

Eubulus greets you, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. **22** The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

At this time in his imprisonment, the Roman brethren were with Paul. Though all had forsaken him on his first defense, the brethren were with him at this time. At least these who are mentioned here were brave enough to be associated with Paul during his time his trials and imprisonment.

Paul's Letter To Titus

Author

Paul, the bondservant of God and apostle of Jesus Christ is the author of this letter (1:1; see "Author" in introduction to 1 Tm).

Date:

After his release from his first imprisonment in Rome around A.D. 62,63, Paul possibly left Rome for Crete, and from there 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 before his arrest and return to 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 is the case, the letter was written before the second imprisonment and before 2 Timothy which was written during the second imprisonment.

Theme:

The theme of the letter is centered around apostolic instructions to an evangelist concerning his work of church edification. Titus' work was to continue the equipping of the newly established Cretan church, and thus, Paul writes to instruct him on how to "*set in order the things that are lacking*" (Ti 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 church. Because of the continued influence of the judaizing teachers in the early churches, especially those judaizing teachers who had been influenced by Gnostic teachings that were developing in the middle and last part of the first century, Paul wrote to Titus in order to direct him in his work to ground the church in the truth (See "Historical Background" in introduction to 1 Tm). Because of the unstable nature of the Cretan churches, Paul gave Titus inspired instructions concerning the work and conduct of the evangelist in the work of equipping the church. 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 stresses the importance of doctrinal integrity combined with behavioral Christianity in order that an evangelist conduct an effective work.

Historical Background

Little is known of Titus, the evangelist (1:4). He is not mentioned in the letter 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). On many of Paul's travels, Titus was in his company (2 Co 7:14; 8:23; Gl 2:3-5). He was with Paul in Ephesus, Corinth and Rome (2 Co 2:12ff; 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 one with whom he had a close personal relationship (1:4; see 1 Tm 1:2).

Chapter 1

1 ¶ Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that is according to godliness,

2 in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,

3 but has in proper time manifested His word through preaching that was committed to me

according to the commandment of God our Savior,

4 to Titus, a true son after the common faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God the Father and the Lord Christ Jesus our Savior.

5 ¶ For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking and designate elders in every city, as I had charged you.

Chapter 1

GREETINGS

1 Paul affirms himself to be the *doulos* (slave) of God's will and *apostolos* (apostle) sent forth by his personal commissioning by 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 for God's work in this world (Rm 12:1). When one becomes a Christian, he works not for 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). It was their faith that moved them to recognize the truth of the gospel that had been revealed from God (2 Tm 2:25). Our faith which 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). **2 Eternal life:** The blessed 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 our characters 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 proving of individuals who through faith would transition into eternal dwelling with God. **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. **3 Manifested His word through preaching:** God manifested the scheme 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 that 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 first 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 schemes 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 preacher what and how to say that which has already been revealed in the Bible. Only through diligent study is one prepared to teach that which is revealed in the Bible (2 Tm 2:15). God speaks His will to men today only through His written word which is all-sufficient to provide the man of God with all that is necessary to teach the word (2 Tm 3:16,17). Therefore, God does not directly speak to the evangelist today as he did to the inspired writers of the Bible. The inspired biblical writers received the word of God through inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Teachers today must receive it through the perspiration of diligent Bible study.

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 belief in the body of teaching 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 church of Christ is based. **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).

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERS

5 Set in order the things that are lacking: Titus was to continue those things in the establishment of the Cretan church 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 churches were during the latter part of the 60s. Christians were 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 destruction of Jerusalem (See comments Mt 24). Titus was 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 is left in Crete in order to continue giving instruction to those who had little knowledge of New Testament Christianity. Titus

6 An elder must be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of being wild or rebellious.

7 For an overseer must be blameless as the steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not violent, not greedy of dishonest gain,

8 but hospitable, a lover of good, sensible,

just, holy, self-controlled,

9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, so that he may be able by sound teaching both to exhort and refute those who contradict.

10 ¶ For there are many rebellious and idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,

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 deal with were the designation of elders (vs 6-9), the threat of false teachers and their teachings, (1:10,11), and the immoral behavior on the part 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 society. What is also assumed by the nature of the instructions to stay in Crete to set things in order is 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 evangelist in a particular church or area.

Designate elders: Paul is not giving Titus authority to individually select those men he might believe should be elders. The inspired direction Paul is writing in this letter is the inspired guide by which the men are to be identified, and thus, designated by the church to serve as elders. After the church had been properly instructed concerning the qualities and qualifications of elders which Paul here mentions, then the church 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 entire 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. Secondly, the elders as a group are to serve the church in every city. At 14:23 emphasizes the fact that a plurality of elders was designated to serve in every church. One might assume that At 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 At 14:23 Luke recorded that the evangelists passed through the cities of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the churches 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 that one church met on Sundays. When the evangelists passed through these cities, they designated elders in the church of each city. In 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 authority given to elders to have responsibilities 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. **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 church as shepherds (See comments 1 Tm 3:1-6). The purpose for which these qualities and qualifications were given was to qualify one for service as an elder, not to disqualify him. Therefore, when a church is working to designate elders, the members must emphasize the positive nature of these spiritual qualities and qualifications. The designation of one to be an elder 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 of the disciples. Therefore, the focus of elders 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 they might service the spiritual needs of the church. **Holding fast the faithful word:** In order to shepherd the flock of God, elders 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 the ability to teach and encourage the faithful. 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 church in order that they feed the flock (At 20:28; see the use of *parakalein* in 1 Tm 4:16; 5:1,2; 2 Tm 4:2). **Convict:** The nature of this word implies that the elders 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 insubordinate and lawless men who seek to contradict the way of truth (1 Tm 1:9). Therefore, the elders of the church must be knowledgeable of the word of God in order to guard the flock from being tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine (See comments Ep 4:11-16).

CORRECTION OF FALSE TEACHERS

10 The general threat to the church was the pres-

11 whose mouths must be stopped. They subvert whole households, teaching things that they ought not for the sake of dishonest gain.

12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans *are* always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.”

13 This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply so that they may be sound in the faith,

14 not giving heed to Jewish fables and com-

mandments of men who turn from the truth.

15 To the pure all things *are* pure. But to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure. Even their mind and conscience are defiled.

16 They profess that they know God. But in works they deny *Him*, being abominable and disobedient and worthless for any good work.

Chapter 2

1 ¶ But as for you, speak the things that are

ence of those who were arrogantly defiant of authority. 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. **11 *Mouths must be stopped:*** The authority 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 to the church. 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 church (1 Tm 6:5). They were going about from house to house, binding where God had not bound, and thus causing dissension in the church (Rm 16:17,18). **12 *One of them:*** Paul seems to indicate by this statement that the problem not only originated from within the church, but also from false teachers in the Cretan society who were propagating their erroneous teachings for hire. ***“Cretans are always liars”:*** This statement which 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 the church was established 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. ***Liars:*** Throughout the first 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 society 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, the church was established. **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 members 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 sin 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 stand up and sharply rebuke those who would practice the sin of the world. ***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 teaching of God (2:2; 1 Tm 1:10; 3:9; 2 Tm 4:3). **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). ***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. In the context of this discussion, Paul's reference is primarily to the Jewish Gnosticism that was 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. **15 *Defiled and unbelieving:*** Those who have honest and sincere hearts look on others to 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). **16 *In works they deny Him:*** The disciples must be on guard against religious people who do not obey the truth (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). ***Abominable:*** They are an abomination to God because they claim to represent God by their disobedient lifestyles. However, 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).

Chapter 2

MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

1 *Speak ... sound teaching:* The Greek word here for “sound” means “healthy” (See 1 Tm 1:10; 2 Tm

proper for sound teaching.

2 *Teach* that the older men be sensible, grave, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, in patience.

3 The older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things,

4 so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 *to be* discreet, pure, workers at home, good, subject to their own husbands so that the word of God not be blasphemed.

6 ¶ Likewise, exhort young men to be discreet.

7 In all things showing yourself *to be* a pat-

tern of good works, in teaching *show* integrity, seriousness,

8 sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that he who is an opponent may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of us.

9 ¶ *Exhort* bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, *and* to please *them* well in all *things*, not answering back,

10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they may adorn the teaching of God our Savior in all things.

11 ¶ For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,

12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live sensibly, righteously and godly in this present age,

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. **2** That which is healthy teaching refers to teaching that affects one's attitudes and behavior. **Older men:** The older men in the church 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. **3 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. **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. (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 domestic 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 the word of God in the community when people see its effect on the lives of Christians.

6-8 Young men: In a similar manner, the young brethren 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 brethren by manifesting in his life an example of godly living (Ph 3:17; 1 Tm 4:12). In order to lead the brethren 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 religious, and yet, do not live according to sound teaching. The evangelist should continue his teaching by behavioral example in 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.

9 Bondservants: Reference here is to slaves 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. **10 Not pilfering:** Whether a slave or an employee, there should be no stealing from one's master or the company for which he works. Thieves will have no part in heaven because they are of a selfish nature, and thus, do not respect their neighbors. **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). On the other hand, hypocritical disciples 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

11 The grace ... has appeared: Though God was patient and forgiving with the sins of those who lived under the Old Testament, His grace was not fully known until Jesus' death on the cross (Lk 3:6; Rm 5:15). It was on the cross that God manifested that He loved us in our 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). **12 Teaching us:** The grace of God teaches us that in view of the loving grace of God for us through the cross, it is reasonable that we should naturally respond to God's will (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 15:10). Our motivation to please God is not because we are trying to legally justify ourselves before God. The motivation of the Christian is in response to the grace of

13 looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Christ Jesus,

14 who gave Himself for us so that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a special people *who are zealous for good works*.

15 ¶ These things speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

Chapter 3

1 ¶ Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for

every good work,

2 to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, forbearing, showing all meekness to all men.

3 For we ourselves also were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful *and* hating one another.

4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared,

5 He saved us, not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

6 whom He poured on us abundantly through

God. Therefore, only those who have hearts of gratitude are fit for 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 is thus mentally prepared for heavenly dwelling. **13 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). **14 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 Jn 6:37; 17:6-8; 1 Pt 2:5,9,10; At 20:28). **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). **15 With all authority:** The authority by which Titus was to speak these things rested in the inspired word which 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).

Chapter 3

GRACE MOTIVATED OBEDIENCE

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 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 obe-

dient to civil government. **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 civil government (See Mt 17:24-27). A Christian should be a good citizen. **2 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 humility toward government officials. **3** Every disciple of Jesus must remember his behavior before he became a disciple. Christians should thus be patient with non-Christians because they 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). **4 The kindness and the 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 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). **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. **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, in immersion 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 renewed in 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). **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 ef-

Jesus Christ our Savior,

7 so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

8 ¶ This is a trustworthy saying, and these things I want you to affirm confidently so that those who have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

9 ¶ But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and contentions and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

10 Reject a factious man after the first and second admonition,

11 knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

12 ¶ When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have determined to spend the winter there.

13 Diligently support Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey so that nothing is lacking for them.

14 And let our *brethren* learn to maintain good works to meet urgent needs so that they will not be unfruitful.

15 ¶ All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

fects of that outpouring extend to all those who believe today (See comments Mk 16:15-20). It is 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. **7 Justified by His grace:** We stand justified before God, not on the basis of meritorious obedience to law or good works, but 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. **8 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 the church lest the church grow complacent concerning its salvation by the grace of God.

AVOID USELESS DEBATES

9 Avoid foolish controversies: There is always the opportunity for the evangelist to become involved in senseless debates over those things some brethren seek to bind on the church. There are those things that some consider essential to salvation which 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). **Unprofitable and worthless:** The evangelist should shun senseless arguments over nonbiblical issues that some seek to make matters of fundamental doctrine. Such arguments endanger the fundamental spirit of love upon which fellowship is established among brethren. If the Bible does not mention a particular subject, or the matter does not affect a moral or doctrinal principle, then the subject is a non-biblical issue, and thus, not a matter for senseless argument. No meetings of disciples should be conducted

when the subject is over matters of opinion which some would bind on the church. **10 Reject:** Paul is stern and serious about the matter of some who would cause division in the church by their senseless debates over matters of opinion. As an evangelist, Titus was to reject such men. The factious man who is causing division in the church over nonbiblical issues and matters of opinions 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 (Rm 16:17,18; compare Mt 18:15-18). **11 Perverted and sinning:** The reason why the factious man should be rejected is because he is warped in his thinking and sinning in his behavior. 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 cause dissension and turmoil in the fellowship of the church. They destroy the peace among disciples because they continually seek to impose their opinions on the church.

FINAL GREETINGS

12 Tychicus was possibly from Colosse (Gl 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.

13 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 commands Titus to make it financially possible for Zenas and Apollos to make their journey to Nicopolis. **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. **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 help others. **15** Paul closes 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.

Paul's Letter To Philemon

Author

From a Roman prison, the apostle Paul wrote this letter to a longtime friend named Philemon (See "Author" in the introduction to Rm).

Date

This short letter, with the letters of Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians, was written by Paul during his first Roman imprisonment somewhere around A.D. 61 to 63 (Compare vss 1,9,23; Ep 3:1; Ph 1:13; Cl 4:18). Some believe that the letter could have been written during Paul's Caesarean imprisonment in A.D. 58-60 before he left for Rome. Others have affirmed that it may have been written during an imprisonment in Ephesus around A.D. 55,56 (See 1 Co 15:32; 2 Co 11:23). However, because Paul mentions many of the same people he mentions in the letters to the Ephesians and Colossians, it is probable that this letter was written during the Roman imprisonment.

Many of the same people that are mentioned in the Colossian letter are mentioned in this letter, indicating that Philemon was closely associated with the church in Colosse and those with whom Paul worked. Key individuals that are mentioned in both letters are Archippus (vs 2; Cl 4:17), Onesimus (vs 10; Cl 4:9), Epaphras (vs 23; Cl 1:7; 4:12), Mark (vs 24; Cl 4:10), Aristarchus (vs 24; Cl 4:10), Demas (vs 24; Cl 4:14) and Luke (vs 24; Cl 4:14). This letter was probably delivered to Philemon by Tychicus and Onesimus who also delivered letters to the Ephesians and Colossians (See vss 10,12; Ep 6:21; Cl 4:3,7-9).

Purpose

Philemon lived in the vicinity of the churches of Colosse and Laodicea (Cl 4:15). From what Paul states in verses 1 and 19, it appears that he was a longtime friend of Paul to whom he was indebted for help in the past. Philemon was possibly converted by Paul. An assembly of disciples met in the house of Philemon (vs 2). He was the master of Onesimus who was his slave. Onesimus had run away to Rome where he was converted by Paul.

Paul addressed this letter to Philemon on behalf of Onesimus who was instructed by Paul to return to Philemon. Paul thus writes to encourage Philemon to receive Onesimus, not as a slave, but as a brother in Christ. It was Roman law that runaway slaves either be branded or beaten to death in the presence of other slaves. It is doubtful that Philemon would have inflicted such punishment upon Onesimus. However, in order to reassure Onesimus and to instruct Philemon, Paul wants to make sure that no punishment is inflicted upon Onesimus when he returns. Paul also wants Philemon to prepare a place for him to stay because he is confident that he is about to be released from prison.

When reading this letter, we must keep in mind that slavery was a part of the socioeconomic structure of the Roman Empire. Some students believe that as many as a third to a half of the population of the Empire was composed of slaves. In such a society, many slaves and masters were converted to Christianity. The Christian masters thus found themselves in a situation where they had Christian slaves but would not sell these brothers to unbelievers. Therefore, the Christian slaves remained in the care of their Christian masters. We do not know what type of arrangement was made in such situations, though from this letter Paul does send Onesimus back to Philemon. He expects Philemon to deal with Onesimus after the principles of Christian conduct. In order to deal with the socioeconomic situation, inspired instructions were given to Christian masters and slaves that they maintain their relationships according to Christian principles until the abolition of slavery as a result of Christian principles being engrafted into society as a whole (See comments Ep 6:5-9; Cl 3:22 - 4:1). We would also assume that Christian slaves gained their freedom from their Christian masters since Christian slaves became more than slaves when they were converted. This seems to be the indication from what Paul says in verse 16. Paul possibly hoped that Philemon would free Onesimus and send him back to Rome to minister to him while he was in prison. Paul did not need a personal slave. He needed company. He was in a situation where he needed company as he stood trial for his life. The sincerity and zeal of Onesimus would have brought him much comfort.