

Titus

Introduction

Crete is an island in the Mediterranean Sea, about 100 miles south of Greece. It is about 3,260 square miles (160 miles east to west, and 37 miles at its widest point), with a population today of 635,000 people. Paul had visited Crete (1:5), where he left Titus, who was a Greek Gentile (Gal 2:3). He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their



mission of mercy to the Jerusalem believers, and when Paul was in Antioch of Syria (Titus' home), all before Paul's first missionary journey (Gal 2:1).

Titus also served as Paul's special representative to the Corinthian church during Paul's third missionary journey. He carried the "severe letter" from Ephesus (2 Cor. 12:18; cf. 2 Cor. 2:3-4; 7:8-12) and, returning to Ephesus through Macedonia, met Paul in Macedonia (2 Cor. 7:6-16). He was, in addition, the leader of the group of men whom Paul sent to the churches in Macedonia and Achaia, to pick up the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:6, 16, 23).

Paul planned to send Artemas or Tychicus to relieve Titus, so Titus could join Paul in Nicopolis for the winter (3:12).

I. Salutation (1:1-4)

A. The Writer (1:1-3)

1:1—Paul—his Gentile name (Saul was his Jewish name)

—**a bond-servant**—one who chooses to be a servant for life

—**of God**—only used by Paul here, elsewhere he calls himself a “servant of Jesus Christ” (Rom 1:1; Gal 1:10; Phil 1:1).

—**and an apostle of Jesus Christ**—one sent out from Jesus Christ. Paul was writing under the authority of Jesus (Acts 9:1-9). The church was “*built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone*” (Eph 2:20).

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—**for the faith of those chosen of God**—God’s elect, chosen in eternity past to respond to the gospel for salvation (Eph 1:4; 1 Pet 1:1-2).

—**and the knowledge of the truth**—Faith is trusting the knowledge you understand to be true.

—**which is according to godliness**—saving truth leads through salvation to sanctification, that is, producing increasing godliness. Divine truth and godliness are connected. Jesus prayed, “*Sanctify them in the truth; Thy Word is truth*” (John 17:17).

AN APPLICATION—In addition to being proved wrong when compared to Scripture, false teaching is also exposed by the ungodliness that it produces. Truth of God produces godliness.

1:2—in the hope of eternal life—the hope of eternal life is grounded in the promise of the absolute trustworthiness of God

—**which God, who cannot lie**—because God is the source and measure of all truth, so it is, by definition, impossible for Him to lie. He speaks the truth from His own nature.

—**promised long ages ago**—lit. “before times eternal,” before the foundation of the earth (Eph 1:3-4). Not only was our salvation planned but the hope of eternal life for believers was planned.

AN APPLICATION—Here God is shown to be the opposite of the people of Crete who are known as liars and full of deceit (1:10, 12-13).

1:3—but at the proper time manifested—this is a dispensational distinction. God did not make known the church age in previous ages. Paul said, “*by revelation there was made known to me the mystery of Christ, ...which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed...that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body*” (Eph 2:3-6).

—**even His word**—the message of the gospel and godliness

—**in the proclamation with which I was entrusted**—Paul “*had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised [Gentiles], just as Peter had been to the circumcised [Jews]*” (Gal 2:7).

—**according to the commandment of**—it was an assignment from God Himself for Paul to carry out (Acts 9:15-16; 1 Cor 15:9; Eph 3:8; 1 Tim 1:11-13).

—**God our Savior**—God the Father chose us in eternity past for salvation (1 Pet 1:2; Eph 1:3-4), so He is the initiator of our salvation, i.e., our Savior.

AN APPLICATION—Jesus was sent from the Father to do the Father’s will (Matthew 26:39, 42). We are saved to do the Father’s will (John 14:23).

B. The Reader (1:4a)

1:4a—To Titus, my true child in a common faith—perhaps Paul had led him to Christ, but he had definitely taken Titus as his protégé, or disciple. With Titus being a Gentile, this identification is particularly significant. Paul also used similar words to Timothy (1 Tim 1:1). “Common faith” is the true faith that is shared by the apostle and all other believers.

C. The Greeting (1:4b)

1:4b—*Grace and peace from God the Father*—grace is God’s favor or gift (Eph 2:8-9), and peace is our relationship with Him (not with the world, where we will have tribulation—John 16:33).

—and *Christ Jesus our Savior*—dying for our sins, bringing us redemption, Jesus also is our Savior (1 Pet 1:2). Actually, with the Holy Spirit convicting us to become believers, all three of the Godhead are involved in our salvation and our sanctification.

II. Concerning Elders (1:5-9)

A. The Duties of Titus in Crete (1:5)

1:5—*For this reason*—there is no section on thanksgiving or personal things like Paul wrote to Timothy.

—*I left you in Crete*—the same reason as Paul left Timothy in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3), to provide leadership, as it seems Paul was only there briefly.

—*that you would set in order*—no matter how gifted, popular, effective, repentant (other worldly criteria), God does not lower the standards of the leaders of believers. It is the term for one who straightens crooked teeth or someone setting a broken arm.

—*what remains*—It seems as though these are perhaps young believers, whom Paul started to instruct in godliness, but because the depravity of the Cretans was so deep and well-known, much more work had to be done in correcting them in doctrine and practice.

—and *appoint elders in every city*—i.e., a plurality of elders in every city where there were believers. Israel had elders also so Moses would not have to bear the burden of leadership alone (Num 11:16-17). These were generally older men. Here, it would mean an older man in the faith. Elders were “*not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil*” (1 Tim 3:6).

—*as I directed* [“commanded”] *you*—as Paul’s apostolic agent in Paul’s absence. This apostolic authority ended with the close of the Apostolic Age. There is no one else in the last 2000 years who has the authority, and certainly no one today has that authority (which includes new revelation from God and performing miracles).

AN APPLICATION—This apostolic authority was not passed on to the early church fathers in the 100s. The writers of the Scripture were the apostles and those they gave authority to (such as Mark, writing with Peter’s authority), James (the head of the church with the apostles in Jerusalem). Scripture ended with the writing of Revelation by the Apostle John in the late 90s.

AN APPLICATION—Although these were fairly new believers, it seems like there is usually in almost any group of believers someone who stands out as more mature. They hunger for the Word and seem to grasp it so quickly. It is a spiritual gift God gives to a group of believers. Titus was to single that person[s] out to lead the believers in Crete. Of course, not everyone was to be a leader—groups of believers function practicing all the gifts.

B. The Qualifications of the Elders (1:6-9)

1:6—*namely*—Paul does not say how many elders, and simply being older in the faith does not necessarily qualify a man for leadership. But the first qualification (which hardly seems necessary to mention) is that the elder is to be a man, not a woman. Women appointed as elders are in disobedience to the directives in the Bible!!

(1) **if any man is above reproach**—one who cannot be accused of anything wrong, blameless. Paul himself wrote, “*I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified*” (1 Cor 9:27). It takes discipline in making right choices to remain blameless.

(2) **the husband of one wife**—possibly that the elder should have been married only once. He must be free of fornication, adultery, divorce, and remarriage (except after the death of a wife), mistresses, illegitimate children, pornography, and any other immoral sin.

(3) **having children who believe**—the home is the training ground for overseers. His children should be believers. The context seems to limit children to those who are still living at home and are not yet adults. **not accused of dissipation** [self-indulgence, wildness, promiscuity] **or rebellion** [out of control, not subject to parents].

1:7—For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward—he is overseeing God’s household. Damage to a church leader is damage to God’s reputation. They are accountable to God for all that they do or fail to do.

(4) **not self-willed**—or “self-serving,” insists on having his own way, arrogant, refusing to listen to others or take into account how others might be affected. Jesus said, “*You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not so among you...*” (Matt 20:25-28).

(5) **not quick-tempered**—a tendency to quickly become angry

(6) **not addicted to wine**—heavy drinker, drunkard, “to be continually in the presence of wine.” This does not prevent one from drinking wine, and it effects people differently. But their reputation should not be someone who continually needs wine.

(7) **not pugnacious**—a bully or violent person, can be verbal as well as physical fighting and quarreling

(8) **not fond of sordid gain**—greedy for material, even dishonest, gain, love of money.

1:8—but—in contrast to the previous list

(9) **hospitable**—practical help to anyone who is in need, friend or stranger, freely using his time, his resources, his encouragement to help others, “giving” instead of “getting”

(10) **loving what is good**—Paul wrote, “*Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things*” (Phil 4:8).

(11) **sensible**—responsible, full of common sense, realistic, mature, intelligent

(12) **just**—honest, principled, full of integrity, right-minded

(13) **devout**—being dedicated to the service of God

(14) **self-controlled**—disciplined, self-restraint, will power

1:9— (15) holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching [of the apostles]—to remain committed to God’s truth in the Scriptures and does not depart from it. He maintains it and guards it from diluting (to water it down, make it weaker), deletion (to cut out, edit out, cancel) and distortion (twist, bend, manipulate, tamper with, alter, change).

(16) **so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine**—persuade, encourage, warn, appeal to, urge in the truth of Scriptures. Paul also wrote, “*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God...accurately handling the word of truth*” (2 Tim 2:15).

(17) **and to refute those who contradict**—show/prove to be wrong/false or untrue those who are in opposition to the truth of the Word of God.

III. Concerning False Teachers (1:10-16)

A. The Picture of the False Teachers(1:10-13a)

1:10—For there are many rebellious men—those who speak in opposition, rejecting the Gospel

—**empty talkers**—men fluent and impressive in speech that accomplishes nothing

—**and deceivers**—who says wrong is right and right is wrong. Jesus said they are “*like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness*” (Matt 23:27). Paul warned the elders of Ephesus, “*I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them*” (Acts 20:29-30). “*such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ...*” (2 Cor 11:13-15).

—**especially those of the circumcision**—these would be Jewish deceivers, who apparently professed to be Christians but infiltrated the church, trying to convince the believers to follow various aspects of Judaism.

1:11—who must be silenced—a moral necessity for the welfare of the believers is to “to close the mouth by means of a muzzle or gag.” The offenders must be refused opportunity to spread their teachings among the believers.

—**because they are upsetting whole families**—Perhaps these false teachers were approaching families, who were isolated from the other believers. It is one reason the cults go from door-to-door, where people are isolated and more vulnerable.

—**teaching things they should not teach**—things that are not true to the Scripture

—**for the sake of [sordid gain (one word)]**—the motives of the false teachers are corrupt, shameful, unclean, vile, disgusting

1:12—One of themselves, a prophet of their own—several of the Greek prophets throughout history prior to the time of Titus have written about this about the Cretan culture.

—**said, “Cretans are always liars**—So notorious were the Cretans that the Greeks actually formed a verb, *to Cretize*, i.e., to lie.

—**evil beasts**—behaving like a wild animal, living solely on the level of sensual appetites and passions. (Interestingly, Crete is known for not having wild animals, but here we see the people themselves are acting like wild animals.)

—**lazy gluttons**—they desired to be filled without exerting personal effort to earn an honest living. They hated to work but loved to eat.

1:13a—This testimony is true—not necessarily of the believers, but of these false teachers and the culture in general. Other non-Christians who are quoted in 1 Corinthians 15:33; Acts 17:28; John 11:51; 2 Peter 2:16.

AN APPLICATION—Failure to confront problems within assemblies of believers, whether theologically or practically based, may be indicative of a basic indifference with regard to God’s truth. The fear of giving offense can also discourage confrontation. Perhaps there is needed a purging of those who deny the truth of God’s Word.

B. The Response to the Situation (1:13b-14)

1:13b—For this reason—because they are wicked people among the believers, who are upsetting whole families,

—**reprove them severely** [as “to cut with a knife or axe”]—harshly rebuke or censure those who are rebellious and deceivers because they are a danger to the believers
—**so that they may be sound** [“healthy”] **in the faith**—the ultimate goal of the rebuke is to get them to be grounded in understanding the true faith, based on the Scriptures, like a surgeon who cuts out a cancer to heal the patient.

1:14—**not paying attention**—heeding or devoting oneself to error
—**to Jewish myths and commandments of men**—Paul does not identify these manmade commandments, most likely from the Talmud, that added to and often contradicted or nullified the actual Mosaic Law (Torah). See Mark 7:5-9.
—**who turn away from the truth**—this means they had been exposed to the truth, maybe once acknowledged it, but later rejected it, turned away from it, in favor of man-made myths.

C. The Condemnation of the False Teachers (1:15-16)

1:15—**To the pure, all things are pure**—Jesus taught that purification was internal (Mark 7:15; Luke 11:39-41), then our perspectives are on all things pure. Inner purity always produces outer purity.

—**but to those who are defiled and unbelieving**—their conscience has lost its ability to make correct moral judgments, and therefore unable to make true distinctions between good and evil.

—**nothing is pure**—purity comes only thru a right relationship with God. Therefore, to someone who is internally unbelieving, nothing is pure. Impurity corrupts all they touch.

—**but both their mind and their conscience** [morality] **are defiled**—morally filthy, contaminated

AN APPLICATION—Whenever a person’s talk and walk conflict, it is usually their walk, rather than their talk, that reveals what they really are. What they do speaks louder than what they say.

1:16—**They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him**—they claimed to know and follow God, but their corrupt actions told a different story. This is why Titus was to appoint leaders—to correct this issue.

—**being detestable**—an abomination to God, causing disgust because of their hypocrisy

—**and disobedient**—they do not obey God’s truth because of their willful adherence to man-made rules and regulations

—**and worthless for any good deed**—because any good deed must come from character right with God. Anything outside of that is worthless, empty, futile.

AN APPLICATION—Verse 16 is the hinge verse of the epistle. In this verse, Paul identifies a key issue: the opponents are teaching that what a person believes and how a person behaves are not related. But Jesus said they are totally related (Mark 7:15). Whatever you believe is what you will do. Whatever you do comes from what you believe in your heart.

IV. Godly Behavior for Different Groups (2:1-10)

A. Instructional Duty of Titus (2:1)

2:1—**But as for you**—Titus, in contrast to the false teachers.

—**speak**—orally communicate, imperative (a command), present tense, i.e., continuity and persistence. There is (should be) no time when you are not speaking according to the truth of God’s Word.

—**the things which are fitting** [“to be right”] **for sound** [healthy] **doctrine**—see also 1 Tim 1:10; 6:3; 2 Tim 1:13; 4:3. Titus is to be aggressive in speaking sound doctrine. Correct doctrine will result in good behavior.

AN APPLICATION—Paul told Timothy, “*proclaim the Word...For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths*” (2 Tim 4:2-4). That time is now!!!

B. Older Men (2:2)

2:2—Older men—senior male men are the first to be natural leaders. Wisdom with age. But the value of their example will depend on their moral character. However, increased age brings decreased energy, diminished vision and hearing, more aches and pains, and often more depression, hopelessness, and cynicism. Solomon wrote, “...*the years draw near when you will say, ‘I have no delight in them’*” (Ecc 12:1-3). As we grow older, change can become harder to accept. Habits become more deeply entrenched. Sins can become such an integral part of daily living that they cease to be recognized as sins at all. For the believer, though, we want to say with Paul, “*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course I have kept the faith*” (2 Tim 4:7).

At the age of 83—after having traveled some 250,000 miles on horseback, preached more than 40,000 sermons, and produced some 200 books and pamphlets—John Wesley regretted that he was unable to read and write for more than 15 hours a day without his eyes becoming too tired to work. After his 86th birthday, he admitted to an increasing tendency to lie in bed until 5:30 in the morning! [MacArthur, *Titus*]

In itself, old age does not make a believer more godly, more faithful, more satisfied, or more effective in service to God. That’s why Paul’s instructions here to the older men.

—**are to be temperate**—restrained, “one who always has a halter on himself” (Louw & Nida)

—**dignified**—worthy of respect

—**sensible**—to let one’s mind guide one’s body, proper behavior

—**sound in faith**—healthy (1:13b), grounded in understanding the true faith of Scriptures

—**in love**—*agape*, giving to others (esp. believers) without reciprocity

—**in perseverance**—endure, continue to bear up under difficult circumstances

C. Older Women (2:3)

2:3—Older women—“Older” is not a specified age, however, typically, childbearing ends at about 40-45 years of age, and child-rearing ends at about 60-65. So “older” is probably a woman who is at least 60 years of age. Paul also mentions 60 as the age of widows qualified for being put on the list to receive support from other believers (1 Tim 5:9).

—**likewise**—similarly to older men, just the same way, in like manner. Older women are a rich resource among believers. A key function is to teach and encourage younger women in the things of the Lord. (This was not the assignment Titus or of any man, even the pastor.) They also ministered to each other and to women in the church of any age, single, married, or widowed. They visited the sick, and provided hospitality to Christian travelers, especially those in some form of ministry.

—**are to be reverent in their behavior**—even when an older woman does something wrong, she should be lovingly rebuked as a mother (1 Tim 5:2).

—**not malicious gossips**—repeating vicious and unfounded charges against others. As part of a woman’s ministry is to help other women, malicious gossip is always a temptation.

—**nor enslaved [addicted] to much wine**—“nor” seems to connect these two negative commands—a loose tongue often is the result of an intoxicating drink.

—**teaching what is good**—Younger women were to keep their primary focus at home (vv. 4-5), but older women are to reach outside their homes and share what they have learned with others who would profit from it. Although women were not to teach or have authority over men (1 Tim 2:12), they do have the God-given responsibility to teach their own children and other young women.

D. Younger Women (2:4-5)

2:4—**so that** [purpose] **they may encourage**—to teach or train

—**the young women**—even before they are married. For example, a young woman should be taught what to look for in a husband, especially that they would be believers (1 Cor 6:14)

—(1) **to love their husbands**—these are young women who are married. This is *phileo*, affectionate love. She needs to train herself to do it. Training yourself to love involves doing loving things for the other person, whether or not you feel like doing them. It involves putting their interests and welfare above your own. It involves sacrificial giving of yourself to others for their sakes, not for the sake of appreciation or returned love or favor. “*For if you love those who love you,*” Jesus asked, “*what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same?*” (Matt. 5:46). [MacArthur, *Titus*]

AN APPLICATION—Paul also described love: *Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails* (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

—(2) **to love their children**—and these young women also have children the love, not consider them a burden to bear.

2:5—(3) **to be sensible**—practical, reasonable, common sense, wise, mature

—(4) **pure**—without moral defect, morally uncontaminated

—(5) **workers at home**—the home is the woman’s primary (not “only”) area of her ministry, and a wise husband should allow his wife to manage it.

—(6) **kind**—nature of her character, her temperament, non-judgmental

—(7) **being subject to their own husbands**—helping him as the head of the family

—**so that the word of God will not be dishonored**—to cause anyone to speak against the Bible and the way a Christian should act according to the Bible.

E. Younger Men (2:6-8)

2:6—**Likewise urge the young men to be sensible**—not impetuous or unrestrained in conduct. To have right thoughts, sound judgment.

2:7—**in all things show yourself** (Titus, as one of the young men) **to be an example** [“mark” or “impression” left by an instrument such as a pen or hammer] **of good deeds**—godly life as well as teaching—living what you teach

—**with purity** [soundness] **in doctrine**—the content of what you teach. “...*handling accurately the word of truth*” (2 Tim 2:15). The more you know of the Bible, the more accurate you will be. Even well-intentioned believers can be inaccurate out of ignorance.

AN APPLICATION—see 2:1. The contrast is to the false teachers of 1:10f.

—**dignified**—behavior leading to respect, act in the right way

2:8—sound in speech which is beyond reproach—used only here in the NT. The gospel itself will always be condemned by a sinful world (John 15:19-21). But our behavior and what we say should not be a stumbling block.

—**so that the opponent will be put to shame**—opposite of “respect”

—**having nothing bad to say about us**—including Paul. Titus is Paul’s representative there in Crete.

AN APPLICATION—What each Christian does affects all Christians. We are like an individual in a child’s mobile. When one part moves, all the parts move. You are never alone.

F. Slaves (2:9-10)

2:9—Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything—Paul had written that slaves were to stay in the sphere in which they were when they became Christians (1 Cor 7:20-24). We can apply these principles to being an employee or student

—**to be well-pleasing**—a Christian should be the best employee, or student

—**not argumentative**—to speak against

2:10—not pilfering—stealing (material things, but also time)

—**but showing all good faith**—being trustworthy

—**so that they will adorn** [to cause to be beautiful] **the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect**—this is an opportunity to be a testimony of what God is like.

AN APPLICATION—When Jesus came to earth, He was “*the exact representation of His* [God the Father’s] *nature*” (Heb 1:3). Now as believers, we should also be the exact representation of God’s nature, so people can see what God is like by observing us.

V. The Foundation for Godly Living (2:11-14)

A. The Manifestation of God’s Grace (2:11)

2:11—For the grace [favor, gift] **of God has appeared** [historical reality, to become visible, make an appearance]—in Christ (John 1:14, 16)

—**bringing salvation to all men**—it is possible for all people to be saved (2 Cor 5:19), but actually salvation to those who believe in Christ (1 Tim 2:4, 6; 4:10).

B. The Training by God’s Grace (2:12)

2:12—instructing us—those who believe. God’s Word is the instruction book.

—**to deny ungodliness**—to pay no attention to, to say No to (Luke 9:23; Mark 8:34). It is a daily thing, that must be maintained while in this life

—**and worldly desires**—the manifestation of ungodliness, the desires of the sin nature, the cravings of the world in its separation from God

—**and to live sensibly**—inwardly self-controlled, to have right thoughts about what one should do or to let one's mind guide one's body, rather than being led by world and ungodly desires of the flesh nature.

—**righteously**—outwardly morally righteous

—**and godly**—upwardly, fully devoted to God in loving obedience

—**in the present age**—an increasingly evil age (Gal 1:4) until the future age of the reign of the King of Kings

C. The Expectation of Christ's Return (2:13)

2:13—**looking for**—eagerly expecting, Gk. present tense, always looking for His coming

—**the blessed hope**—to happily look forward to with confidence, what is assured

—**and the appearing**—we aren't looking for other things—we are look for the appearing of one Person—Jesus Christ (John 14:1-6; 1 Thess 4:13-18)

—**of the glory of our great God**—the Revelation 1:13-16 description of Jesus. This is one of the strongest statements of the deity of Christ in the NT.

—**and Savior, Christ Jesus**—the One who will appear is our Savior Jesus Christ, who came first to die as payment for our sins, but will next appear to us in glory

AN APPLICATION—This must mean the Rapture, which is the only imminent coming of Christ. The Second Coming is preceded by the many signs of the Tribulation. Notice also that Paul does not ask us to look for the Tribulation or the antichrist but to look for Christ.

D. The Purpose of Christ's Redemption (2:14)

2:14—**who gave Himself**—not just the works He did, but the willingness to give His very life. During His life, He showed the works of God but those works did not pay for our sin. Only His death on the cross could do that.

—**for us**—that is, a sin offering as a substitution for us, instead of us.

—**to redeem us from every lawless deed**—to release someone held captive from the slavery of **every** sinful thing. There is no sin in existence which Jesus did not pay for—from Genesis 1 to Revelation 21.

—**and to purify for Himself a people**—in the O.T., when a person was a leper and became healed, they had to go to the priest to be declared pure, ceremonially acceptable (Lev 13:45; 14:2). It is interesting that a leper said to Jesus, "You can make me clean" (Mark 1:40). Jesus then said, "be cleansed" (which included his healing). [Yet Jesus told him to "show yourself to the priest...for a testimony to them" (Mark 1:44).] Purity comes only from God, and it is so we will be pure in His sight, **for Himself**.

AN APPLICATION—How can something that is unclean, impure, filthy dirty make itself clean? It cannot!!!! [It is why we have washing machines!!!!] Purity has to come from outside the person and applied to the person. And nothing unclean can come into the presence of God. So God had to **purify for Himself** a people. It is the only way it could be done.

—**for His own possession**—to make us a pure people who belong to Him alone.

AN APPLICATION—Satan and his world system do not like this pure people. He does all he can to make us dirty and to follow him away from Christ. But we are people who belong to Christ alone. Satan cannot have us.

—**zealous for good deeds**—one who is deeply committed, enthusiastic to do the things that are pleasing to God. He redeemed us from **lawless deeds** in order for us to be **zealous for good deeds**. That is, so we would deny what God detests and pursue what God values.

E. The Restatement of the Duty of Titus (2:15)

2:15—*These things speak* [to teach, give instruction] **and exhort** [encourage] **and reprove** [rebuke for wrong doing]—Titus was God’s representative to the believers on the island of Crete.

—**with all authority**—i.e., the right to command, which comes only from God’s Word, His revelation to us. It is the only authority. And God’s revelation was given to the apostles, like Paul, to write down, to send to Titus, to the believers on Crete, and to us (Eph 2:20; 2 Pet 1:20-21).

AN APPLICATION—Jesus said, “*the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not so among you...*” (Matt 20:25-26). If you interpret Scripture based on some book or some speaker, then that is your authority. Strive to let only the Scripture be your authority (author’s intended meaning, understood through the context). Christianity is full of those who want to be the authority in your life, to tell you what to do apart from the Scriptures. Paul warned the Ephesians, “*after my departure, savage wolves will come in among you...from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be on the alert...*” (Acts 20:29-31).

—**Let no one disregard you**—reject the Word that Titus was teaching them.

VI. Concerning Believers Generally (3:1-11)

A. Obligations as Citizens (3:1-2)

3:1—**Remind them**—to recall and to think about again about our obligations to government

—(1) **to be subject to rulers, to authorities**—Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17. It is God who “*removes kings and establishes kings*” (Dan 2:21). We are not called to change governments but to be witnesses for Christ (Matt 28:19-20). It is only if they forbid us to speak of Christ, that we are to disobey (Acts 4:19-20), and then we will have to pay the consequences from the government of that disobedience.

—(2) **to be obedient**—“*pay taxes*” (Rom 13:6), for example. Drive the speed limit, if you do not, the government has a right to give you a ticket.

—(3) **to be ready for every good deed**—“*for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works...that we should walk in them*” (Eph 2:10; Gal 6:10; 2 Tim 3:17). [Of course, good works to God may not be good works to Satan’s satanic world system.]

3:2—(4) **to malign no one**—Gk. *blasphemeo*, to slander, curse, or treat with contempt.

—(5) **to be peaceable**—we have no right to become hostile when unbelievers act like unbelievers. “*If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men*” (Rom 12:18).

—(6) **gentle**—Gk. “gracious and forbearing”—don’t hold grudges, give others the benefit of the doubt

—(7) **showing every consideration** [Gk. *praus*] **for all men**—not being harsh with people. Jesus said, “*take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle [Gk. *praus*] and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls*” (Matt 11:29).

B. Motives for Godly Conduct (3:3-8)

1. The Motive from Our Own Past (3:3)

3:3—For we also once were—Remembering our own unsaved, sinful past should be a powerful motive for good behavior now toward the unsaved. *We were* implies that what was once true for us is still true for the unsaved.

—**foolish ourselves**—without spiritual understanding, lacking discernment of spiritual realities because “...*the god of this world has blinded the eyes of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ...*” (2 Cor 4:4).

—**disobedient**—of course, not obeying God’s laws, but maybe even not obeying the government’s laws. Chaos reigns...

—**deceived**—believing truth is a lie, and believing lies are the truth (John 8:44-45)

—**enslaved** [Gk. “to be under the control of some influence and to serve the interests, to be controlled by it”] **to various lusts** [passions] **and pleasures**—they never satisfy, they always want more. “...*fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul*” (1 Pet 2:11).

—**spending our life in malice and envy**—having an attitude of ill-will toward others and their good fortune

—**hateful**—Gk. *stugetoi*, a word only used here in the NT, pertaining to be hated by others

—**hating one another**—you hate them, and they hate you, to detest, be hostile towards

2. The Motive from Our Present Salvation (3:4-7)

Note the reference to all 3 persons of the Trinity who accomplished our salvation.

God the Father:

3:4—But when—contrast to verse 3, an historic event in a point in time. “*When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman...*” (Gal 4:4).

—**the kindness**—Gk. that which helps people or proves to be good for people. He “*desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*” (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9).

—**of God our Savior**—Because the Father planned for and initiated our salvation by His choice (Eph 1:1-4) and sending His Son to be the provision, He is our Savior.

—**and His love for mankind**—*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son...* (John 3:16).

—**appeared**—God’s plan (choice) and love were in eternity past, but then appeared when Jesus became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:1, 14).

3:5—He saved us—the ONLY reason we are different now. Every aspect of salvation is from God and God alone. It is His gift, His grace (again—not a characteristic of God, which would always be true, but a work of God, a gift He gives to those He chooses.)

AN APPLICATION—God’s grace was given in the Old Testament, to Noah, for example (Gen 6:8), but grace was not offered in the Old Testament. In our age, often called the “age of grace,” the grace of God is offered: Jesus said, “*Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest*” (Matt 11:28). “*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...*” (Matt 28:19). “*We beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God*” (2 Cor 5:20).

—**not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness**— “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast...” (Eph 2:8-9). We may do good, “righteous” deeds, but that will not save you. In fact, it often gets in the way of belief, acknowledging you are a sinner in need of God’s mercy.

—**but according to His mercy**—Mercy is not a characteristic of God (that which is always true, then He would have mercy on everyone in the world). It is a work of God. He chooses when to show mercy. “...that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles” (Rom 9:23-24).

God the Holy Spirit:

—**by the washing of regeneration**—some think this is water baptism, but this washing is something God does, not what we do. “Regeneration” is making something new (rebirth, born again). The Holy Spirit cleanses us from the defilement of sin (washing) in making us new in Christ. The washing, then, is viewed as producing an instantaneous change that ended the old life and began the new.

—**and renewing by the Holy Spirit**—Gk. to cause one’s position to become new and different, with the implication of becoming superior to the old sinful self. This work of renewal, however, is a lifelong activity in the experience of the believer (Rom 12:2; Eph 5:26-27), the development of an entirely new nature as contrasted to the old. A new manner of life.

3:6—whom He poured out upon us richly—the Spirit’s work in each believer is a continuation of the Pentecostal outpouring. Every faulty or inadequate experience of renewal is always due to some human obstruction, never to God’s inadequate provision. God’s “divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness...” (2 Pet 1:3). But we can “quench” the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19) and “grieve” the Spirit (Eph 4:30).

God the Son:

—**through Jesus Christ our Savior**—It is the finished work of Christ on the cross that enables us to be saved. Jesus was “delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God” (Acts 2:23), in which he bore all the sins of all who would ever believe.

3:7—so that—purpose statement, God’s aim has been accomplished

—**being justified**—God’s justice is fully satisfied in Christ’s payment for our sins.

—**by His grace**—the favor (gift) of God, not what we deserve

—**we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life**—in 2:13 Paul called the coming of Jesus a “blessed hope.” Now there is an additional hope we have: **eternal life**. Our salvation today is a foretaste of the nature of our future inheritance. Peter wrote, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven” (1 Pet 1:3-4).

3. The Necessary Connection between Doctrine and Conduct (3:8)

3:8—This is a trustworthy statement—Paul has also used this phrase in 1 Timothy 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11—we can have confidence in these things.

—**and concerning these things**—that he just wrote about

—**I want you to speak confidently**—Paul confidently taught these things to Titus, now he wants Titus to insist on these things, teach them to the other believers on Crete

—**so that**—purpose

—**those who have believed God** [for salvation] **will be careful** [Gk. “to keep on giving serious consideration to something, keep thinking about”] **to engage** [be actively involved in helping] **in good deeds**—You do not get saved by works, but after-salvation works will be judged at the Bema (1 Cor 3:11-15; 2 Cor 5:10).

—**These things are good**—Gk. “having acceptable characteristics or functioning in an agreeable manner, often with the focus on outward form or appearance”

—**and profitable for men**—beneficial advantage, “that which helps”

AN APPLICATION—That Paul has such a strong exhortation for believers to maintain good works indicates it is possible for genuine Christians not to maintain good works.

C. The Reaction to Spiritual Error (3:9-11)

3:9—But—in contrast to what they are to be careful to do

—(1) **avoid foolish controversies**—Gk. “to express forceful differences of opinion without necessarily having a presumed goal of seeking a solution.” To argue just to argue.

—(2) **and genealogies**—lists of ancestors, especially important to Jews, who had to prove what tribe they were from in order to own property, etc.

—(3) **and strife**—express differences of opinion with antagonism or hostility, quarrel

—(4) **and disputes about the Law**—obviously, these would be Jewish legalists, who promoted “Jewish myths and commandments of men”

—**for they are unprofitable**—in contrast to the teaching about God in verse 8, these quarrels are useless. No benefit or advantage.

—**and worthless**—they are empty, useless

3:10—Reject [have nothing to do with, 2 Tim 2:23)] **a factious man**—one who causes divisions, who places opinions above the truth (Gk *hairetikos*, in English, *heretic*). They have no desire to know the truth. Lovingly point out his error, but if one’s efforts are ineffective, having nothing to do with him. Further efforts would not be a good stewardship of one’s time and energies and would give the offender an undeserved sense of importance (Gal 5:19-21).

—**after a first and second warning**—Paul also wrote, “keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting” (Rom 16:17-18). Don’t be “*unsuspecting*.”

AN APPLICATION—Paul is telling us to make a distinction. They do not receive our “affection” (v. 15). They are not part of our family.

3:11—knowing that such a man is perverted [used only here in the NT]—not straight in his or her thinking.

—**and is sinning**—any belief contrary to what God has revealed in His Scriptures

—**being self-condemned**—he is condemned by what he himself has done, things like disputes, strife, foolish controversies

VII. Conclusion (3:12-15)

A. Concluding Instructions (3:12-14)

3:12—When I send Artemas or Tychicus [Acts 20:2; Eph 6:21, 22; Col 4:7, 8] **to you**—Paul evidently wanted one of them to replace Titus in Crete, so Titus could come to Paul on the west coast of Greece, north of Crete. Tychicus was called “*our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord*” (2 Tim 4:12).

—**make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis**—there were 7-9 cities in the New Testament times named Nicopolis, but he probably means the one on the Adriatic coast of Greece (see the map at the beginning of this material). Titus was not to leave Crete, however, until either Artemas or Tychicus arrived. Paul did not want the believers in Crete to be left without a Bible teacher.

—**for I have decided to spend the winter there**—It’s interesting that Paul did not describe some “leading” of God for his plans. He just decided. Also, it was his decision (which he evidently had not yet made) for replacing Titus, and who would replace him. Also, wherever Paul was, he was not “there” in Nicopolis yet, but intending to go there.

3:13—Diligently [Gk. eagerly desire, intense effort, doing one’s best] **help Zenas the lawyer**—it seems that Zenas and Apollos were passing through Crete and bringing Paul’s letter to Titus. Zenas only appears here. If a Jew, he would be an expert in the Mosaic Law. If a Greek, it would be the Roman law.

—**and Apollos**—an eloquent Jewish preacher of the gospel from Alexandria, Egypt, who “*was mighty in the Scriptures,*” who “*had been instructed in the way of the Lord,*” and was “*fervent in spirit, ... speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus...*” (Acts 18:24-25). He only knew about the baptism of John, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they explained to him the way of God more accurately.

—**on their way**—we do not know their final destination, but Crete was “on their way”

—**so that nothing is lacking for them**—they were partners of Paul and faithful co-workers in preaching the Word of God. Titus was to get them clothes, food, whatever they needed to continue on their journey.

3:14—Our people—Helping Zenas and Apollos was not only a responsibility for Titus, but also for the other believers there in Crete. Paul makes a separation here between the false teachers, those who are causing dissention, and those who are “*in the faith,*” those believers who understand the truth of the Word of God the same as we do.

—**must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs**—meeting the daily needs of other believers is something that needs to be “learned.” It is not an automatic behavior. We need to learn how to recognize “*pressing needs,*” learn how to evaluate whether they are indeed pressing needs. For example, 1 Timothy 5:3-16 gives a list of qualifications to determine what are needs for widows.

—**so that they will not be unfruitful**— “*pressing needs*” are opportunities to practice the good works of our Christian faith, in contrast to verse 9, arguing over worthless and unprofitable things.

B. Personal Greetings (3:15a)

3:15a—All who are with me greet you—we do not know specifically where Paul was when he wrote this letter, but no matter where he was, the believers were always greeting others in other places.

—**Greet those who love** [*phileo*—an affection] **us**—who understand the Scriptures the same way Paul does. Believers are part of a family, with the affection for sisters and

brothers in Christ. This affection is not for those who believe in something else. We may *agape* (giving) them, we may desire they change their thinking, we may desire they be saved, but we do not have *phileo* affection for them. Affection is for those who have like minds as we do.

—*in the faith*—faith is trusting the understanding what is true in the Scriptures. Those who have the same understanding as we do Paul calls “our people” (v. 14).

C. The Closing Benediction (3:15b)

3:15b—*Grace* [favor, gift of God] **be with you all**—that is, be with all those who are truly believers in Christ, those “*in the faith*.”