

14024-E March 26, 2014

The Book of Titus

History/ Background

The Island of Crete was located south of Greece in the Mediterranean Sea. The Island was incorporated into the Roman Empire in 67 B.C. The first band of believers returned home after the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem.

No doubt, news of these young converts needing direction and teaching regarding their faith reached Paul. The Church in Crete was founded by Paul and Titus on his fourth missionary journey after his release from house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:30). Paul left Titus there and went on to Macedonia. After Paul's journey he returned to Rome, was again imprisoned and martyred by Nero shortly after writing II Timothy.

The Cretan culture and society was highly Pagan and was referred to by Epimenides, one of their 6th century poets, by stating that "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes and lazy gluttons" (1: 12). In addition, this newly formed Church on the Island of Crete was infiltrated by false teachers who were "ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach... for dishonest gain" and were "detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good." (1:11; 16)

Author: Paul (1:1-4)

Written : 62-64 A.D. from Macedonia as one of his three Pastoral letters after I Timothy and before II Timothy.

Recipients: Titus (mentioned 13 times) was a Gentile Christian who was a convert of Paul 1:4 "my true child in the faith". The churches in Crete or "Household of God" or the "elect" were dotted all through the 156 mile Island and were to have this letter read corporately.

Purpose: To finish, complete or set in order the work started "The reason I left you in Crete was to straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town" (vs.5) (Illustration: a crooked young tree) and teach sound doctrine 2:1 as well as a mandate to "encourage and rebuke with all authority" (2:15). Apparently, Titus's authority was being questioned and disregarded. Thus Paul makes it know that Titus is to carry on his authority and shouldn't allow anyone to disregard him (1:5; 2:15) once completed, Titus was then to return to Paul in Nicopolis where the apostle was spending the winter (3:12).

Goals/Themes for Titus to Address

- I. **Order:** Establish Leadership by Appointing and Establishing Qualifications (1:5-9)
- II. **Discipline:** Identify and Confront False Teachers with the Truth (1:10-14; 3:9-11)
- III. **Balance:** Calling the Church to Balance Sound Doctrine with Behavior. (2:1-3:8)

I. **Appointing and Defining Leadership (Elders) 1:5-9**

A. **Qualifications of Elders**

Facts

- “Overseers” referred more to the task of the leadership and “Elders” referred more to the character of the man.
- They were to be appointed, in contrast to being self-appointed, throughout the towns and villages dotting the Island of Crete.
- A church without appointed elders is unfinished or need of order and completion. This was not based on consensus or one’s position in the community.
- Elders were not perfect but aware and growing. Big difference between struggling in areas and rebelling against the authority of Christ.

Qualifications

1. Blameless (cannot be accused) with reputation in contrast to deceivers.
2. Faithful in marriage and manage family well in contrast to ruining households.
3. Control of emotions: Not overbearing or quick tempered or violent.
4. Not a drunkard.
5. Not pursuing dishonest gain in contrast to the “sake of dishonest gain.”
6. One who is hospitable.
7. Loves what is good in contrast to seeking dishonest gain.
8. Self- controlled in contrast to being divisive.
9. Upright in contrast to those whose minds and consciences are corrupted.
10. Disciplined in contrast to those who are disobedient and rebellious.
11. Hold firmly to truth in contrast to those who reject the truth.

II. **False Teachers (1:10-14; 3:9-11)**

A. **Characteristics and Error**

1. Came from within (1:10;16)
2. They focused Jewish on myths and false commandments. (1:10;14)
3. Their motivation was for financial gain. (1:11)
4. They were leading people astray and were persuasive (1:11)

5. They were divisive and rebellious (3:10)
6. The group was called the “circumcision group” (1:10)
7. They professed Christ but denied him by their actions. (1:16)
8. They trafficked in foolish genealogies, controversies and quarrels (3:9).
9. They were divisive, warped, sinful and self-condemned (3:10-11)

B. Timothy was given harsh instructions to handle to church problem:

1. Circumcision group...must be silenced.
2. Rebuke them sharply.
3. Warn a divisive person once then twice, after that have nothing to do with them.
4. Rebuke with all authority.
5. Avoid foolish controversies.....

III. Sound Doctrine Balanced with Good Behavior. (2:1-3:8)

A. The Groups

1. Older Men- Sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, love and steadfastness.
 2. Older Women- Reverent in behavior, not slanderers, slaves to much wine, teach what is good. **Then** they can train younger women.
 3. Younger women- Be receptive to older women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home (unlike widows in I Timothy), to be kind, and subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word.
 4. Younger Men- Be self-controlled, and in everything set them an example by doing what is good.
 5. Titus/Elder- In teaching show integrity, seriousness, and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned and those who oppose you will have nothing bad to say about you.
 6. Slaves- Be subject to their masters, in everything try to please them, not to steal from them, show they can be fully trusted, and in every way make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.
- Younger women behave so that no one can malign the word
 - Timothy in teaching show integrity so that they have nothing bad to say about us.
 - Older women teach what is good so that you can train the younger.

- Slaves behave this way to make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.

IV. Paul's Primary Motivation for Good Behavior Goes Back to the Work of Christ

Titus 2: 11-15 "For the grace of God that brings Salvation has appeared to all men. 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 glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself to redeem us all from wickedness a

purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. These things then are the things you should teach."

1. Grace teaches us to say "NO"
2. Christ redeemed us from all wickedness.
3. Purify for Himself a people.

Titus 3: 4-8 "But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying and I want you to stress these things."

1. Those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good.
2. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

VI. What is a healthy Church?

1. Credible and appointed Leadership
2. Sound Doctrine and Clear Gospel Taught
3. Discipline of Error and/or Those Spreading Unbiblical Teachings.
4. A Clear Emphasis and Practice of Balancing Doctrine with Good Behavior.

VII. Application

1. Realize that it truly is God's grace that teaches us to say "NO" to ungodliness.
2. Our behavior impacts those around us be it good or bad.
3. Bring into order or set straight or complete unfinished business/relationships in your life.