



Week 47

Titus

Every Sunday evening at [Bible Explorer](#) we will explore the question

'What does this book from the Bible mean for us today?'

Author: [Titus 1:1](#) identifies the apostle Paul as the author of the Book of Titus.

Who was Titus?

Titus was a beloved missionary and pastor who served with the Apostle Paul. Not much is known about his life except what can be derived from Paul's letter to him and a few other isolated references. He was a Greek (Gal. 2:3) convert to Christianity. There is no specific reference in Scripture as to how they met. But Titus may have been led to Christ through Paul's ministry since he referred to Titus as **"a true son in our common faith" (Titus 1:4, NIV)**.

In Paul's missionary journeys, we see Titus as an early ministry partner with Paul and Barnabas (Gal. 2:1). He was threatened with circumcision to placate the Jewish circumcision group, but Paul insisted that he not sink to their level (Gal. 2:3-4). He was missed in Troas by the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 2:12-13). Later, he met Paul in Macedonia bringing news of the spiritual state of the church at Corinth (2 Cor. 7:6-7). Titus was filled with joy and affection for the people at Corinth (2 Cor. 7:13-15). This affection was similar to Paul's for this church (2 Cor. 8:16). Paul was delighted that Titus decided on his own to go back to Corinth and receive the offering for the saints who suffered in Jerusalem that was promised by the Corinthians (2 Cor. 8:6-12; 16-24).

Paul praised Titus as **"my partner and fellow worker" (2 Cor. 8:23, NIV)** having a like spirit and conduct (2 Cor. 12:18). Ordained as a pastor, he was appointed by Paul as senior pastor at the church in Crete (Titus 1:5). Paul considered Titus a trusted fellow worker (2 Cor. 8:23). So he left Titus to set things in order, establishing elders in every city on the island. Since Cretans were lazy and lacked integrity, Paul trusted Titus to select men of the highest character to bring integrity and discipline to the churches there (Titus 1:5-16). His emphasis to Titus was to proclaim sound doctrine in word (Titus 2:1) and deed (Titus 3:1, 8).

The last reference to Titus is from Paul's last letter (2 Timothy) where he notes that Titus has gone to Dalmatia, the area occupied by the former Yugoslavia and Albania (2 Tim. 4:10).

The New Testament does not record his death. According to tradition, Paul ordained Titus bishop of Gortyn in Crete. He died in the year 107, aged about 95.

Date of Writing: The Epistle to Titus was written in approximately A.D. 66. Paul's many journeys are well documented and show that he wrote to Titus from Nicopolis in Epirus.

Purpose of Writing: The Epistle to Titus is known as one of the Pastoral Epistles, as are the two letters to Timothy. This epistle was written by the apostle Paul to encourage his brother in the faith, Titus, whom he had left in Crete to lead the church which Paul had established on one of his missionary journeys ([Titus 1:5](#)). This letter advises Titus regarding what qualifications to look for in leaders for the church. He also warns Titus of the reputations of those living on the island of Crete ([Titus 1:12](#)).

In addition to instructing Titus in what to look for in a leader of the church, Paul also encouraged Titus to return to Nicopolis for a visit. In other words, Paul continued to disciple Titus and others as they grew in the grace of the Lord ([Titus 3:13](#)).



Key Verses: [Titus 1:5](#), "The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you."

[Titus 1:16](#), "They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good."

[Titus 2:15](#), "These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you."

[Titus 3:3-6](#), "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 Saviour 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, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

Brief Summary: How wonderful it must have been when Titus received a letter from his mentor. Paul was a much-honoured man and rightly so, after establishing several churches throughout the eastern world. This famous introduction from the apostle would have been read by Titus: "To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour" ([Titus 1:4](#)).

The island of Crete where Titus was left by Paul to lead the church was inhabited by natives of the island and Jews who did not know the truth of Jesus Christ ([Titus 1:12-14](#)). Paul felt it to be his responsibility to follow through with Titus to instruct and encourage him in developing leaders within the church at Crete. As the apostle Paul directed Titus in his search for leaders, Paul also suggested how Titus would instruct the leaders so that they could grow in their faith in Christ. His instructions included those for both men and women of all ages ([Titus 2:1-8](#)). To help Titus continue in his faith in Christ, Paul suggested Titus come to Nicopolis and bring with him two other members of the church ([Titus 3:12-13](#)).

Connections: Once again, Paul finds it necessary to instruct the leaders of the church to be on guard against the Judaizers, those who sought to add works to the gift of grace which produces salvation. He warns against those who are rebellious deceivers, especially those who continued to claim circumcision and adherence to the rituals and ceremonies of the Mosaic Law were still necessary ([Titus 1:10-11](#)). This is a recurring theme throughout the epistles of Paul, and in the book of Titus, he goes so far as to say their mouths must be stopped.

Practical Application: The apostle Paul deserves our attention as we look to the Bible for instruction on how to live a life pleasing to the Lord. We can learn what we should avoid as well as that which we are to strive to imitate. Paul suggests we seek to be pure as we avoid the things which will defile our minds and consciences. Then Paul makes a statement which should never be forgotten: "They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good" ([Titus 1:16](#)). As Christians, we must examine ourselves to be sure our lives line up with our profession of faith in Christ ([2 Corinthians 13:5](#)).

Along with this warning, Paul also tells us how to avoid denying God: "He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour" ([Titus 3:5b-6](#)). By seeking a daily renewal of our minds by the Holy Spirit we can develop into Christians that honour God by the way we live.



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Keys for us:

Titus 1:1 – Paul – ‘a servant’ – before anything else. Do we easily recognise ourselves as servants – if not why not?

Titus 1:4 – Titus ‘a true son’ – What does that mean for us to be a true son or daughter?

Titus 1:5 – ‘straighten out what was unfinished’ – How are we called to do this in our day and age within the church?

Titus 1:6 – 9 – These verses describe the qualities for leadership – What are the essential qualities we should look for in those who are called to be leaders in the church today – lay and ordained?

Titus 1:16 – ‘They claim to know God but by their actions deny Him’ - This might remind us of something shared during last week’s sermon –it’s possible to have a saved soul but a wasted life’ – How do we respond to St Paul’s charge?

Titus 2: 7 – Instructions on behaviour –‘In everything set them an example’ – What should our example look like in the 21st century?

Titus 2: 11 – ‘for the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men’ – How do we hold to this essential truth – do we truly believe it? What evidence is there for it?

Titus 2:12 – ‘say ‘No’ to ungodliness - We are called to take responsibility for our faith so that we live a different life or do we?

Titus 3: 5 – ‘...he saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit...’ – What does this mean to us as we celebrate Pentecost?

Titus 3: 8 – ‘...those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.’ Paul emphasises this in v.14.

FINALLY IN TEN WORDS OR LESS:

Church leaders are instructed on their lives and teaching.

SO WHAT?

Though church leaders must keep high standards, so must the people in the ‘pews’. What’s good for the pastor is good for everyone else!