

Titus

Authorship: “Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God’s elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness...” (1:1).

Recipient: “To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior” (1:2).

Date: Because of the similarity to 1 Timothy, it is very likely that Paul wrote these letters within a short time of one another. He probably wrote to Titus around A.D. 62, while en route to the city of Nicopolis in northern Macedonia, where he was hoping to spend the winter.

Unique Features: Titus shows that grace does not negate the necessity of good works: The book contains classic descriptions of God’s grace (2:11-14; 3:4-7). But it emphasizes good works as much as James does (1:16; 2:7; 14; 3:1, 8, 14). In Titus, Paul quoted Epimenides, a Cretan poet (1:12; compare Acts 17:28).

Background & Historical Situation: Paul had visited Crete on his voyage to Rome (Acts 27:7-21) and again following his first Roman imprisonment, at which time he apparently established several churches. He left Titus behind to oversee those churches (1:5). Though the Cretan believers came out of a very difficult culture than the Jews, Jewish legalizers were making serious efforts to influence them. Paul wrote this letter to help Titus with that and other church related issues.

Purpose: To encourage Titus to complete the task of organizing the churches in Crete (1). To discuss the teaching of doctrine and the conduct of ministry (2:1-3:11). To advise Titus of Paul’s future plans and wishes (3:12-14).

Key Passage: “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” (3:3-5).

Outline:

- I. Salutation (1:1-4)**
- II. Qualifications for Elders (1:5-9)**
- III. Silencing the False Teachers (1:10-16)**
- IV. Instructions for Various Groups (2:1-10)**
 - A. Instructions for Older Men (2:1-2)
 - B. Instructions for Older Women (2:3-5)
 - C. Instructions for Young Men and Titus (2:6-8)
 - D. Instructions for Slaves (2:9-10)
- V. The Basis for the Instructions (2:11-15)**
- VI. Doing Good in Society (3:1-8)**
 - A. Responsibilities as Citizens (3:1-2)
 - B. The Basis for the Christian’s Attitude (3:3-8)
- VII. Further Instructions about False Teachers (3:9-11)**
- VIII. Personal Instructions and Greetings (3:12-15)**

Sources:

Elwell, Walter A. and Robert W. Yarbrough. *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998).
Jensen, Irving L. *Simply Understanding the Bible*. (Minneapolis, MN: World Wide Publications, 1990).
Willmington, Harold L. *Wilmington’s Bible Handbook*. (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1997).