

## ***Introduction to Titus***

Titus is part of the Pastoral Epistle. 1 Timothy and Titus were written around the same time, and 2 Timothy written later. At first glance, Titus seems as though it is just a shorter version of the same letter written to Timothy. It addresses a lot of the same issues, particularly the importance of choosing spiritually strong, theologically sound leaders who *both* live in way that is above reproach, as a positive example to the outside world *and* are not afraid to call out false teachers.

But upon deeper examination, we can see the difference between the two. Timothy was in Ephesus, where the church had been in existence for 12 years, and false teachers had cropped up and had been leading the people astray from the truth. Titus was in Crete, where he was organizing new churches out of the believers there. There were already some false teachers in Crete, even before they had officially established their churches. Paul is using what he had learned from Ephesus to get Titus to start the church at Crete on the right track, with a firm foundation of strong leadership and sound doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

## ***Who Was Titus?***

Titus was not mentioned in the book of Acts, so we don't know much about his early life or career. He was noted in Galatians as a Gentile believer who became a companion of Paul, journeying with him and Barnabas to Jerusalem (Galatians 2:1–3). He was then dispatched to Corinth, where he successfully reconciled the Christian community there with Paul, who had founded it. After he was freed from his imprisonment in Rome, Paul then left Titus on the island of Crete to help organize the church there, which is what this letter is about. After he successfully did that, he met again with Paul in Nicopolis and went on to Dalmatia.

## ***Date of the Letter***

Conservative scholars believe Titus was written by Paul around the same time as 1 Timothy, around A.D. 62–63. Paul was writing from Nicopolis, Macedonia, where Titus would later join him. Paul had been released from his imprisonment in Rome (where he wrote Philippians and Colossians) and had been traveling to many churches to help with problems they were having. When he visited Crete, he left Titus there to finish setting up the churches, and he and Timothy went on to Ephesus, where he left Timothy to settle troubles they were having there. Paul went

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon Fee and Douglas Stewart, *How to Read the Bible Book by Book* (Zondervan, 2014), 413.

on to Macedonia, leaving his two “fixers” in those cities to organize the churches, stop false teaching, build strong leadership and strengthen their communities.<sup>2</sup>

In the book of Titus, Paul gives us a very brief guideline for what is most important in establishing a healthy church:

- Build on a firm foundation of the truth
- Establish strong leaders who know sound doctrine and live it out in their lives
- Live together in unity, supporting one another in community

It is only by having strong, healthy churches that we can successfully accomplish our mission to advance the Gospel to the world.

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<sup>2</sup> Gordon Fee and Douglas Stewart, *How to Read the Bible Book by Book* (Zondervan, 2014), 413.