

Gathering Together - October 10th 2021

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## Who wrote it?

Paul wrote Titus

## Why did he write it?

Titus was a young pastor being put in charge of the churches as Crete. Paul wrote to encourage him and address some of the same problems with leading a church as he addressed with Timothy.

## What were the problems?

Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible (Purpose and Teaching > Titus, Letter To)

There were the pressures of false teaching that appear to have had Jewish elements, possibly ascetic emphases and a great deal of speculative discussion (1:10, 14, 15; 3:9)—perhaps an early Jewish form of Gnosticism. Its advocates promoted this teaching “for base gain” (1:11). Titus and those whom he appoints as elders are to refute the wrong teaching and “give instruction in sound doctrine” (1:9). There is no detailed exposition of what Christians believe, but there are certainly clear statements of the saving grace of God in Christ, the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, and the future coming of the Lord Jesus (2:11, 13; 3:4–7). **There is constant emphasis on the life-style that bears out the truth of the gospel**, and there is application to different groups in the Christian community, older men and women, young women, young men, slaves (2:2–10), to the way that Christians should relate to the state, and to qualities of their lives in society (3:1, 2).

## Receiver

### **Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible Recipient > Titus, Letter To**

Recipient. Titus appears to have been “one of the most trusted and valuable helpers of Paul” (Barclay). He speaks of him (2 Cor 8:23) as “my partner and fellow-worker.” Strangely he is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. According to 1:4 he owed his conversion to Paul. It is clear from Galatians 2:1–4 that he was a Gentile, as his was a test case whether gentile Christians should be compelled to be circumcised. At that time Titus was with Paul and Barnabas in Jerusalem. Much later, at the time of Paul’s third missionary journey, he had two delicate missions to carry out for Paul in Corinth, the first concerned with the strained relationship of Paul with the Corinthian Christians, the second related to the gentile collection for the Jerusalem church (2 Cor 2:12, 13; 7:5–16; 8:1–24). If 2 Timothy 4:9–18 deals with the end of Paul’s life then Titus went to Dalmatia after the time of this letter.

## Historical Situation

### **A Dictionary of the Bible: Dealing with Its Language, Literature, and Contents Including the Biblical Theology, Volumes I–V (a) The False Teachers > iv. Situation Implied in Crete**

The false teachers are partly Jews, partly Gentiles; the Jews being the more prominent. They are influential, upsetting whole families (1:11), opposing sound teaching (1:9), tending to reject the authority of Titus (1:10; 2:15; 3:10), quibbling, misleading, money-seeking (1:10–12), inconsistent in their lives with their professed knowledge of God (1:16, but these words do not necessarily apply to the teachers). The substance of their teaching consists of foolish and profitless investigations, genealogies, questions connected with the Law (3:9–10), Jewish legends, and commands of men (1:14), apparently laying stress on the requirements of a Levitical purity (1:15). In contrast with 1 Tim., there is in this Epistle no trace of anything akin to 2nd cent. Gnosticism. Each phrase is not only capable of a Jewish explanation, but calls for it as its natural meaning. The question of purity (1:15) is on a par with our Lord’s treatment of Pharisaism (Mk 7); the confession of a knowledge of God is more naturally attributable to

Jews, 1:16 (cf. Ro 2:17), than to Gentiles; and the genealogies and legends will probably be those connected with the patriarchal history (cf. 1 TIMOTHY).

**A Dictionary of the Bible: Dealing with Its Language, Literature, and Contents Including the Biblical Theology, Volumes I–V i. Historical Situation > Titus, Epistle To**

Paul and Titus had been together in Crete. It is probable that they found the island already evangelized before their arrival (cf. Ac 2:11); for by the time this letter is written whole families (1:6–11), and people of all classes and ages (2:1–10), consisting both of Jews and Gentiles (1:10), belong to the Church. But the communities were unorganized, and there were false teachers. St. Paul himself began to complete the organization; probably meeting with opposition from the false teachers (3:10–11), and calling out hearty affection from others (3:14–15). But for some reason he could not stay to finish his work, and left Titus with definite instructions to complete it (1:5). Time elapsed after he left, but apparently only a short time, before this letter was written. St. Paul was moving about with some of his disciples (3:15),—perhaps in Macedonia (if we may argue from the likeness to 1 Tim.),—intending to winter at Nicopolis. Possibly he received some communication from Titus, reporting progress at Crete (so Zahn, Einl. i. p. 430; but unconvincingly). More likely, he took the opportunity of the fact that Zenas and Apollos were starting on a journey which would take them past Crete to send a letter to Titus in order to prepare him to join him in Nicopolis, and to strengthen him to enforce a high moral standard in Crete, in spite of the dangerous tendencies of the false teachers.

The dates both of the visit to Crete and of the composition of the letter are uncertain. The organization of the Church is so little advanced that it might easily fall within the period covered by the Acts; and it is possible that the visit may be that of Ac 27:9 (ἱκανοῦ χρόνου), and that this letter was written early in the Roman imprisonment (so Bartlet, Apostolic Age, p. 182): but Titus is not mentioned as being present at the time of Ac 27, and the surest indication for the date of the letter is its likeness to 1 Tim.; so that probably both the visit and the letter fall after the release from the Roman imprisonment [see 1 TIM.].



# Focus in on Submit to Rulers

## **Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible 3:1, 2**

3:1, 2. Christians also have a duty to submit to rulers (cf. Rom 13:1–7; 1 Pt 2:13–17) and to be available in the community “for any honest work.” Again the quality of life-style is emphasized, in particular courtesy and the desire for peace in relationships with others.

## **Titus 3:1–2 NLT**

Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good. They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone.

## **Romans 13:1–7 NLT**

Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. The authorities are God’s servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God’s servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience.

Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority.

## **1 Peter 2:13–17 NLT**

For the Lord’s sake, submit to all human authority—whether the king as head of state, or the officials he has appointed. For the king has sent them to punish those who do wrong and to honor those who do right.



It is God's will that your honorable lives should silence those ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you. For you are free, yet you are God's slaves, so don't use your freedom as an excuse to do evil. Respect everyone, and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king.