

New Testament Survey—Titus

Let's discuss together an important question. What are some of the challenges faced when starting a new church? The need to reach lost people, the challenge of dealing with people who know nothing about Christ and what it means to live for Him, the need for leaders, the challenge of helping people put off old patterns of thinking and living and put on new Christ-like ways of thinking and living, etc, etc.

Those are the kinds of challenges Paul faced wherever he went. That's also why he surrounded himself with men who could assist him in the process of helping new churches mature. Such was the case with Titus.

Discuss: What do you know about Titus the man? Titus the book?

To do: Discover all the appearances of the word "good" in the book. What does it modify? What place do "good works" have in the Christian life? [11 times]

(Titus 1:8) "But a lover of hospitality, a lover of **good** men, sober, just, holy, temperate;"

(Titus 1:16) "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every **good** work reprobate."

(Titus 2:3) "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of **good** things;"

(Titus 2:5) "To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, **good**, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

(Titus 2:7) "In all things showing thyself a pattern of **good** works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,"

(Titus 2:10) "Not purloining, but showing all **good** fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

(Titus 2:14) "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of **good** works."

(Titus 3:1) "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every **good** work,"

(Titus 3:8) "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain **good** works. These things are **good** and profitable unto men."

(Titus 3:14) "And let ours also learn to maintain **good** works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful."

- **Who wrote the book?**

--Paul

## Titus: The Recipient of the Letter

--Unlike Timothy, Titus was a full Greek; not a Jew, but a Gentile

--Paul calls him "my true son in our common faith" (1:4)

Q: What does that indicate about Titus?

--Titus is not referred to in Acts, but is mentioned 13 times in the rest of the NT

--In Gal. 2:1-3, Paul explains that he took Titus with him to Jerusalem. The occasion was when Paul left Antioch to "discuss" his gospel with the Jerusalem leaders. Titus became Paul's "exhibit A" for his skeptical Jewish brothers to see. Titus was an uncircumcised Gentile, yet a genuine Christian, and his presence vindicated Paul's message and ministry.

--We presume that Titus worked with Paul at Ephesus during his third missionary journey.

--From there, Paul sent Titus to Corinth to deal with delicate problems in the church. Titus had a genuine spiritual concern for the church at Corinth (2 Cor. 8:16-17), so much so that Paul wrote of him (2 Cor. 8:23), "As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you..."

--Apparently, after Paul's release from his first imprisonment, he and Titus worked in Crete briefly together (1:5). Paul had to leave, but he commissioned Titus to stay behind as his representative.

--Later Paul asked Titus to meet him at Nicopolis (on the west coast of Greece) when a replacement arrived (3:12).

--In his final letter (2 Tim. 4:10), Paul says that Titus went on a mission to Damaltia (modern Yugoslavia). This is the last we hear of Titus. [Note: Tradition says that in his senior years, Titus was the overseer of the work on Crete and that he died a natural death on the island.]

--Titus must have been a man of solid character, and a thorough knowledge of the Word of God and biblical doctrine. He was a resourceful leader, and had a great love for ministry with people.

### • **When was the book written?**

--Between A.D. 63-65 (possibly written from Corinth)

## The Island of Crete:

--A very large island (fourth largest in Mediterranean Sea), about 150 miles long and from 6 to 35 miles wide.

--Very mountainous. The people depended on the sea for their living, both through fishing and merchant shipping (Note: Acts 27 indicates that the ship that was supposed to take Paul to Rome sailed along its southern coast and actually harbored there).

--In NT times, the moral conditions on Crete were deplorable. One of their own poets (see 1:12), Epimenides, depicted the Cretans as "liars, evil beasts, slow bellies." In fact, the Greek word *kretizein* meant "to act as a Cretan," and became synonymous with "to play the liar."

As Gromacki sums it up (p. 309), "Such was the national, environmental heritage of most of the

Cretan believers with whom Titus had to cope."

Note: Acts 2:11 indicates that on the day of Pentecost, there were Cretans in Jerusalem who heard Peter's message. If some of them were converted, they may have taken the gospel back to Crete with them. It also indicates a Jewish influence on the island before Paul got there.

- **Why was the book written?**

--Paul's letter was intended to guide Titus as he attempted to organize the young church at Crete.

Key Verse: 1:5 "The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished..."

Titus was given the assignment of organizing the young church in Crete. What does it take to get a church on its feet?

Ch 1 The Right Kind of Leaders

Ch 2 The Right Kind of Living

Ch 3 The Right Kind of Reputation in the Community

- **What is the outline of the book?**

(adapted from *NIV Study Bible*)

I. Salutation (1:1-4)

II. Concerning Elders (1:5-9)

III. Concerning False Teachers (1:10-16)

IV. Concerning Various Groups in the Congregations (ch. 2)

V. Concerning Believers in General (3:1-8)

VI. Concerning Response to Spiritual Error (3:9-11)

VII. Conclusion (3:12-15)

- **What is the message of the book in one sentence?**

--Titus is a book that shows what young churches need if they are to be strong.

- **What contribution does the book make to biblical theology (that is, how does this book relate to the rest of the Bible)?**

1. *Titus presents God as a Saving God.*

The book of Titus teaches that God is a God who saves (see 1:3, 4; 2:10, 13; 3:4, 6). God has a

saving purpose, and expects His Church to be committed to the same purpose. Discuss: What do you learn about God from these verses?

Note: In Titus, evangelism flows out of this understanding of God. The book of Titus identifies certain things that must be in place if a church is to fulfill its God-given mission in evangelism (1:5). In order for a church to be effective in evangelistic outreach, the following must be in order:

The Church must have Godly Leadership (ch. 1), a Godly Congregation (ch. 2), and a Godly Reputation with the world (ch. 3).

## *2. Titus emphasizes for us the importance of "doing good."*

Q: According to 2:14, what did God have in mind when He saved us? To form a people who are eager to do what is good

Q: According to 3:8, what was Titus to strive for in his ministry at Crete? To help the people who have trusted in God to devote themselves to doing good.

Discuss: Respond to the statement, "Now that I am saved, I can do anything that I please without being lost."

Good works are not the basis, but the fruit of our salvation. They are a visible sign of genuine salvation.

Q: What danger does Paul warn of in 1:16? People can claim to know God, but deny him by their actions.

## *3. Titus teaches us the qualifications for being a leader in the church.*

Q: According to 1:5, what was the first item of business that Titus needed to address? Appoint elders in every town.

Q: What are the qualifications of an elder in a church? See verses 6-9

## *4. Titus gives us a helpful model of the kind of teaching ministry that should exist in the local church (see chapter 2).*

Q: According to 2:1-2, who was Titus to teach? The older men and older women

Q: Then what was to happen, acc. to 2:4? Have the older women teach the younger

Q: Who else was Titus to teach? 2:6 Young men; 2:9 Slaves

Q: The teaching was with what goal in mind? 2:10b To make the gospel attractive