

NT Book: Titus – A Letter from Paul to Titus

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All references in red are from: Engelbrecht, E. A. (2009). *The Lutheran Study Bible*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.

Time Line:

AD 33	AD 57–58	c AD 64	AD 68	AD 68
Resurrection of Jesus	Paul lands on Crete on the way to Rome	Paul assigns Titus to Crete	Titus written	Martyrdom of Peter and Paul

Purpose: To guide Titus’s teaching and administration for the Christians on Crete.



Summary Statement: The rich man grips his belly in pain, pleading for the physician to explain what is wrong. “Too much rich food! Too much wine!” the physician complains. “Excesses will kill you. No wonder your body is not sound.” Like a sincere physician, the apostle Paul warns Titus about the excesses that afflict the congregation of Cretans, who were proverbial for gluttonous excess (1:12) and who craved new and different doctrines (1:10, 13–14; 3:9). Paul teaches that soundness (1:9, 13; 2:1–2, 8) comes from modest living in accordance with the truth. The wholeness of the Gospel brings salvation and leads to self-controlled living.

Luther on Titus: This is a short epistle, but a model of Christian doctrine, in which is comprehended in a masterful way all that is necessary for a Christian to know and to live.

Challenge for Readers: *Faith and Works*. In Titus, Paul places special emphasis on the relationship between faith and works, explaining that our works result from God’s saving action.... Finally, he provides a summary statement that explicitly states how Christians are to do good works, springing from God’s work in Baptism (2:14b; 3:8).

Blessings for Readers: As you read Titus, reflect on the excesses in your life. Our world today offers excesses of every variety. Yet, as Paul demonstrates, the basics in life and in doctrine are God's greatest gifts. The simple purity of the truth is the hope of our salvation.

Luther on Titus Chapter 1: [Paul] teaches what kind of man a bishop, or pastor, ought to be, namely, one who is pious and learned in preaching the gospel and in refuting the false teachers of works and of man-made laws, those who are always warring against faith and leading consciences away from Christian liberty into the captivity of their own man-made works, [as if these works,] which are actually worthless, [should make them righteous before God.]

Outline:

I. Opening Salutation (1:1–4): ^{ESV} **Titus 1:1** Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, ² in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began ³ and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior; ⁴ To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

1. What is Paul? _____
2. Note three blessings that were to come to others through Paul's ministry: _____

3. How did Paul become a preacher? _____
4. Was Titus Paul's son? _____
5. What is grace? _____
6. What is peace? _____

II. Body (1:5–3:11): Part A: Appointment and Qualifications of Elders (1:5–9): ^{ESV} **Titus 1:5** This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders [πρεσβυτέρους] in every town as I directed you-- ⁶ if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷ For an overseer [ἐπίσκοπον], as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸ but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

7. Prior to this letter, were Paul and Titus both on the island of Crete? Y N
8. What was a primary task for Titus? _____
9. The qualifications:
 - a. above reproach – blameless.
 - b. the husband of one wife – literally in the Greek, *one woman man*.
 - c. his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery [wickedness] or insubordination – rebelliousness.
 - d. must not be arrogant [self-willed, stubborn] or quick-tempered [inclined to anger] or a drunkard [addicted to wine] or violent [a bully] or greedy for gain – for money.
 - e. hospitable [welcoming], a lover of good, self-controlled [prudent], upright, holy, and disciplined – self-controlled.
 - f. must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

II. Body (1:5–3:11): Part B: Elders' Duty to Refute False Teaching in Crete (1:10–16):

10. ^{ESV} **Titus 1:10** For there are many who are insubordinate [*rebellious*], empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party.
- People who taught that Christians must be circumcised and obey all of the Jewish ceremonial rules to receive salvation.
 - What is wrong with such teaching? _____
11. ¹¹ They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach.
- How should we silence false teachers today? _____
 - If one family member is influenced, what could happen to the others? _____
 - Do some people knowingly deceive others for the purpose of making money? Y N
12. ¹² One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." ¹³ This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, ¹⁴ not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.
- ...Paul likely cites the passage as a rebuke to the Cretan false teachers and not to Cretans generally.
 - rebuke ... sharply*. False teaching is dangerous, requiring a clear, direct response. The rebuke is both a judgment on the troublemakers and an opportunity for them to repent and experience God's grace. Titus must meet the false teachers with Law and Gospel.
 - What is law and gospel? _____
 - Why is law and gospel important for everyone? _____
13. ¹⁵ To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled.
- Who are pure in God's sight? _____
 - Pure ones have spiritual eyesight: "...a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no man" (1Co 2:14-15 NAS).
14. ¹⁶ They [*the false teachers*] profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.
- Doctrine and practice must go hand in hand*. Does what you believe make a *significant difference* in your *daily* life? Y N
 - unfit*. Faith in Christ bears fruit in the good works He provides, but those without Christ's salvation are unable to bear this fruit (Mt 7:17). "...every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit" (Mt 7:17 ESV).
 - In the Mt 7 context, what is good fruit? It *does not refer to good deeds but to what the prophet says—his preaching and teaching*.

Luther on Titus Chapter 2: [Paul] teaches the various estates—the older, the younger, wives, husbands, masters, and slaves—how they are to act, as those whom Christ, by his death, has won for his own.

II. Body (1:5–3:11): Part C: Instructions to Various Groups regarding Christian Living (2:1–10):

^{ESV} **Titus 2:1** But as for you, teach what accords with sound [spiritually healthy] doctrine.

15. ² **Older men** are to be sober-minded [self-controlled], dignified [worthy of respect], self-controlled [sensible, prudent], sound [healthy] in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.
16. ³ **Older women** likewise are to be reverent [respectful] in behavior, not slanderers [accusers – like the devil] or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, ⁴ and so train [encourage, advise, urge] the young women
 - a. to love their husbands and children,
 - b. ⁵ to be self-controlled [sensible, prudent], pure [chaste], working at home, kind [good], and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.
17. ⁶ Likewise, urge the **younger men** to be self-controlled [reasonable, sensible, serious].
18. ⁷ Show **yourself** in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity [soundness, purity], dignity [seriousness], ⁸ and sound [healthy] speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil [worthless, bad] to say about us.
 - a. Titus needs to set an example for the young men as he teaches the newly appointed elders/pastors and the churches on Crete.
 - b. Paul is concerned with avoiding behavior that might undercut Titus’s credibility or fuel the arguments of opponents, such as the false teachers, who would be at odds with Titus and a sound understanding of the Gospel.
19. ⁹ **Slaves** are to be submissive [in subjection] to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative [speaking against], ¹⁰ not pilfering [putting aside for oneself], but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn [decorate] the doctrine of God our Savior. – How should we be employees? _____

II. Body (1:5–3:11): Part D: Theological Basis for This Christian Living (2:11–15):

20. ^{ESV} **Titus 2:11** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, – Who has been *excluded* from God’s plan to save the whole world? _____
21. ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions [desires], and to live self-controlled [soberly, sensibly], upright [righteously, justly], and godly lives in the present age,
22. ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,
 - a. Regarding Jesus’ return, are you *wishful* or *certain* about His coming? _____
 - b. Why? _____
23. ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness [sinning as a frame of mind] and to purify [cleanse] for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous [enthusiastic, eager] for good works. – *purify*. By saving us from our sin, Jesus purifies us and makes us fit to be part of His family.
24. ¹⁵ Declare these things; exhort [urge earnestly] and rebuke [convict, express disapproval] with all authority. Let no one disregard [look down on] you. – Titus is charged to encourage and correct or reprimand his audience with clear, direct teaching of Law and Gospel. This is a responsibility of all pastors, even in the face of apathy or opposition. –*Please pray for me!*

Luther on Titus Chapter 3: [Paul] teaches Christians to honor worldly rulers and to obey them. He cites again the grace that Christ has won for us, so that no one may think that obeying rulers is enough, since all our righteousness is nothing before God. And he forbids association with the obstinate and with heretics. (AE 35:389–90)

II. Body (1:5–3:11): Part E: General Instructions about Living as Christians in Society (3:1–2):

^{ESV} **Titus 3:1** Remind them to be submissive to [to voluntarily submit to] rulers [people over certain domains] and authorities [those given power to make decisions and take action], to be obedient [to rulers and authorities], to be ready [prepared] for every good work, ² to speak evil of [revile – use abusive language of] no one, to avoid quarreling [to be uncontentious – not argumentative, peaceable], to be gentle [yielding, kind], and to show perfect courtesy [gentleness, humility] toward all people.

25. *every good work.* Many of Paul’s admonitions point Christians toward good works that stem from a godly life; this passage starts with good citizenship.
26. *speak evil of no one.* Do not indulge in slander, insults, or character assassination.
27. *perfect courtesy toward all people.* Gentle, courteous conduct stands in contrast to quarrelsome attitudes and evil speech; it strengthens the Christian’s credibility and personal witness.

II. Body (1:5–3:11): Part F: Theological Basis for This Christian Living Grounded in Holy Baptism (3:3–8):

^{ESV} **Titus 3:3** For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions [desires] and pleasures, passing our days [spending our lives] in malice [evil] and envy, hated by others [literally, arousing hatred] and hating one another. ⁴ **But** when the goodness and loving kindness [literally, love for mankind] of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, **not** because of works done by us in righteousness [uprightness], **but** according to his own mercy [pity, compassion], **by** [through] the washing of regeneration [rebirth] and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly [abundantly] through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. ⁸ The saying is trustworthy [literally, faithful the word], and I want you to insist on these things [to affirm them confidently], so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent [good] and profitable [useful] for people.

28. Verse 5 says “he saved us”; which Person of the Holy Trinity is “he”? _____
29. *not because of works.* Every aspect of our salvation described in 2:11–14; 3:4–7 depends on God’s action; none of it depends on what we do. Even though Paul repeatedly urges Christians to prepare for and perform good works, these are the harvest of God’s grace in saving us from our sins and are not prepayments or repayments for His salvation.
30. *washing of regeneration and renewal.* Baptism brings new life and spiritual cleansing. God provides this Baptism as a means for us to receive His grace.... Cyprian: “The blessed apostle sets forth and proves that baptism is that wherein the old man dies and the new man is born” (ANF – Ante-Nicene Fathers 5:388).
31. *justified by His grace.* “Justification before God is regeneration” (FC SD III 19).
32. *heirs.* Once justified and purified, God adopts us into His family as coheirs with Jesus Christ.
33. *hope.* God promises eternal life, and believers can look forward to spending eternity with Him.
34. *devote themselves.* God prepares good works for Christians to do (Eph 2:10), and we need to pay attention and not shirk these opportunities.

II. Body (1:5–3:11): Part G: Final Instructions about Dealing with False Teaching and Teachers (3:9–11): ^{ESV} **Titus 3:9** But avoid foolish controversies [debates, discussions], genealogies [records of ancestry], dissensions [rivalries], and quarrels [fights] about the law, for they are unprofitable [useless] and worthless. ¹⁰ As for a person who stirs up [causes] division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, ¹¹ knowing that such a person is warped [corrupt] and sinful; he is self-condemned.

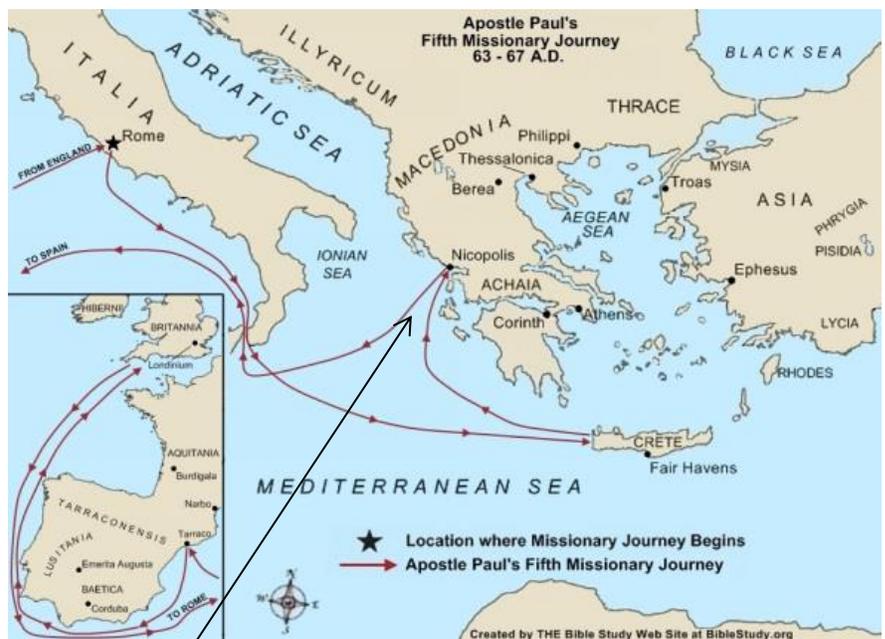
35. Direction for excommunication as a means of Church discipline. The reason for excommunication is not a person’s misunderstanding per se, but that the person persistently teaches and imposes that misunderstanding on others, creating division in the Church, the Body of Christ.
36. *after warning ... have nothing more to do with him.* A template for discipline, to be exercised by spiritual leaders of the Church. Titus needed to discipline the false teachers who afflicted the churches on Crete. He is to warn them once and then a second time...

3:1-11 Summary: God brings us out of sin and into new life in Christ, beginning with the cleansing and rebirth He provides in Baptism. This is all accomplished by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, not by anything we can do on our own. Those who stray away from God’s truth and stir up division among God’s people must be disciplined by the Church. We are committed and fervent in our beliefs, but we also check ourselves, our words, and our behavior against God’s trustworthy Scripture.

III. Closing (3:12–15):

A. Personal Instructions (3:12–14): ^{ESV} **Titus 3:12** When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you,

do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. ¹³ Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. ¹⁴ And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful.



37. Titus was entrusted with the work on Crete; however, when **Artemas** or **Tychicus** arrived, Titus was to turn the work over to them and go to Paul in Nicopolis.

38. Zenas and Appollos are probably the ones who brought Paul’s letter to Titus.

39. Quite a challenge today to get people to “**devote themselves to good works...**” In this context, it was to provide Zenas and Apollos what they needed for traveling.

B. Greeting (3:15): ^{ESV} **Titus 3:15** All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace [God’s undeserved love and favor] be with you all.