus.
 - a. He was converted.
 - i. There is no place in the ministry for those who have not trusted Christ for salvation. This is step one.
 - b. He was faithful
 - i. Though a somewhat obscure character in the New Testament, Titus was available whenever Paul called upon him. He is referred to as a co-worker with Paul. That is, one who is working toward the same goal as the apostle.

Titus

- Too often in ministry we find people with a separate goal. They are not interested in coming alongside and supporting the work, but rather in establishing a work of their own.

c. He had longevity

- i. Titus seems to be a convert from Paul's earliest missionary work and remained faithful to the Apostle until the end of his life.
- ii. Even after Paul's execution, Titus remained faithful to the call of God

d. Uniquely gifted

- i. One thing that marked the ministry of Titus was that he was always sent to deal with difficult situations. Jerusalem, Corinth and Crete were very troubled areas that needed to be handled with the utmost care and a firm hand.

The church is always in need of men who will be willing to step into difficult situations and handle them with the Word of God.

Sadly churches are often in upheaval due to the behavior of the pastor of the sheep. Men like Titus, who will step in for a season to put things back in order, are valuable assets to the kingdom of God.

II. Situation

Titus, a seasoned ministry veteran, was deployed to the Island of Crete to care for the church. Like all missionaries, Titus faced obstacles that are common to all, as well as things unique to the culture to which he was called. Paul wrote to instruct and encourage him in the work.

Titus

- A. There are two main references to Crete outside the book of Titus.
 - 1. Acts 2:5-11 - “And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven... Cretans and Arabs...”
 - a. A group of people from Crete visited Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost. While there, they heard the Gospel and came to faith in Christ. When the feast was over they returned home taking the Gospel with them. These believers became the catalyst for the church in Crete.
 - 2. **Acts 27:7** - “When we had sailed slowly many days, and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, the wind not permitting us to proceed, we sailed under the shelter of Crete off Salmone.”
 - a. After appealing to Caesar, Paul was taken as a prisoner from Caesarea to Rome. This long and dangerous journey brought him by ship to the Island of Crete. It is possible he met, or at least heard of, the Christian contingency there.
- B. Titus records the further efforts by the apostle to minister in Crete.
 - 1. After his release from prison, he and Titus made their way to Crete to continue the work of evangelism and church planting.
- C. Titus remained in Crete to assist the church.
 - 1. Putting the puzzle pieces together, we can surmise that the church in Crete began when a group of people had an encounter with God and took the Gospel home with them. This small group grew into a number of believers so large it became necessary for Titus to move to Crete, with the purpose of training leaders to pastor in every city on the island.
 - a. The New Testament church often spread this way.
 - i. The work in Samaria was a result of people leaving Jerusalem with the Gospel.

Titus

- ii. The Ethiopian Eunuch took the message of Christ back to North Africa.
 - iii. Many of the sites visited by Paul on his mission trips were port cities that would have international influence as sailors heard about Christ and took the Gospel around the world.
2. The ministry responsibilities of Titus were three-fold.
- a. To set in order the things that were lacking.
 - i. **Titus 1:5** - "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as you. "
 - After Paul's departure Titus was instructed to remain in Crete to help order the church.
 - The work of setting the church in order begins with the leaders.
 - Paul spends ample time describing the proper character of the elders.
 - The work includes each and every member of the church
 - ii. **Titus 2:1-10** Paul writes to older men, younger men, older women, younger women, Titus himself and slaves.
 - iii. A well-ordered church is one where each member is doing his or her part to walk with and serve Christ.

Titus

b. Appoint elders in every city

- i. **Titus 1:5** - “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you.”
- ii. Crete is a large island and because of its history was heavily populated. As a result it was necessary to have many churches on the island.
 - It was always God’s design to have multiple churches because of the vast number and variety of people in the world.
 - These churches must have the same doctrinal position, (the doctrine of Scripture.) However, they would all carry the character of those who were raised up to serve at them.
- iii. God’s method is to do a work around the people he raises up. What the local churches need is more men and women who will step up to serve with the gifts they have been given so the church can have a greater influence in the world.
- iv. Elders and bishops are two terms used to speak of the same office in the church. They were the ones who were given oversight of the New Testament church.
- v. In addition to this office we also read of:
 - Apostles
 - Prophets
 - Evangelists
 - Deacons
 - And non-teaching elders

Titus

vi. **Titus 1:6-14** and **1 Timothy 1:1-13**

Paul goes into great detail to explain the qualifications for those who might apply for the position of an elder. It is clear from this list, and the one found in 1 Timothy that God is more interested in character than in talent. There is only one ability listed in either list, that of being able to teach, and is more a gifting of the Spirit than a natural talent. The list of character qualities of the leaders include:

- Blameless – not faultless, but having no weights or sins that have not been set aside.
- Husband of one wife
- Having faithful children

Titus 1:6 (NIV) - “An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient”.

This would not exclude someone from serving because their spouse or children have backslidden, but points to the need for the leader to first lead well at home before he is qualified to lead in the church.

Pastors and church leaders whose children have grown to walk with the Lord attest to the fact that their parents were the same at home as they were at church. When a leader puts on a pastor face at church, and lives a different life at home their children often struggle to walk with Christ.

- Blameless as a Stewart of God
Stewart - a house manager; before a person is appointed as an elder he must first show that he serves well around the house of God.
- NOT Self-willed – perhaps the most important trait in any Christian or leader is that they are more interested in the will of God than they are

Titus

in their own will. Jesus modeled this for us. He always did that which pleased the Father

- NOT Quick tempered or soon angry, given to wine or a striker
- Not greedy for money –Many in ministry laugh at the minimal pay and suggest they are obviously not in it for the money. Often those with the least are the greediest or consumed with money. A leader in the church is one who is handling his money properly. He should spend the money as scripture describes. He should be a cheerful giver, one who trusts the Lord to provide his needs, one who weekly gives at the local church.
- Hospitable - lover of strangers
- Lover of good - literally a friend of good, think of a companion of good things
- Sober minded - curbing your desires
We all have desires for that which is unhealthy; a simple example might be pie. We also have desires for things that are immoral. The sober minded curbs his desire by not getting around the smell of pie.
- Just – righteous
- Self-control - in strength or in control of himself

Kant, the famous philosopher spoke of true freedom being found when we place ourselves under control of something greater than our desires.

The Bible teaches that the true source of strength for the child of God is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Titus

We read that Jesus went in the power of the Spirit and told His disciples that they could be clothed with power from on high.

- Holding fast to the faithful Word - in a sea of confusion the elder clings to the old faithful word of God.
 - ABLE - ability stems from holding fast to the Word and using it to exhort and convince
- vii. THOSE WHO CONTRADICT - anti - Lego - speak against the word of God
- Our responsibility is to Parakeleo (come along side and help) but also to convict - same word used of the Holy Spirit in **John 16:8**, “And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: . . .”

We use the Word to convict those who deny the Word.

c. The role of the Elder

This leads to explaining the role of the elder: stopping the mouth of the false teacher by declaring he truth.

- i. To teach the word “teach” does not appear in the NKJV of Titus. Instead, speak, doctrine, admonish, exhort and teaching are used.
- ii. The NIV however is filled with the exhortation to teach the church.
 - **Titus 2:1** “You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine. Teach the older men, . . .”
 - **Titus 2:3** - “Likewise, teach the older women. . .”

Titus

- **Titus 2:7** - “In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech.”
- **Titus 2:9** - “Teach slaves to be subject to their masters. . .”
- **Titus 2:11** - “For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No”. . .”

iii. The primary responsibility of the pastor is to teach the church the proper doctrines of the Word of God.

- Jesus vividly illustrated this when Peter was reinstated into the ministry.
- **John 21:15-17** “So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of Jonah do you love Me more than these?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Feed My lambs.’ He said to him again a second time, ‘Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, “Tend My sheep.” He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed My sheep.’”

iv. Paul speaks generally of things that all believers must do.

- **Titus 2:1** “But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine . . .”
- **Titus 3:8** “This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to

Titus

maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.”

- v. Paul constantly emphasizes that our lifestyle must bear out the truth of the gospel.
 - **Titus 2:10** “. . . not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.”

- vi. Paul also gives specific instruction to each group of believers in the local church.
 - **Titus 2:2** “. . . that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; . . .”

 - **Titus 2:3-5** “. . .the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”

 - **Titus 2:4-5** “. . . the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”

 - **Titus 2:6** “Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, . . .”

 - **Titus 2:7-8** “. . . in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who

Titus

is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.”

- **Titus 2:9-10** “Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.”

III. Outline

Titus has 3 short chapters and only 46 verses. The whole book can be read through in a few minutes.

A. Titus divides nicely into four parts:

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Titus 1:1-4 | Introduction |
| 2. Titus 1:5–16 | The Elder and his role in ministry |
| 3. Titus 2:1-3:11 | The main message |
| 4. Titus 3:12-15 | Closing thoughts |

IV. Doctrines in Titus

A. Christology

1. Deity of Christ

- a. **Titus 2:13** “Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, . . .”

τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,

- μεγάλου θεοῦ - literally “Mega God”

Titus

2. Saving work of Christ.

a. Salvation in Christ is a major component of the doctrine of Titus.

i. **Titus 2:11** “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, . . .”

b. This salvation stems from grace.

i. **Titus 2:14** “Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.”

c. This salvation redeems us from lawlessness and purifies us.

d. The clearest presentation of the work of salvation is in Titus 3:3-7. Paul reminds us of who we were prior to trusting Christ. In that condition, God reached out to us with His mercy

i. Our salvation includes:

- Regeneration
- Renewing through the Spirit
- Pouring out of the Spirit
- Justification
- Eternal life

Titus

3. The return of Christ

- a. **Titus 2:13** “Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, . . .”

B. Doctrine of good works

One of the main messages throughout Titus is that good works must accompany trust in Christ. In addition to reading of the character of leaders and the behavior of the saints, Paul also declares:

1. **Titus 1:1** “Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, . . .”
2. **Titus 2:10** “Not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.”
3. **Titus 2:11-12** “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, . . .”
4. **Titus 3:8** “This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.”
5. **Titus 3:14** “And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.”