

Titus 1

Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2 in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,

3 but at the proper time revealed His word in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior;

4 To Titus, my true son in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Qualifications of Elders

5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, 6 namely, if any man is beyond reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of indecent behaviour or rebellion.

7 For the overseer must be beyond reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not overindulging in wine, not a bully, not greedy for money, 8 but hospitable, loving what is good, self-controlled, righteous, holy, disciplined, 9 holding firmly the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.

10 For there are many rebellious people, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of dishonest gain. 12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."

13 This testimony is true. For this reason, reprimand them severely so that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. 15 To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.

16 They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

Did you gain any insight into God's character?

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?
Did God instruct you to do something?

Background to Titus

Titus was no stranger to conflict. He was a long-term companion of Paul who was a valuable aid in two of Paul's greatest crises. Titus first appears in the New Testament in Galatians 2:1, where Paul says he took Titus along on his trip to Jerusalem with Barnabas. Titus was a Gentile, and the issue at hand was whether Gentiles should have to comply with Jewish ceremonial rites (circumcision, diet restrictions and so on) in order to be full members of the Christian community.

Titus appears again in the middle of Paul's struggle with the church at Corinth. In that deeply divided church, he represented Paul. He had the unwelcome job of delivering what we call the "severe letter" which Paul refers to in 2 Corinthians 2:1-4 and 7:5-13 and then staying there for about a year. Then he delivered the letter we now call 2 Corinthians in which Paul takes on his critics and calls the church to honour an unfulfilled financial pledge.

Titus was in Crete at the time Paul wrote him. Crete was a seaport, a sleazy port of call for cargo ships traversing the Mediterranean. It had been socially backward for 1400 years when the Minoan civilization was destroyed by a devastating earthquake. Paul had preached in Crete and was giving Titus the job of following through with developing a healthy church. This letter was sent while he was in the midst of his task and reviews his assignment. It shows Titus as a forceful personality and skilled administrator. It seems he was made of tougher stuff than Timothy. By the time Paul had written 2 Timothy, the job in Crete was done, and Titus had been sent on to Dalmatia (part of modern Yugoslavia).

This letter gives us two very valuable things: (1) A showcase of Paul's strategy for leadership in the midst of chaos—Timothy was given a long-term assignment in an established church; Titus was sent to follow up an evangelistic movement and give the Christian body some coherence; (2) a model of hope in the face of a very messy situation; Paul's confidence in the power of the gospel shines throughout the letter.

Paul's helpful insights

Medieval names were about identifying you in Medieval England. What we now take for granted—our surnames—had a specific purpose in Medieval England. Before 1066, people in England only had a single Christian name. After 1066 and William's victory at the Battle of Hastings, the Normans introduced a more precise system that included a surname and by the Twelfth Century, English society had what we might recognize as Christian names and surnames. Surnames fell into six main categories:

1. Titus is a Roman boy's name; the meaning of the name is 'Honourable'.
2. Look how Paul introduced himself.

3. 'Apostle of Jesus Christ - guardian of truth to the next generation of believers.
4. Paul had no uncertainty with regards to the call on his life
5. He presents himself as a bond servant? In those days your name identified what you did.
6. 'I was entrusted to tell the story of the truth no matter what'!
7. The introduction to Titus set the tone for what was to come in the letter.
8. His Message of faith – salvation through the cross.
9. Chosen of God – predestination?
10. Why the hope and not the certainty? – Promise not yet received.
11. Promised by someone who cannot lie.
12. First reference to salvation is Gen 3 v 9 – 'Adam where are you?'.
13. Why was this time 'the proper time'?
14. God manifested His word – came into existence.
15. Damascus road revelation to Paul by God - Jesus is the saviour.
16. Personal insight into Paul and Titus friendship - Father and Son.
17. We have a common faith – united by truth!
18. Grace – unmerited favour and peace – security in relationships.
19. God – who is Father, Christ in His Deity - Messiah, Jesus in His humanity - Saviour.
20. What is it to have a knowledge of the truth?
21. A bondsman is a life of surrender to God.
22. How important is it to know your place? Jesus is at the top of the tree.
23. How can you send your faith off to work?
24. The benefit of being a Christian is that you believe Gods promises.
25. The benefit of believing is you can receive those promises.
26. The Romans linked the nations by road, so it was the perfect time to spread the gospel.
27. What is God's grace and peace?
28. Do you think the moral demands on an elder were too hard?
29. What is an empty talker?
30. Who are the those of the circumcision?
31. How does it help to call people horrible names?
32. How do you respond to being reprimanded?
33. Why are all things pure to the pure?
34. What is a defiled conscience?
35. Our testimony is our life seen, not what we say.