

TITUS

WRITER

Paul, the bondservant of God and apostle of Jesus Christ, was the author of this letter (1:1; see “Writer” in intro. to 1 Tm). He was a personal friend of Titus who was a fellow evangelist who accompanied Paul on many of his journeys.

DATE

After his release from his first imprisonment in Rome around A.D. 63, Paul possibly left Rome for Crete, and from there went to other regions. He made a hurried trip through Crete before leaving for Asia Minor, and then eventually to Nicopolis (3:12). The letter was written from Nicopolis (3:12), but possibly before his arrest and second Roman imprisonment in A.D. 67. From the statement of 3:12, where Paul expressed urgency on the part of Titus to come to him before winter, Paul evidently expected to be arrested again. If this were the case, the letter was possibly written before the second imprisonment and before 2 Timothy which was written during the second imprisonment (See 2 Tm 4:6-8).

THEME

The theme of the letter is centered on apostolic instructions given to an evangelist concerning his work. Titus’ work was to continue the equipping of the newly converted Cretan disciples. Since Paul had to leave the new disciples in Crete, he wrote to instruct Titus on how to “*set in order the things that are lacking*” (1:5).

PURPOSE

Paul evidently anticipated that he would be arrested again after his release from Nero's court (3:12). Therefore, his last missionary journey, the fourth, would have commenced in Rome, extended through Crete, to Asia Minor, and then on to Nicopolis where it is believed that he was arrested again for his second Roman imprisonment, and subsequent beheading. Therefore, because Paul could not tarry with the newly converted disciples of Crete, he left Titus with the disciples, and then later wrote this letter in order to put into writing instructions for the continued equipping and establishment of the disciples in the faith. Because of the continued influence of the judaizing teachers among the early disciples, especially those judaizing teachers who had been influenced by Gnostic teachings that were developing in the middle and last part of the 1st century, Paul wrote to Titus in order to direct him in his work to ground the disciples in the truth (See "Historical Background" in intro. to 1 Tm). Because the disciples of Crete were new in the faith, Paul gave Titus inspired instructions concerning the work and conduct of the evangelist in the work of equipping the saints for spiritual growth. He instructed Titus concerning the beliefs and behavior of false teachers, qualifications for the designation of elders, the behavior of Christian servants, and various personal instructions concerning Titus as an evangelist. Throughout his instructions, Paul stressed the importance of doctrinal integrity combined with behavioral Christianity, in order that an evangelist carry out an effective ministry. This letter is an apostle's exhortation to an evangelist that he carry on with his work.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Little is known of Titus, the evangelist (1:4). He is not mentioned in the document of Acts. He was possibly a convert of Paul since Paul referred to him as his "son" (1:4). He may have been from the city of Antioch of Syria (At

15:2). He was born of Greek parents, and thus uncircumcised in his youth (Gl 2:3). He was with Paul in Antioch of Syria, and subsequently accompanied Paul and Barnabas to the Jerusalem meeting of Acts 15. It was there that Paul refused to allow him to be circumcised because of the demands of the false brethren who came in “to spy out our liberty in Christ” (Gl 2:4). On many of Paul’s travels, Titus was in his company (2 Co 7:14; 8:23; Gl 2:3-5). He was also with Paul in Ephesus, Corinth and Rome (2 Co 7:5-15; 12:18; 2 Tm 4:10; see 2 Co 8:6,16,17). Because of his close relationship with Paul, Paul instructed him as a close companion in evangelism (1:4; see 1 Tm 1:2).

Personal Instructions to Titus

(1:1 – 3:15)

Outline: (1) Greetings (1:1-4), (2) Qualities and qualifications of elders (1:5-9), (3) Correction of false teachers (1:10-16), (4) Ministry of the church (2:1-10), (5) Manifestation of God’s grace (2:11-15) (6) Grace motivated obedience (3:1-8) (7) Avoid useless debates (3:9-11), (8) Final greetings (3:12-15)

Chapter 1 GREETINGS

1:1 Paul affirms himself to be the *doulos* (slave) of God’s will and *apostolos* (apostle) sent forth by the personal mandate of Jesus (At 9:15,16; see Rm 1:1; 1 Co 1:1,2). As opposed to slavery in sin (Rm 6:17,18), all Christians should give themselves as slaves to God’s work in this world (Rm 12:1). When one becomes a disciple, he does not work according to his own will, but for the will of the one who has sent him forth into the world (See Gl 2:20). ***Faith ... truth:*** The faith here refers to the response of Christians (God’s elect) to the grace of God (See 2:11,12; 3:4,5; compare 2 Co 4:15). It was their faith that moved them to recognize the truth of the gospel that was revealed from God (2 Tm 2:25). Our faith that moves us to respond to the truth of the gospel brings our lives into agreement with the will of God when we obey the gospel (2 Tm 3:16,17).

1:2 *Eternal life:* The reassuring hope of the Christian is that his existence will continue past the termination of this present world (3:7; Rm 8:24,25; 2 Tm 1:1; Hb 6:18; 2 Pt 3:13). The purpose for the existence of this present world is to prepare us for eternal dwelling. Since the eternal life of the Christian was planned before the creation of the world, then we correctly assume that this world was never in the plan of God to be eternal (Compare comments Rv 13:8; see Rm 1:2; 16:25; 2 Tm 1:9). In the eternal existence of God, the creation of the world was meant only to be the ideal environment for the testing, and thus maturing of individuals who through faith would transition into eternal dwelling with God. The disciples of Jesus thus hope for a dwelling that is beyond this world (Hb 6:18,19). ***Cannot lie:*** Since God is unique in eternity as the omniscient being who has originated all things, then there is no being before whom He might lie (Nm 23:19; Hb 6:18). It is thus impossible for God to lie, since He cannot lie to Himself. He cannot lie or deceive men because there is no darkness in Him at all (Js 1:13; 1 Jn 1:5). If we imagined in our minds that God could lie, then we have created a god after our own mortal natures.

1:3 *Manifested His word through preaching:* God manifested the plan of redemption through the inspiration of men (Gl 4:4-6; Ep 3:3-5; 1 Tm 2:6). He revealed that the crucifixion of Jesus was more than the execution of another Jew. He also revealed through the Spirit the body of truth by which those who respond to the cross must conduct their lives (Jn 14:26; 16:13; see Ph 1:27). What was revealed in the 1st century was final in the sense that there is no more word of God to be revealed. Other than the cross and resurrection of Jesus, there will be no more plans of redemption by which one can be saved (See comments At 4:12; 2 Pt 1:3; Jd 3; compare comments Jn 14:26; 16:13). Paul is here discussing the revelation of the mystery of God,

not any supposed continued inspiration of men to speak without study. It is erroneous to affirm that the Holy Spirit will reveal to the teacher what and how to say that which has already been revealed in the Bible. Only through diligent study is one prepared to teach what is revealed in the Bible (2 Tm 2:15). God speaks His will to men today only through His written word that is all-sufficient to provide the man of God with all that is necessary for teaching (2 Tm 3:16,17). Therefore, God does not directly speak to the evangelist today as he did to the inspired prophets. The inspired biblical prophets received the word of God through inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Teachers today must receive it through the diligence of personal Bible study.

1:4 A true son: Since this term is not used in a physical sense, then we assume that Paul uses it spiritually in referring to Titus as one he had formerly converted (See 1 Tm 1:2). **Common faith:** This is our commonly accepted the truth of the gospel that has been revealed through the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:26; 16:13; see comments Jd 3). Since it is a “common” faith, then we must affirm that this faith will bring all believers together into one body of Christ. It is erroneous to contend that men have the right to construct their own faiths. Only God has the right to establish the foundation of faith upon which the unity of the body is based. And since all disciples of Jesus have a common faith, they are brought together in unity. Their unity, therefore, is a blessing, not something for which they manipulate themselves through agreements and creeds. The brotherhood of humanity can be realized only when men have a common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There can be no real unity among faiths if men have created gods after their own imaginations and religions that are created after the desires of men. **Grace, mercy and peace:** God extended His grace toward us as the manifestation of His mercy (3:4-7; see comments Ep 2:1-10). The result of His grace is our

peace with God, and thus peace of mind in knowing that we are saved by His grace (Rm 5:1,2).

QUALITIES & QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS

1:5 *Set in order the things that are lacking:* Titus was to continue developing those things in the establishment of the Cretan disciples that were not in place when Paul left Crete (Compare 1 Co 11:34). After his release from his first imprisonment, Paul made a quick trip through Crete. He was evidently in a hurry to go on to Asia Minor because of the perilous times in which the Christians were living during the latter part of the 60s. Christians were living in times of civil turmoil that was produced by the Jews' rebellion against the Roman government. This civil turmoil would eventually move the Romans to put down the insurrectionist Jews in A.D. 70 by the termination of national Israel (See comments Mt 24). Titus was thus left behind in Crete in order to continue the edification and equipping of the new converts because Paul wanted to hurry on to other areas. Paul is not here giving Titus authoritarian rule over the church. As an inspired prophet, Titus was left in Crete in order to continue giving instruction to those who had little knowledge of New Testament Christianity. Titus was to set things in order by teaching the word of God (1 Tm 4:11,12; 2 Tm 4:2). In the context of this letter, some of the things that he needed to set in order was to move the disciples to designate elders (vss 6-9), deal with the threat of false teachers and their teachings (1:10,11), and to correct the immoral behavior of some new converts (2:1-10). The nature of the instructions of this epistle is defined by the fact that the ones Titus was to nurture in the faith had been converted out of a very non-Christian culture of behavior. What is also assumed by the nature of the instructions to stay in Crete to set things in order was that once things were set in order, Titus was to move on to other areas. Paul

did not establish Titus, or any other evangelist, as a permanent resident in any particular area. Evangelists were to be moving about in their ministry to preach the gospel to the lost. ***Designate elders:*** Paul was not giving Titus authority to select individually those men he might believe should be elders. The inspired direction Paul was writing in this letter was the inspired guide by which the men were to be identified, and thus, designated by the disciples to serve as elders. After the disciples had been properly instructed concerning the qualities and qualifications of elders that Paul here mentions, then they could designate those who would be identified to shepherd the flock of God. Therefore, the evangelist Titus had the responsibility to teach the disciples the qualities and qualifications of elders. Once taught, the disciples had the responsibility to identify the men whom Titus would then set forth before the church. ***In every city:*** Paul here emphasizes two thoughts. First, there is always to be a plurality of elders (pastors or shepherds) designated to serve together in any one region, or city. Secondly, the elders as a group are to serve all the disciples of every city. Acts 14:23 emphasizes the fact that a plurality of elders was designated to serve. One might assume that Acts 14:23 is speaking of every assembled group of disciples that met at the same place on a given Sunday. However, this would be an assumption since in the context of Acts 14:23 Luke recorded that the evangelists passed through the cities of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening all the disciples in each of these cities (At 14:21,22). The emphasis was on one church in one city, regardless of where or in how many places the one church assembled on Sundays. Since the church is not identified by its assemblies, but by individuals who have obeyed the gospel, then there is only one church in any particular city of the world. When the evangelists passed through these cities, they designated elders among the disciples of each city. By understanding the

extent to which the responsibility and work of any elder must go, one must keep in mind that the work of elders extends only to those who can personally know the elders. The elders' responsibility would thus be limited only to those with whom they can have ongoing personal contact and service (See comments 1 Pt 5:1-4). Nowhere in the New Testament is responsibility given to elders to function beyond their ability to personally serve and nurture the flock among whom they live. The extent of the service of elders is defined by their ability to be personally known by those they serve, not by the ability of all the members to meet in one location on Sunday. We would assume that all the elders knew of one another, but not all the disciples in a particular city knew all the elders. Since the early disciples met in the homes of the members in every city, we would assume that the elders moved among the assemblies in order to carry out their responsibilities of teaching the flock of God. In their teaching ministry, they were not confined to one house assembly. Neither did the assemblies restrict the shepherds from working with the flock of the cities. Since they had no authority to dictate rules and the function of the flock, their ministry was focused on servicing the spiritual needs of the disciples in the cities (See comments 1 Pt 5:1-4).

1:6-9 As in his first letter to Timothy, Paul here instructs Titus concerning qualities and qualifications of men who would be designated to serve the flock of God as shepherds (See comments 1 Tm 3:1-6). The purpose for which these qualities and qualifications were given was to identify one for service as an elder, not to disqualify him. Therefore, when members are working to designate shepherds or pastors, the members must emphasize the positive nature of these spiritual qualities and qualifications. The designation of one to be a pastor is meant to direct his attention toward the disciples. Those who are qualified, and thus are good workers in the kingdom, must redirect their energies

toward the flock of God. Evangelists work with the lost. However, God has ordained that the sheep must receive the special attention of men who have personal qualities that aid in the spiritual development and teaching of the disciples. Therefore, the focus of shepherds is not on the lost, but on the saved. The public designation of certain men to be elders is for the purpose of directing the members' attention toward these men in order that shepherds might service the spiritual needs of the saints. ***Holding fast the faithful word:*** In order to shepherd the flock of God, pastors (shepherds) must be good students of the word of God in order to effectively teach its principles to others. The elder must be a knowledgeable student of the word in order that he have a biblical foundation upon which to teach and encourage the faithful. Through the teaching of the word of God, he must also be able to correct those who are erring both in belief and behavior (1 Tm 3:2; 6:3). It is the responsibility of the elders, therefore, to deal with teaching matters among the disciples. They must be able to personally teach the word of God. ***Exhort:*** The Greek word here (*parakalein*) refers to elders being the teachers of the disciples in order that they spiritually feed the flock (At 20:28; see the use of *parakalein* in 1 Tm 4:16; 5:1,2; 2 Tm 4:2). ***Refute:*** The nature of this word implies that the shepherds must take a firm stand against those who would either live or teach contrary to the word of God. Elders must be knowledgeable of the Scriptures in order to boldly reprove and rebuke the erring (1 Tm 5:20; 2 Tm 3:6; 4:2). ***Those who contradict:*** These are those who through persuasive speech turn others from the truth (See Rm 16:17,18). They are rebellious and lawless members who seek to contradict the way of truth (1 Tm 1:9). Therefore, the elders must be knowledgeable of the word of God in order to guard the flock from being tossed to and fro with every wind of teaching (See comments Ep 4:11-16).

CORRECTION OF FALSE TEACHERS

1:10 The general threat to the church was the presence of those who were arrogantly defiant of the authority of the word of God. This attitude was especially evident among the Jews (the circumcision), whose defiant insubordination against the Roman Empire eventually led to the termination of the Jewish State in A.D. 70 (See 1 Tm 1:6; Js 1:25; see comments Mt 24). Since Paul was writing these words between A.D. 63 and 66, the defiance of the Jews against the Roman government was at its peak. Rome's efforts to bring the Jews into subjection during this time also affected Jewish Christians.

1:11 *Mouths must be stopped:* The responsibility to stop these mouths is in the hands of the elders and evangelists who do their work through the teaching of the word of God (vs 6; see comments Ep 4:11-16). Evangelists and elders must be bold in their efforts to minister the word of God. Those who would reject, or seek to stop the teaching of the word of God, have set themselves against the word of God, and thus against God. ***Dishonest gain:*** Those about whom Paul spoke here were extracting support from Christians in order to continue their efforts to divide the disciples (1 Tm 6:5). They were going about from house to house, binding where God had not bound, and thus causing dissension among the disciples of the city (Rm 16:17,18).

1:12 *One of them:* Paul seems to indicate by this statement that the problem not only originated from among the disciples, but also from false teachers in the Cretan society who were propagating their erroneous teachings for hire. ***“Cretans are always liars”:*** This statement, that is here quoted from Epimenides who lived around 600 B.C., manifests a truth concerning the Cretan culture. The philosopher Epimenides was regarded as a prophet among the Cretans, and thus, he was considered to have spoken the truth. Though he lived centuries before there were Chris-

tians in Crete, the cultural heritage of dishonesty that was spoken by Epimenides was still prevalent in the culture of Crete. Past sins of a culture, therefore, do not easily pass away. Nevertheless, the culture of Christianity must influence for good any local culture. **Liars:** Throughout the 1st century world, the Cretans were known to be liars. In fact, the noun and verb form of the word for Cretans refers to lies and telling lies. **Evil beasts:** The Cretans behaved as animals. Their culture was one that was given over to sensuality and the fulfilling of the lusts of the flesh. However, in the midst of such sinful cultural practices, there were new Christians. The disciples, therefore, must be careful not to allow the culture in which they lived to determine their behavior.

1:13 Rebuke them sharply: Some of the new converts were leaning toward a return to their former hedonistic life that was typical of the Cretan society. Therefore, Paul here urges Titus to firmly rebuke these members with clear and decisive teaching. These erring disciples must be reminded that they would not escape God's judgment if they practiced that which was commonly accepted in the society. The ever-present danger that faces Christians in societies where sinful behavior is common is that Christians begin to behave according to the sinful practices that are practiced within the society. It is the responsibility of the evangelists and elders, therefore, to rebuke those disciples who would live in sin while seeking to live in fellowship with the church. **Sound in the faith:** One must not only believe the correct things, he must practice that which he believes. Therefore, being sound in the faith means to conduct one's life according to the word of God (2:2; 1 Tm 1:10; 3:9; 2 Tm 4:3).

1:14 Jewish fables: Paul classified as fables those fanciful teachings of the Jews who proposed that such were true. The Jewish Targums contained many of these stories

(1 Tm 1:4-6). Since many of the initial converts were Jews, the prophets who had the responsibility of teaching the flock had to be firmly grounded in the word of God. **Commandments of men:** These were religious restrictions that men bound on the consciences of those who adhered to man-made religions (See comments Mk 7:1-9; Cl 2:20-22). The important point that Paul affirms here is the fact that both the fables and commandments of men lead one away from the truth and away from God. In the context of this discussion, Paul's reference is primarily to the Jewish Gnostics who were infiltrating the church. However, in any century of the church there is always the danger of religious philosophies and doctrines of men coming into the church. One must always keep in mind that when fables and doctrines of men are elevated above the word of God, then those who believe them are being led away from God. Those who would persist in maintaining their belief in fictitious spooks and spirits must understand that their superstitions are not leading them to the word of God, but away from God. Since they trust in their fears of such imaginations, they are led astray after their imaginations.

1:15 *Defiled and unbelieving:* Those who have honest and sincere hearts assume that others have the same character (Compare Lk 11:41; Rm 14:13-23; 1 Co 6:12; 10:14-33). However, those who have dishonest hearts believe that others are of the same character. They assume that there is dishonesty in the hearts of others because they themselves are dishonest. The fact that they consider others to have the same evil character they have is evidence that their minds and consciences are defiled (Rm 1:28; 1 Tm 6:5; 2 Tm 3:8).

1:16 *In works they deny Him:* The disciples must be on guard against religious people who do not submit to the truth of God's word (See comments Mt 7:15-20). One does not know God unless he behaves in a godly manner (1 Jn

2:4; 5:2,3; compare Mt 7:21,22). One may know the truth, but if his life does not conform to the truth, then his behavior denies God. **Abominable:** They are an abomination to God because they claim to represent God though they live contrary to the word of God. They behave in a manner by which they accuse others and work dishonestly with their brothers. They have thus disqualified themselves from being saved (Rm 1:28). They are not able to dwell with others in eternal heaven simply because they cannot dwell with the saints on earth. The organic function of the church is manifested by giving an opportunity for each member to demonstrate his relationship with others. If one cannot honestly dwell with the disciples in this life, then he has disqualified himself from dwelling with the disciples in eternal heaven.

Chapter 2

MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

2:1-3 *Speak ... sound teaching:* The Greek word here for “sound” means “healthy” (See 1 Tm 1:10; 2 Tm 4:3). Truth that comes from God is spiritually healthy for the preservation of the soul. It is this truth that Paul instructs Titus to teach in order to correct the virus of ungodliness that was prevalent in the area where he was ministering. That which is healthy teaching refers to teaching that affects one’s attitudes and behavior. It is healthy, not because it is simply believed, but because it is behaved. **Older men:** The older men among the disciples must conduct themselves with dignity and sobriety (Compare 1 Tm 3:2; 4:1). The demeanor of their lives must be characterized by reverential self-control that manifests loving patience toward others. Whether in the assembly of the saints, or in the daily walk of life, the demeanor of the older men must be an example of sobriety. **Older women:** The behavior of godly women must be characterized by self-control, both

in speech and in reference to wine. They must teach that which is good, both by word and the demeanor of their lives. Women who allow themselves to become emotionally out of control do not reflect the demeanor of women with integrity. It is the work of older women to teach the younger women how to conduct themselves with dignity.

2:4,5 Paul lists seven things that older women must teach the younger sisters. (1) They must teach them to love their husbands. (2) They must teach them to love their children. (3) They must teach them to exercise self-control in order to conduct themselves with dignity. (4) They must teach them to live a pure and holy life. (5) They must teach them to be keepers of their homes in caring for their husbands and children (1 Tm 5:14). (6) They must teach them to concentrate on having a good character (1 Pt 3:1-6). (7) They must teach them to be submissive to their husbands in order to present a home environment in which children can be nurtured (Ep 5:22,23; Cl 3:18; 1 Tm 2:11,14). ***Not be blasphemed:*** The reason why the young women must serve God after the above principles is for the purpose of exalting Jesus in the community when people see the effect of His teaching in one's life. When women conduct themselves with godliness, they bring glory to God. Those who conduct themselves in public with behavior that manifests self-control and integrity bring honor to Jesus after whom they have patterned their lives.

2:6-8 *Young men:* In a similar manner, the young men must manifest a character of integrity by exercising self-control in all areas of one's life. ***Pattern of good works:*** Paul exhorted Titus to lead the disciples by manifesting in his life an example of godly living (Ph 3:17; 1 Tm 4:12). In order to lead the brothers into doing good works, the evangelist must set the example in his own life. If the evangelist lives a life of integrity and reverence toward God out of a pure heart, then he will put to shame those who claim

to be Christian, and yet, do not live according to sound teaching. The evangelist should continue his teaching by giving an example of good works regardless of the slanderous attacks of those who are intimidated by his godly living (See 2 Tm 2:25). **Sound speech:** The evangelist should speak those words that are based on the word of God. In this way, those who slanderously accuse him can find no just accusation against his speech. If the evangelist maintains his speech that is founded on the word of God, then those who would attack the speech of the evangelist are actually attacking the word of God.

2:9,10 Bondservants: Reference here is to slaves (*doulos*) who should be obedient to their masters (Ep 5:24; 6:5; 1 Tm 6:1). For the sake of the word of God, these Christian slaves should work in obedience to their masters in order to convert their masters. **Not pilfering:** Whether a slave or an employee, there should be no stealing from one's master, or the company for which one works. Thieves will have no part in heaven because they are of a selfish nature, and thus, do not respect their neighbors. If one steals from his employer, he is endangering the success of the company for which he works. The goal of the employee is to make sure that his employer is successful, for if he does not, then he will be out of a job. **Adorn the teaching:** The godly behavior of Christian slaves manifests the dignity of the word of God as it is carried out in the lives of the obedient (See Mt 5:16). Hypocritical disciples, however, bring shame upon the word of God because the world sees that Jesus does not change the way they believe and behave (See comments Jn 13:34,35).

MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S GRACE

2:11 The grace ... has appeared: Though God was patient and forgiving with the sins of those who lived before the cross, His grace was not fully known until the incarna-

tion and Jesus' death on the cross (Lk 3:6; Rm 5:15). It was on the cross that God manifested that He loved us even in our state of sin (Rm 5:8; see comments Ep 2:1-10). Since the grace of God has been manifested to all men, then it is God's desire that all men obediently respond to His will (2 Pt 3:9). When one truly understands the grace of God, he will respond in thanksgiving for all that God has done through Jesus (See comments 2 Co 4:15).

2:12 Teaching us: Grace teaches us that in view of the love of God for us through the cross, it is reasonable that we should naturally respond to God's will with the totality of our lives (See comment Rm 12:1). When we understand all that God has done for us through the cross, then our hearts respond with gratitude to God for His saving grace (See comments 1 Co 15:10; 2 Co 4:15). Our motivation to please God is not because we are trying to legally justify ourselves before God, and thus put God in debt to reward us with heaven. The motivation of the Christian is based on the grace of God. Therefore, only those who have hearts of gratitude are deserving of the eternal kingdom of heaven. When one's life is controlled by thanksgiving and gratitude, he develops skills by which he can continually dwell with others. He looks for opportunities to help others because God has helped him. He is thus mentally prepared for heavenly dwelling.

2:13,14 The blessed hope: Christians are looking for the coming of Jesus because they are looking forward to the new heavens and earth that are yet to come (See comments 2 Pt 3:10-13; see Rm 5:1-5; 1 Co 1:7; 1 Tm 1:1). **Glorious appearing:** Jesus is our great God and Savior. He will come again in His glory (At 1:9-11; Cl 3:4; 1 Jn 3:2). **Gave Himself:** Jesus is coming in order to redeem us from this world because He redeemed us from sin (Is 53:12; Jn 10:17,18; 2 Co 5:15; Gl 1:4; 2:20; 1 Tm 2:6; Hb 12:2; 1 Pt 2:21-24). He bought us out of sin (redeemed) because

we could not save ourselves either by perfect keeping of law or meritorious good deeds (Mk 10:45; 1 Tm 2:6). **Purify:** Jesus cleansed us of sin by His sacrificial blood on the cross (Ep 5:26,27; Hb 9:14; 1 Jn 1:7-9; Rv 21:9-11; see Ez 37:23; Hb 1:3; 9:14). **Special people:** Christians are special because they have voluntarily responded to the gospel of grace (See comments Rm 6:3-6). Therefore, they are a people who belong to God (See Ex 15:16; 19:5,6; Dt 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; compare At 20:28; Jn 6:37; 17:6-8; 1 Pt 2:5,9,10). **Zealous for good works:** Christians are eager to work because of their gratitude for their salvation (1 Co 15:10; 2 Co 4:15; Gl 4:18; 6:10; Ep 2:10). They work because they are saved, not in order to be saved (See Ph 2:12,13; 1 Jn 4:19). The disciples of Jesus can be identified by their zeal to help others. The organic nature of the church, therefore, is identified by the work of the members to help others. God's people are not identified by their assemblies, but by their service to others in their community. It is for this reason that the Christian is identified by his love for his neighbor that is expressed through good works.

2:15 With all authority: The authority by which Titus was to speak these things rested in the inspired word that Paul was writing to him. The authority was in the word, not in the man. Therefore, when the evangelist speaks from the word of God, he is speaking from the authority of the word of God (See 1 Tm 4:16; 5:20; 2 Tm 4:1,2). Jesus has all authority (Mt 28:18), and thus, His authority as head over all things is manifested throughout the world through the preaching of His word (Jn 12:48). When men seek to assert authority among God's people, they lord over the flock of God (See comments Mk 10:35-45; 1 Pt 5:1-3). The disciples of Jesus behave in a submissive manner that upholds the authority of Jesus in their lives. They do not seek a following by exerting authority among men in order to

draw the disciples after themselves (See comments At 20:29,30).

Chapter 3

GRACE MOTIVATED OBEDIENCE

3:1 What Paul instructs here is to be read by all Christians in view of what God did on the cross as explained in verses 4 & 5. **Be subject:** Because God subjected His Son to the cross (Jn 3:16), Christians must not be arrogant toward civil authority (See comments Rm 13:1-10; see 1 Pt 2:13-21; compare At 4:19,20; 5:29). Christians must set an example in society of being obedient to civil government. The spirit of subjection identifies Christians with Jesus who submitted to the cross. **Ready:** Disciples must be ready to do every good work (Gl 6:10; see Ep 2:10; Cl 1:10; Hb 13:21; 1 Pt 3:15). The context here indicates that the Christian should be ready to help in those good works in society that are encouraged by society as a whole (See Mt 17:24-27). A Christian should be a good citizen. The disciples of Jesus are known for their willingness to do good to all men.

3:2-4 *Speak evil of no one:* Disciples should not speak evil of civil authorities. Their attitude toward those who are not Christians, but are in authority in civil government, should be peaceable and gentle. Christians should manifest an attitude of subjection toward government officials. Every disciple of Jesus must remember his behavior before he became a disciple. Christians should thus be patient with non-Christians because they too were once disobedient, and without understanding in the world (1 Co 6:11; Ep 2:1-5; 5:8; Cl 3:7; 1 Pt 4:3; see Ep 4:29; Cl 4:5,6). **The kindness and love of God:** Paul speaks of the time when each individual came to realize the grace of God that was manifested on the cross. Recognition of the love and mercy that was manifested on the cross moves one to obedience of the gospel and a change in one's life. "We love Him

because He first loved us" (1 Jn 4:19; compare 2 Co 4:15).

3:5 Not by works: See comments Rm 5:8; see Rm 3:20; Gl 2:16; Ep 2:8,9; 2 Tm 1:9. Jesus did not die on the cross because men had meritoriously earned His sacrificial death. He died even though we were in sin. The loving grace of God was thus manifested through the cross because Jesus died for the unloving and undeserving. ***The washing of regeneration:*** When one responds to the good news of the cross and resurrection (1 Co 15:1-4), he is immersed with Jesus in the likeness of His death and resurrected in the likeness of His resurrection (See comments Rm 6:3-6). He is thus washed of all sins (Jn 3:3-5; At 22:16; Ep 5:26; Cl 2:12; 1 Pt 3:21). One is cleansed of all sins when he is baptized into Christ (1 Co 6:11). Therefore, by baptism into Christ for the remission of sins (At 2:38), one is spiritually regenerated. One's regeneration is based on his obedient response to the grace of God that was revealed on the cross. In this way, the influence of the Holy Spirit is brought into one's life because one has obediently returned to the will of God. The work of the Holy Spirit is manifested in the lives of those who live the godly life according to the direction of the word of God (See 2:5).

3:6 Whom He poured on us: The Holy Spirit was poured out on the apostles on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30 (See comments At 2:16,17,38,39). The effects of that outpouring extend to all those who believe today (See comments Mk 16:15-20). It was through Jesus that the Spirit was poured out. Therefore, anyone who does not obey the gospel in order to come into a covenant relationship with God does not have the Holy Spirit. He is not sanctified by the Spirit for he has not partaken of the washing of regeneration.

3:7,8 Justified by His grace: We stand justified before God, not on the basis of meritorious obedience to law or good works. We are justified on the basis that God saved

us regardless of our inability to keep law perfectly in order to save ourselves (Rm 5:1,2,8; see Rm 3:24,25; 8:17; Gl 2:16). **Heirs:** We were justified by God's grace in order that we become heirs of eternal life (Rm 8:23). Therefore, we have hope of eternal life because God manifested His grace toward us through the cross. **Affirm confidently:** The faithful saying is that Christians should continue to believe in God in order to maintain good works (Gl 6:10; Ep 2:10). It is not that Christians are meritoriously working in order to secure their salvation. The fact is that their maintaining of good works manifests their belief in God and appreciation for His grace (2:14; 2 Co 4:15; Js 2:14-26). These are the things that the evangelist must constantly teach lest we grow complacent concerning our salvation by the grace of God.

AVOID USELESS DEBATES

3:9 Avoid foolish controversies: There is always the opportunity for Christians to become involved in senseless debates over those things some seek to bind on the church. There are those things that some consider essential to salvation that the Holy Spirit never intended should be matters that would cause arguments among brethren. Paul here hands Titus a mandate not to become involved in such foolishness (See comments 1 Tm 1:4; 2 Tm 2:14). If meetings are proposed to discuss such senseless debates, Paul instructed Titus that he avoid such meetings. **Unprofitable and worthless:** One should shun senseless arguments over nonpolitical issues that some seek to make matters of doctrine. Such arguments endanger the fundamental spirit of love by which the organic body of Christ functions. If the Bible does not mention a particular subject that affects moral or doctrinal principles, then the subject is a nonbiblical issue that should not result in unproductive meetings and debates. No meetings of disciples should be conducted when

the subject is over matters of opinion that some would bind on the church.

3:10 *Reject:* Paul is stern and serious about the matter of some who would cause division by their senseless debates over matters of opinion. Titus was to reject such men. The factious man who is causing division over nonbiblical issues and matters of opinion should be rebuked twice. If he is persistent in his behavior, then he should be marked, and thus, not given a platform from which to spread his teaching. The problem that Titus faced was not those who refused to bind where God had bound. The problem was with those who sought to bind on the church those things that God never intended to bind (See comments Rm 16:17,18; compare Mt 18:15-18).

3:11 *Perverted and is sinning:* The reason why the factious man should be rejected is because he is warped in his thinking and sinning in his behavior. He is perverted concerning his understanding of the freedom that Christians enjoy in Christ (See comments Gl 5:1). He has condemned himself because he has not humbly submitted to the weightier matters of the law as faith, mercy and justice (See comments Mt 23:23,24). The Holy Spirit is here harsh with this type of person because such people continually disrupt the organic function of the body by imposing on the body those things that are not mentioned in the word of God. They destroy the peace among disciples because they continually seek to impose their opinions on other disciples.

FINAL GREETINGS

3:12,13 Tychicus was possibly from Colosse (Cl 4:7; see At 20:4; Ep 6:21; 2 Tm 4:12). He was with Paul at the time of the writing of this letter. Paul wanted Titus to come before winter. Some Bible students believe that Paul sensed that he would soon be arrested again, and thus, wanted Titus with him on his final journey to Rome. ***Support:*** This is

from the Greek word *propempeo*. The word was used to enjoin the responsibility of financially making it possible for one to continue his journey (See comments 3 Jn 5-8). In this case, Paul commanded Titus to make it financially possible for Zenas and Apollos to make their journey to Nicopolis.

3:14 *Maintain good works:* Paul again emphasizes the point that Christians must manifest their appreciation for God's grace by maintaining good works (vs 8; 2:7,14; 2 Co 4:15). His emphasis on maintaining good works indicates that there were many with whom Titus was working who professed to be Christian, and yet, they were lazy. His continual exhortation concerning good works indicates that Christians sometimes find it easy to continue their beliefs, but fail to perform in reference to the needs of others. ***Unfruitful:*** Those who are lazy, and do not maintain good works, are unfruitful (See 1:16; 1 Tm 2:10; 5:10; 6:18; 2 Tm 2:21). They bear no fruit simply because they are doing nothing to serve others. *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before that we should walk in them"* (Ep 2:10). It is the nature of those who have experienced the grace of God to show their appreciation to God for their salvation through good works (See comments 2 Co 4:15). If one does not manifest good works in his life as a disciple, then he has little appreciation for his salvation. Being unfruitful means being ungrateful. It is not that we meritoriously work for our salvation. We are saved, and thus work out our salvation that we have in Christ. Paul exhorted the Philippians to work out their *"own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure"* (Ph 2:12,13). The exhortation does not say to work "for" one's salvation, but to work it out. When one realizes the greatness of his salvation, he is motivated to work to the glory of God.

3:15 Paul closes this epistle by encouraging acceptance of one another in the faith (Rm 14:1,2). Because of our common obedience to the gospel, we have a common fellowship that extends to all disciples throughout the world (Jd 3). Our discipleship is manifested by our acceptance of all disciples. When we find a faithful disciple of Jesus, therefore, we are obligated to accept him as a brother.

ABBREVIATIONS

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis - **Gn**, Exodus - **Ex**, Leviticus - **Lv**, Numbers - **Nm**, Deuteronomy - **Dt**, Joshua - **Ja**, Judges - **Jg**, Ruth - **Rt**, 1 Samuel - **1 Sm**, 2 Samuel - **2 Sm**, 1 Kings - **1 Kg**, 2 Kings - **2 Kg**, 1 Chronicles - **1 Ch**, 2 Chronicles - **2 Ch**, Ezra - **Er**, Nehemiah - **Ne**, Esther - **Et**, Job - **Jb**, Psalms - **Ps**, Proverbs - **Pv**, Ecclesiastes - **Ec**, Song of Solomon - **Ss**, Isaiah - **Is**, Jeremiah - **Jr**, Lamentations - **Lm**, Ezekiel - **Ez**, Daniel - **Dn**, Hosea - **Hs**, Joel - **Jl**, Amos - **Am**, Obadiah - **Ob**, Jonah - **Jh**, Micah - **Mc**, Nahum - **Nh**, Habakkuk - **Hk**, Zephaniah - **Zp**, Haggai - **Hg**, Zechariah - **Zc**, Malachi - **Ml**

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew - **Mt**, Mark - **Mk**, Luke - **Lk**, John - **Jn**, Acts - **At**, Romans - **Rm**, 1 Corinthians - **1 Co**, 2 Corinthians - **2 Co**, Galatians - **Gl**, Ephesians - **Ep**, Philippians - **Ph**, Colossians - **Cl**, 1 Thessalonians - **1 Th**, 2 Thessalonians - **2 Th**, 1 Timothy - **1 Tm**, 2 Timothy - **2 Tm**, Titus - **Ti**, Philemon - **Pl**, Hebrews - **Hb**, James - **Js**, 1 Peter - **1 Pt**, 2 Peter - **2 Pt**, 1 John - **1 Jn**, 2 John - **2 Jn**, 3 John - **3 Jn**, Jude - **Jd**, Revelation - **Rv**