

SECTION 15

Titus: A Test Case for Interpreting the Text

Titus

“A Call to Sound Doctrine and Good Works”

Theme: Balancing Theology and Good Works

Author: The Apostle Paul (1:1)

Recipient: Titus: my true child in our common faith (1:4) who was at Crete (1:5)

Date of Writing: c. A.D. 66

Place of Writing: Asia Minor (modern Turkey) ?

Major Emphases:

1. God as Savior
2. Qualifications for Leaders
3. Sound Doctrine
4. Silencing False Teachers
5. Roles of Men and Women
6. Coming of Christ
7. Doctrine of Regeneration
8. Good Works

Titus

Introduction 1:1-4	Maintain Sound Doctrine and Good Works								Conclusion 3:15
	Church Leadership		False Teachers		Specific Groups		Everyday Life		
	God's Word Has Appeared				God's Grace Has Appeared		God's Kindness and Love Has Appeared		
	Commitments (1:5-6)		The Divisive (1:10-11)		Older Men (2:1-2)		In the Community (3:1-8)		
	Conduct (1:7)		The Deceived (1:12-14)		Older Women (2:3-4)		In the Church (3:9-11)		
	Character (1:8)		The Defiled (1:15-16)		Younger Women (2:4-5)		In our Conduct (3:12-14)		
	Convictions (1:9)				Younger Men (2:6-8)				
				Slaves (2:9-10)					
				All Persons (2:11-15)					
Leaders		Enemies		Followers					
1:5	1:9	1:10	1:16	2:1	2:15	3:1	3:15		

Purpose Statement: Paul wrote to Titus, his son in the faith, in order to instruct him in establishing churches that would be properly governed and active in maintaining sound doctrine and good works.

Key Words: Faith(ful); Good Works; Sound Doctrine; Savior

Introduction to Titus

“A Call to Sound Doctrine and Good Works”

I. Author

The author of Titus is Paul the apostle. This conclusion is supported by the text itself (1:1), the internal evidence of theology and language, and the external testimony of the overwhelming majority of the Church Fathers. Arguments against Pauline authorship of this book are the same as those marshaled against the other two pastoral epistles (e.g. 1 and 2 Timothy). There are differences between these three letters and the other Pauline epistles. Those differences, however, are adequately explained by the fact that the other letters are written to churches, whereas the pastorals (and Philemon) are personal letters written to associates. Linguistic differences are probably due to the use of an amanuensis (secretary), possibly Luke (c.f. 2 Tim. 4:11) and/or the difference of subject matter being addressed. The extremely personal nature of this letter further supports its genuineness as the work of the apostle Paul.

II. Date and Place of Writing

The historical references of this book fall outside the Book of Acts and between Paul's two Roman imprisonments (Acts 28:30-31; 2 Timothy). The events between these two imprisonments may be reconstructed from various information throughout the pastoral epistles.

1. Paul was released from his first imprisonment c. A.D. 62-63 (Acts 28:30).
2. He then journeyed to Asia Minor, visiting Ephesus and Colossae in the spring and autumn of the same year (1 Tim. 1:3, Philemon 22)
3. After leaving Timothy in Ephesus, he traveled to Macedonia where he spent the winter (1 Tim. 1:3, Phil. 2:24)
4. In A.D. 64 he revisited Asia Minor on his way to Spain (Rom. 15:28)

5. He returned from Spain in A.D. 65-66 and spent some time on Crete.
6. Sometime later he departed for Asia Minor, leaving Titus (A.D. 66).
7. Shortly after his arrival in Asia Minor, Paul wrote a personal letter to Titus (A.D. 66).
8. Paul spent the winter of A.D. 66/67 in Macedonia in the city of Nicopolis where Titus was to rejoin him (2 Tim. 4:13, Titus 3:12).
9. Paul was re-arrested in A.D. 66-67 and sent to Rome.
10. Near the time of his death under Nero's reign in c. A.D. 67-68, Paul's last letter was written (2 Tim. 4:20).

From this brief chronology we can project that Paul wrote Titus from Asia Minor perhaps in the summer or autumn of c. A.D. 66.

III. Destination

This epistle from Paul was written to Titus (1:4) who was laboring to organize the local assemblies of believers on the island of Crete (1:5) in the Mediterranean Sea. Crete was an island 146 miles long immersed in pagan philosophy. Located in the Mediterranean near the Aegean Sea, it was the mythical birthplace of Zeus and the legendary Minotaur, a half-bull, half-human monster.

IV. Occasion and Purpose

Apparently Titus was appointed by the apostle to organize the churches in Crete. Paul seems to have evangelized the island, but could not stay long enough to develop local leadership. Because this was lacking (1:5) and false teachers were infiltrating the scattered flocks (1:10-16), Titus was summoned to temporarily remain on Crete to "set in order the things which are lacking and ordain elders in every city." In the midst of little, if any, local

leadership and the encroachment of false teachers, Paul and Titus apparently discussed the task of organizing the churches when they were together (1:5), but the letter affirmed Paul's instructions telling Titus both what to do (1:5-16) and what to say (2:1 – 3:11).

V. Recipient

Though he does not appear by name in Acts, Titus is mentioned thirteen times in the New Testament (2 Cor. 2:13, 7:6, 13, 14; 8:6, 16; 12:18 twice; Gal. 2:1, 3; 2 Tim. 4:10; and Titus 1:4). Titus was a convert from a non-Jewish heritage early in Paul's ministry. Titus first appears with Paul at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:2; Gal. 2:1, 3) where he is the apostle's proof that one does not need to become a Jew to be a Christian. Later, Titus' work is related to the Corinthians as he appears as an emissary to Paul concerning the Corinthian's reaction to 1 Corinthians (2 Cor. 7:16) and as the bearer of the second epistle to them. We do know that Titus has a specific burden for the spiritual welfare of the Corinthians (2 Cor. 8:16). There is little information in the New Testament with respect to Titus between A.D. 56 (when he delivered 2 Corinthians to Corinth) and A.D. 66 (when we find him laboring on Crete). The most distinct biographical note concerning Titus was written by Paul when he said that they "walked in the same spirit and in the same steps" (2 Cor. 12:18; c.f. also 8:23). Titus may have rejoined Paul in Nicopolis where they spent the winter of A.D. 66-67 (Titus 3:12), and accompanied Paul to Rome (2 Tim. 4:10). The final biographical entry notes that Titus was in Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10).

VI. Purpose

It is likely that the church on Crete suffered from two sources: (1) visiting Judaizers who mixed law and grace and (2) ignorant Christians who abused the grace of God and turned it into license. Paul had several purposes in mind when he wrote: (1) to remind Titus of his work of re-organizing the church and appointing elders; (2) to warn him about false teachers; (3) to encourage him in pastoring the different kinds of people in the church; (4) to emphasize the true meaning of grace in the life of the Christian; (5) to explain how to deal with church troublemakers; and (6) to encourage believers to look for the coming of Christ.

VII. Emphasis

Several words are repeated in this brief letter, helping us to understand the burden that was on Paul's heart. Savior occurs six times (1:3, 4; 2:10, 13; 3:4, 6). Good works is a major emphasis (1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 5, 8, 14). Saved by grace means saved unto good works. Christian doctrine and Christian living are to be sound (1:9, 13; 2:1-2, 8). There ought to be a life of godliness (1:1 and 2:12), not worldliness. God's grace leads a person to live a godly life (1:4; 2:11ff; 3:7, 15). The key verse of the book is probably 3:8 – “. . . they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.”

VIII. Theme

The theme of Titus is a call to sound doctrine and good works for the church of the Lord Jesus. Passages occur in this short epistle concerning the qualifications and responsibilities of pastors (1:5-9), the ethics of the believer (2:1-10), the return of Christ (2:11-14), and the nature of salvation (3:3-7).

An Outline of Titus

“A Call to Sound Doctrine”

I.	<u>Sound doctrine and the church’s leadership</u>	1:1-9
	1. Greeting	1:1-4
	2. The selection and qualification of elders	1:5-9
II.	<u>Sound doctrine and false worship</u>	1:10-16
	1. The divisive	1:10-11
	2. The deceived	1:12-14
	3. The defiled	1:15-16
III.	<u>Sound doctrine in the lives of certain groups</u>	2:1-15
	1. Different age groups	2:1-8
	a. Older men	2:1-2
	b. Older women	2:3-4
	c. Younger women	2:4-5
	d. Younger men	2:6-8
	2. Slaves	2:9-10
	3. All persons	2:11-15
	a. Proper teaching	2:11-12
	b. Proper looking	2:13
	c. Proper living	2:14-15
IV.	<u>Sound doctrine in everyday life</u>	3:1-15
	1. In the community	3:1-8
	2. In the church	3:9-11
	3. In our conduct	3:12-14
	4. Conclusion	3:15

SAVED TO SERVE

Titus 1:1-4

- I. We are servants of our Lord. 1:1
 - 1. We are slaves. (humility)
 - 2. We are sent. (authority)
 - 3. We are selected. (ministry)
 - 4. We are sanctified. (spiritually)

- II. We are secure in our Lord. 1:2-3
 - 1. We have His witness. 1:2
 - 2. We have His word. 1:3

- III. We are separated unto the Lord. 1:4
 - 1. We share a common faith.
 - 2. We are in God's family.

QUALIFICATIONS OF A GODLY LEADER

Titus 1:5-9

- I. He is a man with godly commitments. 1:5-6
 - 1. He is faithful to the church. 1:5
 - 2. He is faithful to others. 1:6
 - 3. He is faithful to his wife. 1:6
 - 4. He is faithful to his children. 1:6

- II. He is a man of godly conduct. 1:7
 - 1. He understands the need of a good reputation.
 - 2. He understands the nature of his calling.
 - 3. He understands the necessity of a balanced life.

- III. He is a man of godly character. 1:8
 - 1. He pursues the right priorities.
 - 2. He possesses the right perspective.
 - 3. He produces the right pattern.
 - 4. He promotes the right passion.

- IV. He is a man with godly convictions. 1:9
 - 1. He is devoted to the truth.
 - 2. He is diligent to teach.

THE MINISTRY OF CONFRONTATION
Titus 1:10-16

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|------|---|---------|
| I. | <u>We must confront the divisive.</u> | 1:10-11 |
| 1. | They are destitute in how they talk. | 1:10 |
| 2. | They are dangerous in what they think. | 1:10-11 |
| 3. | They are dishonest in why they teach. | 1:11 |
| II. | <u>We must confront the deceived.</u> | 1:12-14 |
| 1. | Who they are is clear. | 1:12-13 |
| 2. | What they believe must be confronted. | 1:13-14 |
| III. | <u>We must confront the defiled.</u> | 1:15-16 |
| 1. | They lack purity (the inside). | 1:15 |
| 2. | They lie in their profession (the outside). | 1:16 |
| a. | They are detestable. | |
| b. | They are disobedient. | |
| c. | They are disqualified. | |

THE ROLE OF MEN AND WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Titus 2:1-8

I. Pursue God's Assignment As An Older Man. 2:1-2

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|----|------------------------|-----|
| 1. | Be a teacher. | 2:1 |
| 2. | Be sober. | 2:2 |
| 3. | Be reverent. | 2:2 |
| 4. | Be self-controlled. | 2:2 |
| 5. | Be sound in the faith. | 2:2 |
| 6. | Be loving. | 2:2 |
| 7. | Be patient. | 2:2 |

II. Pursue God's Assignment As An Older Woman. 2:3

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|----|---------------|
| 1. | Be reverent. |
| 2. | Be truthful. |
| 3. | Be sober. |
| 4. | Be a teacher. |

III. Pursue God's Assignment As A Younger Woman. 2:4-5

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|----|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1. | Love your husband. | 2:4 |
| 2. | Love your children. | 2:4 |
| 3. | Be self-controlled. | 2:5 |
| 4. | Be pure. | 2:5 |
| 5. | Be a homemaker. | 2:5 |
| 6. | Be good. | 2:5 |
| 7. | Be subject to your husband. | 2:5 |

IV. Pursue God's Assignment As A Younger Man. 2:6-8

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|----|-----------------------|-----|
| 1. | Be sober. | 2:6 |
| 2. | Be a good example. | 2:7 |
| 3. | Be sound in doctrine. | 2:7 |
| 4. | Be sound in speech. | 2:8 |

Servant Evangelism: A Biblical Perspective On Slavery
Titus 2:9-10

- I. Be productive for your superior. 2:9

- II. Be pleasing in your spirit. 2:9

- III. Be polite in your speech. 2:9

- IV. Be principled in your service. 2:10

- V. Be public in your sincerity. 2:10

- VI. Be praiseworthy for your Savior. 2:10

THE AMAZING GRACE OF GOD
Titus 2:11-15

- I. God's grace teaches us how we should live. 2:11-12
 - 1. God's grace has come to us. 2:11
 - 2. God's grace must change us. 2:12

- II. God's grace teaches us where we should look. 2:13
 - 1. We know what to look for: His coming.
 - 2. We know who to look for: Our Savior.

- III. God's grace teaches us who is Lord. 2:14
 - 1. Jesus paid for us.
 - 2. Jesus purifies us.
 - 3. Jesus possesses us.
 - 4. Jesus prepares us.

- IV. God's grace teaches us what we should learn. 2:15
 - 1. Learn doctrine.
 - 2. Learn duty.
 - 3. Learn discernment.
 - 4. Learn dedication.

NEW BIRTH FOR A NEW LIFE
Titus 3:1-8

- I. We must be ready for good works . 3:1-3
 - 1. In the present we can help others. 3:1-2
 - a. We submit obediently. 3:1
 - b. We serve eagerly. 3:1
 - c. We speak gently. 3:2
 - d. We show humility. 3:2
 - 2. In the past we harmed others. 3:3
 - a. Sin deceives. d. Sin detests.
 - b. Sin disobeys. e. Sin desires.
 - c. Sin dictates. f. Sin destroys.

- II. We have been regenerated for good works . 3:4-7
 - 1. God cares for us. 3:4
 - 2. God changes us. 3:5
 - 3. God has come for us. 3:6
 - 4. God comforts us. 3:7

- III. We will be rewarded for good works . 3:8
 - 1. We should affirm good works.
 - 2. We should be active in good works.

GOD'S FORMULA FOR A FRUITFUL LIFE
Titus 3:9-15

- I. Avoid the foolish. 3:9
 - 1. They are unwise.
 - 2. They are unprofitable.

- II. Reject the divisive. 3:10-11
 - 1. They must be disciplined. 3:10
 - 2. They are dangerous. 3:11
 - 3. They are destructive. 3:11

- III. Follow the leader. 3:12-13
 - 1. Listen to their advise. 3:12
 - 2. Lend your assistance. 3:13

- IV. Maintain good works. 3:14
 - 1. Good works must not be neglected.
 - 2. Good works do meet needs.

- V. Welcome the faithful. 3:15
 - 1. Express the love we share.
 - 2. Pray for the grace we need.

**“Church Discipline: A Missing Essential In The Life Of
The Contemporary Church”**

Titus 3:9-15

- I. Avoid the Foolish. 3:9
 - 1) They are unwise.
 - 2) They are unprofitable.

- II. Reject the Divisive. 3:10-11
 - 1) They must be disciplined.
 - 2) They can be dangerous.
 - 3) They are destructive.

- III. Follow the Leader. 3:12-13
 - 1) Listen to their advice.
 - 2) Lend your assistance.

- IV. Maintain Good Works. 3:14
 - 1) Good works must not be neglected.
 - 2) Good works do meet needs.

- V. Enlist the Faithful. 3:15
 - 1) Express the love we share.
 - 2) Pray for the grace we need.