

Titus

WHAT'S THIS BOOK ABOUT? Paul gives practical advice to Titus, the young pastor of the church in Crete.

WHO WROTE IT? The apostle Paul.

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN? Around A.D. 63.

WHERE DOES THIS BOOK FIT? Paul probably wrote Titus shortly after 1 Timothy.

THE BREAKDOWN

- Chapter 1: Choosing church leaders
- Chapter 2: Relating to various groups in the church
- Chapter 3: Living as a Christian

KEY CONCEPTS

- Truth
- Teaching
- Elders
- Grace

READING TIME

3:05	1:30	1:30	2:00	2:30
1:00	1:30	2:00	2:30	

WHAT'S THE POINT OF

Titus?


+++
Give the
gospel a
good name
in the world.

WORTH MEMORIZING

- 2:11-14 The grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion to God, while we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed. He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds.
- 3:4-7 When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace he declared us righteous and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.

THE MASCULINE PERSPECTIVE

- SELF-CONTROLLED LIFE. Paul gives specific instructions for older men (2:2) and younger men (2:6-8). The bottom line for both groups is self-control. We are to lead by example, from a foundation of spiritual integrity.



INTRODUCTION TO
TITUS

BACKGROUND

Titus was a Greek who was brought by Paul to Jerusalem (Gal 2:1-9), where he became an example of Paul's mission to bring the gospel message to the Gentiles. Titus probably traveled with Paul on his third missionary journey years later; Paul sent him to Corinth, even entrusting him to deliver what we know as 2 Corinthians (see 2 Cor 7:6-8:23). Paul and Titus had ministered together in Crete, but Paul left Titus there to organize the church (1:5). Tradition says Titus became bishop of Crete. In the epistle Paul asks Titus to join him the next winter in Greece. Titus was with Paul when he was arrested and sent to prison a second time. At Paul's request Titus then left for Dalmatia (2 Tim 4:10). At different times, Paul referred to Titus as his "brother" (2 Cor 2:13), his "partner and fellowhelper" (2 Cor 8:23), and his "son" (1:4).

MESSAGE

Paul begins with a doctrinal statement before detailing Titus's mission to organize the Cretan church and appoint elders. Paul lays out characteristics of qualified leaders, in marked contrast to characteristics of false teachers. He stresses the importance of teaching sound doctrine. His text forms a code of conduct for Titus and his followers, emphasizing good deeds and honorable behavior among the various groups that make up the churches, along with sound behavior in the world.

TIME

Paul wrote his letter to Titus circa A.D. 63, on his journey to Rome. He sent the letter with his friends Zenas and Apollis, whom he knew would be traveling to Crete (3:13). Paul's plans were to winter in the western Greek town of Nicopolis, and he asked Titus to join him there once a replacement for Titus (either Artemas or Tychicus) arrived in Crete (3:12).

OUTLINE

- I. Instructions for Church Leadership
 - A. Greetings 1:1-4
 - B. Qualifications for church leaders 1:5-16
- II. Instructions for Church Life 2:1-15
- III. Instructions for Life in Society
 - A. Obey the government 3:1-8
 - B. Avoid foolish arguments 3:9-11
- IV. Final Instructions 3:12-15



construction company in Belize recently destroyed one of the nation's largest Mayan pyramids while excavating for a new road. The loss is incalculable, and authorities blame it on laziness. Builders were too slothful to figure a way around the treasure, so they took the easy way out—bulldozing through it without thinking.

We do a lot of damage by taking the easy way out. In the book of Titus, the apostle Paul told his troubleshooter, Titus, how to minister to people who were converted from a culture filled with "liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons" (Titus 1:12). The setting was the island of Crete, which Paul and Titus had evangelized. Titus remained on the island to get the churches organized and to develop the work. But he struggled to oversee churches filled with people who had grown up without self-discipline.

That sounds like a relevant subject, doesn't it? How do we move from laziness to self-control and spiritual maturity? In chapter 1, Paul laid down the qualifications of mature and hard-working church leaders. In chapters 2 and 3, he told Titus what to say to various groups and to the Church as a whole.

The same grace that brought salvation, he wrote, teaches us to say "No" to worldly passions, to deny laziness and lust, and to live soberly and righteously in this world. The message of Titus is: God's work should be well-organized and His workers self-controlled as we go about building—not bulldozing—His Church in this world.



KEY THOUGHT:

Godly leaders should set in order what is lacking in the Church: by teaching sound doctrine and modeling self-discipline.



KEY VERSES:

"Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."
Titus 2:12-13



KEY ACTION:

"Speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine . . . Be careful to maintain good works."
Titus 2:1 and 3:8



KEY PRAYER:

Dear God, help me seek sound doctrine, and create a strong desire within me to be nourished by Your Word.

BASIC SURVEY

TITUS

AUTHOR: The apostle Paul (1:1).

DATE: Approximately AD 63.

INTEN WORDS OR LESS

Church leaders are instructed on their lives and teaching.

DETAILS, PLEASE

On the Mediterranean island of Crete, Paul left Titus to “set in order what remains and appoint elders” (1:5 NASB) for the fledgling church. Known for their poor behavior (see “Unique and Unusual” below), the people of Crete needed the kind of church leader who would hold fast to “the trustworthy message he was taught. . . to encourage others with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong” (1:9 NLT).

QUOTABLE

> Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost (3:5 KJV).

UNIQUE AND UNUSUAL

Paul quotes a Cretan philosopher in this letter: “One of Crete’s own prophets has said it: ‘Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons’” (1:12 NIV). The quotation is from Epimenides, of the sixth century BC.

SO WHAT?

Though church leaders are held to a high standard, so are the people in the pews. What’s good for the pastor is good for everyone else.

READ TITUS 2 AND PSALM 66.

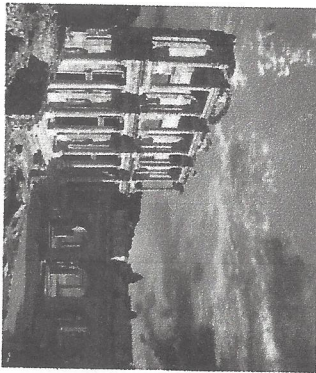
- One-Month Course: your next reading is on page 253. →
- Three-Month Course: your next reading is on page 253. →
- Six-Month Course: your next reading is on page 251. →

CLOSER LOOK

SETTING CHURCHES IN ORDER

As an apostle and evangelist, Paul’s top priority was preaching the Gospel. However, it was also important for converts to be grounded and deeply rooted in the truths of the faith. For this reason Paul also made it a priority to organize the new believers and to appoint elders to teach them and oversee them (Acts 14:21–23).

While preaching always remained a priority, as the years went on, problems and questions arose, and false teachers caused divisions, so it became important to have mature elders and wise bishops (overseers) in place to protect the church. Paul told Titus, “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. . . . For a bishop [overseer] must be blameless, as a steward of God. . . holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict” (Titus 1:5, 7, 9 NKJV).



These are the ruins of the Celsus Library in Ephesus, Turkey, one of the places where Paul traveled as he established churches.

Paul warned about “idle talkers and deceivers. . . whose mouths must be stopped” (Titus 1:10–11 NKJV). From Crete, Paul traveled to Ephesus. Years earlier he had warned the elders there that false teachers would arise (Acts 20:29–31). And now he wrote Timothy, “When I left for Macedonia, I urged you to stay there in Ephesus and stop those whose teaching is contrary to the truth” (1 Timothy 1:3 NLT). Christians are warned to “contend earnestly for the faith” (Jude 1:3 NKJV).

READ TITUS 1 AND MATTHEW 22.

- Six-Month Course: your next reading is on page 255. →

HIDDEN TREASURE

QUOTING POETS AND PHILOSOPHERS.

Paul frequently quoted Greek poets and philosophers to prove a point. For example, he wrote, "One of them, a prophet of their own, said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.' This testimony is true" (Titus 1:12-13 NKJV). Paul was quoting *Cretica* by Epimenides (500s BC), a Cretan poet said to have made several true predictions. Does this mean Paul endorsed everything Epimenides said? By no means. Two lines later in *Cretica*, Epimenides said of Zeus, "Thou livest and abidest forever." In Acts 17:28, when speaking to the philosophers of Athens, Paul again quoted Epimenides, as well as citing the Cilician poet Aratus (315-240 BC). In 1 Corinthians 15:33 he quoted the play *Thais* by the Greek playwright Menander (342-291 BC).

READ TITUS 3 AND JEREMIAH 10:1-16.

HIDDEN TREASURE

TRANSFORMING HEARTS AND LIVES

Some people took Paul's message of "salvation by grace alone, not works" to unhealthy extremes, teaching that as long as a person professed "faith" in Jesus, they could continue living in sin like the pagans around them and God would ignore it. But Paul warned against this kind of deception (Ephesians 5:3-7). He taught that Jesus "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" (Titus 2:14 NKJV). Jesus came to cleanse us from all corrupt deeds. Also, Paul stated that when we're born again we're "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10 KJV).

READ 2 CORINTHIANS 12-13.

Can God Make a Rock So Big that He Can't Lift It?

Alex McFarland

When speaking at a university or when answering questions in an open forum on Christianity, it is common for someone to smugly ask me, "Can God make a rock so big that He can't lift it?" The challenge inherent in this question is that there is something an omnipotent (all-powerful) God cannot do. Nonbelievers enjoy asking this question, because it seems that either way we answer the question, we submit that there is, in fact, something God cannot accomplish. Either we answer that God can make a big rock He cannot lift or that God cannot make a rock big enough that He can't lift it. Thus the question seemingly poses an insolvable conundrum. However, close examination reveals that it does not put God in some kind of cosmic checkmate. In fact, the question in no way proves that there's something He cannot do. Rather, it is simply a meaningless question that implodes on itself.

Essentially, the questioner is asking, "Is there any way that the God who can make all things can make a rock so big that the God who can lift all things cannot lift it?" Worded this way, the inconsistency and meaninglessness of the question is revealed. It's actually a pseudo-question. It proposes impossible conditions and thus makes no sense. This means the question itself has no truth value, and thus cannot be evaluated as either true or false. Trying to answer this question is much like trying to answer, "What does the color blue smell like?"

The question also reveals false ideas about the biblical concept of *omnipotence*. When speaking of God's omnipotence, Christians are not claiming, "God can do anything at all." Instead, omnipotence refers to God's power to do anything which is both consistent with His holy character and logically possible. The "big rock" question asks if God can do something logically impossible. His inability to do such a thing does not count against His power. For example, God cannot make a square circle. So what? It's a nonsense task. Likewise, it is a logical impossibility (and a nonsense thing to ask) for God to make a rock so big that He can't lift it. And since God always acts in ways that are consistent with His holy nature, His inability to lie or sin does not count against His omnipotence either (Nm 23:19; Tt 1:2; Jms 1:13). The things that are true about His character will always be true, and He cannot do anything to contradict them.

This non-question of smug skeptics actually reminds us that we serve a logical, coherent, and all-powerful God. Reason and coherence are hard-wired into the fabric of reality—reflecting the orderly God who created it. Contradictory questions and meaningless word puzzles such as the big rock question implode on themselves and remind us that we will never be able to outsmart the Lord. Nothing we can do and no question we can ask could ever disprove God's omnipotence and perfect power.

Titus

BOOK INTRODUCTION

As a young pastor, Titus needed more than a brief greeting and pat on the back; he needed a plan. He also needed a strong word of encouragement from his coach, friend, and father in the faith to steel him for a daunting task.

The apostle Paul knew that establishing and pastoring multiple churches on the large island of Crete would be a challenging assignment, especially with false teachers posing a threat. So in his letter to Titus, Paul does three things in quick order: Paul reassures Titus that he (a seasoned mentor) understands the difficulty of the task confronting Titus, encourages the young pastor to stand strong and speak boldly, and gives Titus a practical plan for strengthening and bringing order to the churches.

Quoting a well-known Greek poet of the day, Paul first acknowledges that Titus has a difficult road to travel. "Creteans," as Paul quotes, "are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons" (1:12). By citing these highly unflattering words in his letter, Paul is saying, "I know what you'll be up against, Titus, but your ministry can be effective if you stand strong in Christ."

Paul probably always had Titus, a Gentile, in mind for that task. We do not know how Titus was led to Christ, but when Paul refers to him as "a true son in our common faith" (1:4), it may mean that Paul led the younger man to faith in Christ. Titus was certainly close to Paul from the beginning of the apostle's ministry and had served as his personal emissary to the troubled church in Corinth (2 Cor. 8:6).

After Paul's release from his first house arrest in Rome, the two men either traveled to Crete together or met there. We do not know how long they were on the island or how churches came to be planted. We do know that Paul departed the island alone, leaving Titus to "set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city" (1:5). Apparently, many of the former "liars, evil beasts, [and] lazy gluttons" of that island had found salvation and life-transforming power in Jesus Christ. But Titus' task would not be easy. He would need specific instruction and encouragement to carry out his mission.

Titus knew it would only be a temporary assignment. He would be replaced by "Artemas . . . or Tychicus" once he brought order to the churches (3:12). Until then, he had to prepare himself, plunge into the work at hand, exert his authority in Christ, and proclaim everywhere "the kindness and the love of God our Savior" (3:4).

TITUS

WHAT IT SAYS | *Get Organized! Preach Sound Doctrine*

Apparently Paul left Crete before he accomplished all that needed to be done—especially appointing elders to shepherd the new believers in every town (1:5). Paul lists for Titus the qualifications of elders (1:6–9) to help him complete this urgent goal. When this list of sterling character traits is compared with the characterization of the Creteans as liars, rascals, and lazy louts, it shows how daunting Titus' task seemed. In addition, fully one-third of Paul's letter is devoted to various categories of believers—older and younger men, older and younger women, slaves—with detailed instructions for practical Christian living. Another third is given to the need for good works—wise counsel on an island known for its bad works.

A key part of Titus' mission was to set an example for the Creteans to follow: "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 is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you" (2:7, 8). The and encourages the younger to model what the Cretan should become. Eventually, Artemas or Tychicus would assume pastoral positions in the churches in Crete (3:12). But to complete the important work of restoring order, Titus was Paul's man.

WHAT IT MEANS | *Aim for Holy Living*

The themes of Paul's letter reflect the status of the churches and culture of Crete.

- **The Need for Sound Doctrine:** False teachers on Crete were also creating havoc by "teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain" (1:10, 11). Titus had an immediate need to teach sound doctrine, especially related to the Second Coming of Christ (1:10–16; 2:11–15; 3:4–7).
- **Order in the Church:** Part of the problem in the church in Crete was a lack of order. So Paul provides instruction to his protégé on choosing qualified leaders (1:5–9) and shepherding people to spiritual maturity.
- **Good Works:** Paul uses the singular or plural of *good works* six times in Titus (1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14). One of Titus's greatest challenges would be to encourage the Creteans to live in a manner befitting their commitment to Christ. They could not continue following their old ways (1:8, 16; 2:3, 7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14).
- **Grace for Daily Living:** The "grace of God that . . . has appeared to all men" is sufficient to carry God's people all the way from salvation to their glorification in heaven. It is also what teaches Christians how to live (2:11, 12). Chapter 2 of Paul's letter provides instruction for godliness for both leaders and laymen.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU | *Helping Difficult People Become His People*

Titus, a young leader, was plunged into a challenging ministry with sometimes hardheaded, unruly believers. His patient, faithful work in both Corinth and Crete reminds us that God not only loves difficult people but also knows how to equip His shepherds to lead by example and make a difference wherever they go.

God's goal for His shepherds is to take "liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons" and guide them to good works as well as positive, truthful speech that will "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" (2:10). Whenever we find ourselves in need—no matter how demanding our circumstances or problematic the people we meet—God has a plan that will equip us for the work and yield godly results. And if we walk where and how we should, others will take note and follow.

TITUS

TITUS, A YOUNG PASTOR, FACES the unenviable assignment of setting in order the church at Crete. Paul writes advising him to appoint elders, men of proven spiritual character in their homes and businesses, to oversee the work of the church. But elders are not the only individuals in the church who are required to excel spiritually. Men and women, young and old, each have their vital functions to fulfill in the church if they are to be living examples of the doctrine they profess. Throughout his letter to Titus, Paul stresses the necessary, practical working out of salvation in the daily lives of both the elders and the congregation. Good works are desirable and profitable for all believers. This third Pastoral Epistle is simply titled *Prostition*, "To Titus." Ironically, this was also the name of the Roman general who destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and succeeded his father Vespasian as emperor.

WATCH WORDS

- **idle talker** (someone who speaks empty, senseless words)—1:10
- **savior** (one who saves; God and Jesus)—2:10 (also 1:3, 3:4)
- **regeneration** (the process of being made anew; being born again)—3:5
- **renewing** (transforming; renovating)—3:5

- 1:1 bondservant - see Rev. 11:8.
- 1:2 hope - see Rom. 15:13.
- 1:2 life - see John 5:24.
- 1:2 promise - see Acts 7:5.
- 1:3 savior - see Titus 2:10.
- 1:4 common - see Acts 4:32.

1:7 bishop

(Gr. *episkopos*) (Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:2; 1 Pet. 2:25) (G1985: This word for "overseer" or "bishop" is a compound form of *epi* (G1909), "upon, over," and *skopos* (G4649), "one who watches or looks out." This person is a guardian who watches over and protects members of the church. In the New Testament it usually refers to someone who holds a particular office or position of leadership in the church, but in 1 Peter 2:25 it refers to Christ: "You were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer [*episkopos*] of your souls.")

TITUS 2:4

Picture This

Sober-minded • 2:6

Three times in Titus and five times in other epistles, we are told that we need to be sober in our thinking and our living (2:2, 6, 12; Rom. 12:3; 1 Thess. 5:6, 8; 1 Tim. 3:2; 1 Pet. 1:13). Paul is not the only biblical writer to exhort Christians to guard their minds and habits. Peter also provides a compelling visual image of what it means to be sober-minded when he tells his readers to "Gird up the loins of your mind" (1 Pet. 1:13). In biblical times, men wore long, flowing robes. When they needed to get someplace quickly, they had to pull up ("gird") their robes to avoid tripping over them.

When Paul encourages Titus to exhort the young men to be sober-minded, he is exhorting them to pay urgent attention to how they live, removing any pattern of thought or behavior that could trip them up or hinder their progress in the faith. But such counsel is not just for young men. It is required of pastors and older men and young women. In fact, it is required of all of us—no matter our age, gender, or position—who have experienced the grace of God (2:12).

Getting Down to Practicality

Titus 2:1-8

PAUL'S SHORT LETTER TO TITUS, who pastored a church on the island of Crete, outlines the demands the gospel places on believers in various stages of life. The apostle is concerned that people live out what they've heard in church. He also cares about how the new Christian movement appears to outsiders in a religiously diverse culture.

Thus he instructs:

The older men are to be known for sound faith, love, patience, and self-control. This will make them "worthy of respect," Paul says.

The older women should likewise "live in a way that honors God" (Titus 2:3). Slander and heavy drinking are out of the question. Rather, they should focus on teaching the younger women, giving them lessons in life that come from experience.

The young men (including Titus) are to live lives of integrity, seriousness, and wisdom. "Teach the truth so that your teaching can't be criticized" (2:8). Paul's bottom line is to show that Christianity is not just some ethereal philosophy of the mind. It is a practical, personal faith that requires a difference in how we live our lives—regardless of age.

SEEK GOD AND SURRENDER TO HIM

The Promise of Positive Change

Titus 2:11-14

When we seek God and surrender to him, we receive renewed hope for positive change in our lives. Of course, we may have doubts about our ability to change. These are reasonable doubts if we have failed in the past to make the changes we needed to make. But through surrender to God, we can be assured that real change will be possible because God himself promises to help us.

Paul recognized that God can and will help us change. He encouraged Titus with the words,

The grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good (Titus 2:11-14).

God has promised to save us and make us his people! Throughout that process, God rescues us from our bondage to sin. Let us cooperate with God's plans for our salvation by surrendering to him and turning from sinful pleasures.

Turn to Hebrews 11.

THE BIG PICTURE

Paul wrote this letter to Titus, a young pastor on the island of Crete. Titus faced two primary problems in his church. Some of the people claimed that immoral living was all right because God's grace was sufficient for forgiveness. Another group insisted that acceptance for forgiveness through obeying the Law of Moses. Paul encouraged Titus to confront both groups for undermining God's gracious gift of forgiveness in Christ.

Paul solved Titus's dual problem by reminding him of the importance of God's grace. When we realize the amazing grace that God has given us, we feel an incredible sense of gratitude. God's grace will motivate us to obey God's will for our lives, not to live a life of immorality because our forgiveness is guaranteed. God is not a harsh taskmaster whose favor depends on our slavish obedience to his rules. He is a gracious Father who offers us a relationship with himself, both now and throughout eternity. We can live godly lives out of gratitude to God because he loves and forgives us.

The fact that God is gracious and forgiving is essential to our spiritual renewal. We have probably tried to overcome sin and transform our lives but have failed because we don't possess the power to make those changes on our own. But God is gracious. We don't need to be afraid to admit our failures to him. He will forgive us and give us a chance to start over again. We can continue our honest self-examination without fear, daring to see the truth and confess it. God will never reject us for our failures and mistakes. God accepts us just as we are.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL THEMES

THE BLESSINGS OF GOD'S GRACE

Salvation in Jesus Christ is good news! God offers salvation to us freely even though we do not deserve it. Yet salvation is more than just God's offer to pay for our sins; God also seeks to transform our lives so that we can live each day with the reality of his power inside us. We don't need to be afraid as we come before God, regardless of our sins. Our relationship with God is not based on our success at following his laws, but rather on his gracious provision for the forgiveness of our sin—Jesus Christ. As we entrust our lives to God, he forgives us and empowers us to live according to his perfect plan.

A. THREATS TO THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD'S GRACE (1:1 – 16)

B. SOUND TEACHINGS WITH RESPECT TO GOD'S GRACE (2:1 – 3:11)

1. Applying God's Truth to People of All Ages (2:1 – 10)
2. God's Grace as a Motivation for Godly Living (2:11 – 3:6)
3. Applying God's Truth to the Problem of Legalism (3:9 – 11)

C. FINAL PERSONAL REMARKS (3:12 – 15)

Essential Facts

PURPOSE: To encourage Titus to be faithful in applying the grace of God to various circumstances.

AUTHOR: The apostle Paul.

AUDIENCE: Titus, a pastor on the island of Crete.

DATE WRITTEN: Between Paul's first and second Roman imprisonments (AD 63 and 66).

SETTING: Titus pastored the church on the island of Crete, a place well known for its immorality. A group of legalists had also made inroads into the church, so Titus had to deal with both immorality and legalism.

KEY VERSES: "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age" (2:11 – 12).

KEY PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS: Paul with Titus.



The "washing of regeneration" in this verse is often thought to imply that baptism qualifies a person for heaven. The immediate context shows that Paul was explaining the importance of good works in the life of a Christian. He began in verses 1-2 by showing how Christians should not fight but should be kind and gentle. In verse 5, he said believers are sowed "not by works of righteousness . . . but according to His mercy." He adds in verse 7 that believers have "been justified by His grace," which contradicts the idea that baptism is a work that saves us. The apostle Peter said that baptism is a work that saves a person from sin but is a "pledge of a good conscience toward God" (1 Pt. 3:21). Baptism, then, is a public testimony of the spiritual cleansing that takes place through faith in Jesus (Ac 18:31-33; Rm 10:9-10; Eph 2:8-10). Every Christian should get baptized since it is commanded, but baptism does not justify us before God.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

We can never make progress spiritually if we are isolated from others. Developing healthy relationships accompanies surrendering our lives to God. He commands us to love each other and live in harmony. God never designed life or spiritual growth to be undertaken alone. God often uses other people to encourage us to persevere in our faith. Paul urged Titus to be accountable to others. By depending on others, Titus could stand firm and reflect God's love and power in his life. Relationships that hold us accountable can give us the courage to do as Titus did. Relationships also help us to continually seek God for the help we need to live in harmony with other fallible people.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL REQUIRES SACRIFICE

When we enter God's kingdom, we also enter new relationships that are subject to his commands. As we see in this letter, there should be an order to all our relationships. Everyone's role is important. If we are going to be faithful to our role, we must make sacrifices for others. Seeking spiritual renewal sometimes begins as a selfish pursuit. We tend to focus on our own problems and needs. But healthy spiritual growth moves beyond this self-focus and considers the needs of others. Each of us has something to share. We should make the sacrifices necessary to help others in need of spiritual renewal.

BY THE NUMBERS

CHAPTERS **3**

VERSES **46**

WORDS **989**

TITUS

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Titus is mentioned 14 times in Paul's letters, but never in the book of Acts.
- ▶ Titus—like Timothy, Barnabas, Luke and many others—served alongside Paul in his missionary travels and often went on solo journeys to teach and encourage the various churches. Paul referred to Titus as his partner and coworker among the believers.

REACHING OUT

Paul had entrusted Titus with continuing the ministry on the island of Crete, in the Mediterranean Sea (1:5). The island, which is about 170 miles long and 30 miles wide, was populated with characters of bad reputation.

In the Word

Titus, like Timothy, was a minister under Paul's leadership. His book also bears similarities to the books written to Timothy, containing instructions and teachings for personal ministry as well as church growth and development.

KEY PASSAGE

"For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (2:11-13).

LIFE LESSONS: Treat others with goodness and love, as Jesus has done for you (3:3-8). Be self-controlled (2:6-8).

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW TITUS AND PHILEMON?

TITUS IN REVIEW

TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE

Always Remember

Titus 3:1-5

- ★ **MINUTIAE & MISCELLANY**
1. What does Paul say an elder must be?
- 🔥 **HOT SEAT**
2. I am the Cretan philosopher who Paul quotes when he says, "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons." Who am I?
- ★ **MINUTIAE & MISCELLANY**
3. Where does Paul ask Titus to meet him?
- ★ **MINUTIAE & MISCELLANY**
4. What does Paul encourage the young men to be?
A. Courageous
B. Selfless
C. Self-controlled
D. Full of wisdom
- ★ **MINUTIAE & MISCELLANY**
5. What does Paul say we should do with all authority?
- 🕒 **TIME TRAVELER**
6. You are a divisive person. How many times does Paul say you will be warned?
A. Only once
B. Twice
C. Three times
D. As many times as needed

As we begin to enjoy the benefits of our transformed lives, the memories of our previous lifestyles may begin to fade. Do we vividly remember what we once were before we surrendered to God? Can we recall the dark emotions that filled our souls? Do we have true compassion and humble sympathy for those enslaved to sin and in need of God's message of salvation? When we take God's message to others, it is vital that we never forget where we came from and how we got where we are now. Paul told Titus:

At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:3-5).

As we share our story of God's transformation of our lives, let us never forget where we came from. We, too, were slaves, just as others are today. Our hearts were filled with the confusion and painful emotions that others still feel. We were saved because of the love and kindness of God, not because we were good or wise. We must also remember that we are still free because God is with us, continually helping us and redirecting our lives.

Turn to Hebrews 12.

ANSWERS: 1. 1. 2. 1. 3. 1. 4. A. 4. 1. 5. 1. 6. 1. 7. 1. 8. 1. 9. 1. 10. 1. 11. 1. 12. 1. 13. 1. 14. 1. 15. 1. 16. 1. 17. 1. 18. 1. 19. 1. 20. 1. 21. 1. 22. 1. 23. 1. 24. 1. 25. 1. 26. 1. 27. 1. 28. 1. 29. 1. 30. 1. 31. 1. 32. 1. 33. 1. 34. 1. 35. 1. 36. 1. 37. 1. 38. 1. 39. 1. 40. 1. 41. 1. 42. 1. 43. 1. 44. 1. 45. 1. 46. 1. 47. 1. 48. 1. 49. 1. 50. 1. 51. 1. 52. 1. 53. 1. 54. 1. 55. 1. 56. 1. 57. 1. 58. 1. 59. 1. 60. 1. 61. 1. 62. 1. 63. 1. 64. 1. 65. 1. 66. 1. 67. 1. 68. 1. 69. 1. 70. 1. 71. 1. 72. 1. 73. 1. 74. 1. 75. 1. 76. 1. 77. 1. 78. 1. 79. 1. 80. 1. 81. 1. 82. 1. 83. 1. 84. 1. 85. 1. 86. 1. 87. 1. 88. 1. 89. 1. 90. 1. 91. 1. 92. 1. 93. 1. 94. 1. 95. 1. 96. 1. 97. 1. 98. 1. 99. 1. 100. 1.