

Message #1**Various Texts**

There is a New Testament book of the Bible that we desperately need right here and right now. We are living in a wild fiasco of a world filled with all kinds of crazy things. We live in a world that for the most part is unruly and undisciplined.

Many people don't have a job and the truth is a vast number of them don't want a job and they don't want to work. I know of a case in which a healthy young man refused to get a job and work because he could just live off the government. I know of a case in which someone was on food stamps and figured out a way to make money by selling the food stamps at 50 cents on the dollar. They could actually make money by not working and scamming the government. That is the world in which we live. We know the whole world is filled with liars. All we have to do to prove that is listen to the news at night.

This world is not getting any better. This world is getting to be more and more of a godless free-for-all. Many don't like rules and they don't like laws. In fact, we are losing total sense of the rule of law. It is like we have lost our minds. Students walk out of class and go to a special safe zone room for a good cry to play with play dough and color with crayons because an election did not go the way they expected. When I was teaching or when I was in high school or college, if we walked out of class we took a zero. If we didn't take an exam, we took a zero. You weren't coddled, you were punished.

But today, things are so bizarre that if you don't like the way things are going, just walk out. What will these people do when in real life they lose? What will they do if they lose a job or if they have a bill to pay or if something breaks down in the house? You can't run from problems, you must face them. We are losing total sense and sanity of what is right and wrong.

In the midst of this kind of world, here is our church. We have a few hundred people here who are believers and they go to this church. What are we supposed to do? What is the church supposed to do? What kind of men and women are we supposed to be? What should we be doing in a free-for-all world filled with a bunch of emotional and empty talkers?

There is a book in the Bible that takes this subject head on. The island of Crete was this very kind of world. It was a wild, party, unruly atmosphere. In fact, a modern day brochure of Crete says this: "Crete simply has it all." There are 57 quality beaches on the island of Crete. It was an environment in which people just wanted to be on the beach all day and they didn't want to work. It wasn't that these people called in sick; they just didn't go to work. Morals were low. Life on the beach is not known for its Sunday School Classes. Drunkenness prevailed and Crete was so corrupt that the term "to Cretize" was a synonymous term for lying and not telling the truth. The people were known to be a bunch of lazy liars and moral losers (Titus 1:12).

Paul decided to write a letter to a guy on the island to help him get God's people to think right and live right. In the next few weeks, we would like to take you through the letter Paul wrote.

The book in the Bible is called Titus.

As is our custom, we would like to ask and answer a series of introductory questions:

QUESTION #1 – Why study Titus?

There are seven reasons why we are going to study Titus:

Reason #1 - Titus is one of only 66 inspired books that God has given to man.

There is only one way God speaks to His people today—not through emotional surges, not through feelings or subjective reason—God speaks through His written Word. This was a big problem with people in Crete. They would listen to people who were telling them religious things that weren't true (Titus 1:14). **What always tells us the truth is God's inspired written Word and Titus is one of those inspired books.**

Titus sits in the English Bible and the Greek text as the 17th book of the 27 New Testament books. Actually the Greek text of Titus is extremely reliable.

The fact that Titus is a book that belongs in the Bible is easy to prove.

It was named as an authentic N.T. book by the councils of Nicea (A.D. 325), Hippo (A.D. 393), Carthage (A.D. 397) and Carthage (A.D. 419).

It was named as authentic by the early translations in Latin (A.D. 150) and Syriac (A.D. 200).

It was named as authentic by the major canon listings—Muratorian (A.D. 170), Apostolic (A.D. 300), Cheltenham (A.D. 360) and Athanasius (A.D. 367).

It was also either quoted or stated to be authentic by Clement of Rome (A.D. 95-97), who frequently quoted it in his writings. It was also cited by Ireneaus (A.D. 130), Diognetus (A.D. 150), Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 150), Tertullian (A.D. 150), Origen (A.D. 185), Cyril (A.D. 315), Eusebius (A.D. 325) and Augustine (A.D. 400)

Now Titus has been classified as a Pastoral Epistle. That is a term used to describe three N.T. letters: I Timothy, II Timothy and Titus. The reason for this classification was because these three letters were written to individuals whose job it was to see to it that churches were functioning the way God wanted.

However, this classification of being a “pastoral letter” was not inspired by God; it was invented by a man. It was first used in 1703 by B. N. Berdot, and was popularized around 1723 by Paul Anton. Since this time, the term “Pastoral Epistle” has been used to brand Titus.

But the fact is, Titus is not a book for Pastors; it is an inspired book for all the people of God. This is easily proved by the fact that Titus was to take this written document to every city and every church on the island of Crete (Titus 1:5).

This is a rare inspired book and it is a profitable book and we are going to take a journey through it.

Reason #2 - Titus is a book that was written to a party island world just like our party world.

As we said there are today 57 quality ocean beaches on Crete and it was a “spring break” atmosphere almost every day. It was a wild, unruly place. There were not only wild girls and boys, but wild men and women. Grab the booze and let’s go to the beach. Make no mistake about this; **many of these party-type people were true believers**. But they needed to get straightened out a little bit. Titus is a book that brings things into focus. What people need in an unruly world is the Word of God.

Reason #3 - Titus is a book that shows us how we are to deal with false preachers and teachers.

We live in a world that says we need to be politically correct and tolerant of any religious belief. That does not square with this book. God does not want to sympathize with false preachers and teachers, we are to silence them (**Titus 1:11**). Their mouths must be shut and God expects His people and His church will stand up against false religion. We live in a time when many people say all religion is good, let’s all get along. Titus says no way.

Reason #4 - Titus is a book that shows us the kind of organization is needed in a church.

Even though the world is going mad, the church needs to be a place of Biblical sanity. There needs to be proper orderliness and proper organization. It needs good Elders and Deacons. It still needs godly men, women and children. It needs godly older women, younger women, older men and younger men. This is how a church is to run. It is to be a place of reverence and sound teaching and sound doctrine. That is what a wild world needs in a church. You won’t find any philosophy in Titus that says let’s entertain the seeker at church so he will come in off the beach.

Reason #5 - Titus is a book that shows all ages of people how to demonstrate God’s grace.

Regardless of location or age, it is expected by God that believers will demonstrate God’s grace to this world. Older men (2:2); older women (2:3); younger women (2:4) and younger men (2:6) are to demonstrate God’s grace in the world in which they live.

This is a book that encourages all believers of all ages to be godly and demonstrate grace to the world and it spells out just exactly how to do that. We need to live godly lives that reflect the grace of God and Titus 2 is a chapter that brings out that very fact.

Reason #6 - Titus is a book that shows us what to do with lazy liars.

We are not supposed to laugh at them or appease them or support them; we are supposed to “reprove them severely” (**Titus 1:12-13**).

Reason #7 - Titus is a book that says you do not change the grace message even though people live like heathens. **Titus 3:5-7**

Paul wanted believers to live godly lives, but he did not tamper with grace in any way to try to get them to do that. The worst heathens in the world need to learn of the grace of God.

QUESTION #2 – Who is Titus?

Titus was a very special man closely connected to Paul. One writer said Titus was a “trouble shooter for Paul.” He was one of Paul’s closest friends. He had an “unwavering loyalty” to Paul and to the gospel he wrote. In fact, Titus is mentioned some 13 times in Paul’s epistles (Gal. 2:1; 2:3; II Tim. 5:10; Titus 1:4; II Cor. 2:13; 7:6, 13, 14; 8:6, 16, 23; 12:18, 18).

Fact #1 - Titus had been saved under the ministry of Paul. **Titus 1:4**

Paul called him his “true child in the common faith.” These words imply that Titus was saved under the ministry of the Apostle Paul. Some have speculated that Titus came to faith during the remarkable revival that took place in Antioch under Barnabas and Paul (Acts 11:25-26).

Fact #2 - Titus was the uncircumcised Gentile that Paul took to Jerusalem to make a theological point. Gal. 2:1-2

Titus was a full Greek/Gentile. He was a Gentile that Paul specifically refused to circumcise. When Paul left Antioch to go to meet with the leaders of Jerusalem, he specifically took Titus with him.

The meeting in Jerusalem was critical (Acts 15) because Paul was going to defend the grace of God gospel he had been preaching. Titus accompanied Paul and Barnabas to that meeting.

One reason why Paul took Titus is because he wanted to use him as an example of one who had experienced the salvific grace of God even though he had not been circumcised.

So when Paul takes Titus with him, he would be introduced to the key Apostles and Elders. Now after this moment, we don’t hear much about him until Paul’s third missionary journey when he was in Ephesus. From Ephesus, Paul sent Titus to Corinth.

Fact #3 - Titus was the loyal man he chose to go find out the spiritual condition of the Corinthian church. II Cor. 2:13

It is debated how many trips Titus actually made to Corinth, but one thing is clear; Titus was such a trusted Pauline representative that Paul would send him to a chaotic and carnal church like Corinth.

Some have said he made three trips and some have said two trips to Corinth. One trip was from Ephesus when he took them the letter we know as I Corinthians. The other trip was from Macedonia when he took them the letter of II Corinthians.

We may remember that Paul was waiting for Titus to come to him and when he didn't show, Paul went to Macedonia to look for Titus (II Cor. 2:13). What this tells us about Titus is that he was a trusted leader.

Fact #4 - Titus was the man Paul sent to collect funds for poor Christians. II Cor. 8:6

Titus was a man of integrity. He could be trusted with money.

Fact #5 - Titus was a man Paul knew cared about people as much as he did. II Cor. 8:16-17

Titus was an apostolic representative of Paul. He had never been to formal school, but he learned grace from Paul and in eternity he will be highly honored.

Fact #6 - Titus was a relatively young man. **Titus 2:6-8 (v. 7)**

Paul identified Titus as being a young man. Just because you are young does not mean you cannot be a powerful young man or young woman.

QUESTION #3 – Who wrote Titus?

Titus was written by Paul. There really can't be much debate about this. Both the internal evidence and the external evidence support and prove that Paul wrote Titus.

The very first verse of the text says it was written by Paul who identifies himself as an Apostle. Paul reminds Titus of his special calling and ministry that God gave him (1:3). Paul uses his special eschatological words. For example, in Titus 2:13, he refers to the "appearing" of Jesus Christ that will occur at the Rapture. This is not the "second coming" in which Jesus Christ will establish His kingdom (i.e. II Tim. 4:2).

The testimony of early church fathers say Paul wrote Titus. It wasn't until a liberal named F. C. Baur surfaced in 1835, who claimed that Paul didn't write it, that it was even questioned. His basic arguments were: 1) You cannot specifically put this in a historical context of Paul and Crete. He argued, when did he go to Crete and when did he winter in Nicopolis? 2) The words in Titus are not typically those used by Paul. 3) Some liberals have gone so far as to suggest there is no Trinitarian doctrine in this book. Well if one looks at Titus 1:1 and 2:13 and **3:4-6**, the Trinity is certainly there. **Titus was written by Paul.**

QUESTION #4 – What are the historical circumstances of Paul writing Titus?

Crete was the largest island and most populated island in the Greek islands. It is the 88th largest island in the world and it is the 5th largest island in the Mediterranean Sea. It is an island that contains over 650,000 people.

It is an island of mountains. It is about 160 miles long and 7 ½ to 37 miles wide. It is an island that has about three mountain ranges that run west to east. Some of the mountains go up to over 8,000 feet.

Crete is an island that has a Mediterranean climate. The atmosphere is humid. Although there can be snow up on the top of the mountains, it is a hot climate down below with temperatures running from 80 degrees to 100 degrees. Crete is one of the few islands that can actually support itself agriculturally.

We don't exactly know when the churches started on the island of Crete. Obviously it was during the life span of the Apostle Paul. We know from Acts 2:11 that there were people from Crete in Jerusalem at the beginning of the Church Age. It is possible that many believed and had gone back home to Crete and had formed some churches. There apparently were believers in every city. There are at least 146 villages, towns and cities on the island. **What this means is that there was some village or town or city about every two miles.**

At some point Paul went to that island with Titus. Many believe that after the book of Acts ended, Paul got out of prison and traveled and went to Crete, on his way to Spain. **He left the island and left Titus on the island as his personal apostolic representative.**

They apparently visited several cities and churches and found them to be inadequate. Apparently the Gospel of the grace of God had saved people, but their lives weren't reflecting it.

There were two men who were going to travel to Crete. Their names were Apollos and Zenas (Titus 3:13). Paul decided to write Titus a letter and have them take it to him, which he obviously did. This is the letter we know as Titus.

QUESTION #5 – What are some key words found in the book of Titus?

The words “good deeds” shows up six times (1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:5, 8). The word “grace” shows up four times (1:4; 2:11; 3:7, 15). The word “faith” shows up six times (1:1, 4, 13; 2:10, 13; 3:15). Also a critical theme that shows up in Titus is that “sound doctrine” is critical to “sound faith” (Titus 1:9, 13; 2:1-2, 8). Sound doctrine produces sound lives.

By faith, God's people are expected to demonstrate good, sound, grace works. This is not O.T. legalism; but a demonstration of grace works. **Make no mistake about this fact, people are saved by faith and not works. But after they are saved, it is an expectation that they will live godly lives that will reflect the grace of God to a wild world.** In order to do that they need to be carefully taught sound doctrine.

This was a major problem with Christians on the island of Crete. Their lifestyle was not reflective of a true relationship with Jesus Christ. One reason why was that they needed to be taught the truth and Titus' job was to see to it they were.

QUESTION #6 – Where was Paul when he wrote Titus?

When it comes to this letter, it is not easy to trace Paul's itinerary of where he was. There is nothing within the text that proves where Paul was when he wrote. We know from Titus 3:12 that Paul was not yet in Nicopolis, which was where he intended to spend the winter. Nicopolis is located about 325 miles to the North West of Crete. It was located on the western shores of Greece. This was a Floridian kind of place to winter and Paul wanted to winter there and he wanted Titus to join him.

QUESTION #7 – When did Paul write this letter to Titus?

Most believe that Paul wrote this letter to Titus around the time he wrote his first letter to Timothy—A.D. 63-64. Titus is a book that does not fit the travels of Paul, which means he wrote it after the books of Acts ends. When Paul wrote Philippians, he did expect to get out of jail (Phil. 1:19, 25) in Rome. Apparently he did and travelled and during that time he wrote Titus.

We know that before Paul was executed in A.D. 67, he sent Titus to Dalmatia (II Tim. 4:10). Dalmatia, which is near Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia, is 650 miles to the north of Crete. If Paul died in Rome in A.D. 67, Titus had been with him in Rome and was sent to Dalmatia, **Paul must have written Titus on Crete somewhere near A.D. 64.**

QUESTION #8 – Why did Paul write this letter to Titus?

In the wild world in which we live, God wants His people sound in their doctrine and their lives so that they can reflect the grace of God to the world in various contexts.

The church is not to be concerned about religion; it is to be concerned about life. In order for that to happen, the church needs to be a place that stands for truth and has godly people leading it.

The theme of the letter is this: **Those who have been saved by God's grace are to reflect that grace to the wild world in which they live and the way we reflect it may not be what the majority of people think is the way to reflect it.**

For example, one way we actually reflect God's grace is by being "pure in doctrine" (2:7). Another way we actually reflect God's grace is by being reverent (2:3). Another way we reflect God's grace is by confronting people and shutting their mouths (1:9-11).

As we said, we need Titus right here and right now and may God use this book to transform each of us to be the kind of grace reflector God wants us to be.