



*Saint Mark's Church
Sunday School*

The Epistles of Titus and Philemon

Code: 12/NT/3

THE EPISTLE TO TITUS"

Introduction

AUTHOR: The apostle Paul, as stated in the salutation (1:1). The testimony of church history also provides overwhelming support that Paul is the author.

RECIPIENT: Titus, Paul's "true son in common faith" (1:4). There is no mention of Titus by name in the book of Acts, but we can glean much about him from the epistles of Paul. He was a Gentile by birth ([Ga 2:3](#)), and accompanied Paul to Jerusalem during the controversy over circumcision ([Ac 15:1-2](#); [Ga 2:1-5](#)).

During Paul's third missionary journey, Titus became his personal emissary to the church at Corinth, seeking to learn how they received his first letter. When Titus did not return to Troas as expected, Paul anxiously went on to Macedonia ([2Co 2:12-13](#)). It was there that Paul and Titus finally connected, much to the relief and comfort of Paul when Titus reported how well he was received by the Corinthians ([2 Co 7:5-7,13-15](#)). Paul then sent Titus and two others back to Corinth, bearing the letter we call Second Corinthians, and exhorting the brethren to complete their collection for the needy saints in Jerusalem ([2Co 8:16-9:5](#)).

At the time of the epistle to Titus, he had been left on the island of Crete by Paul to "**set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city**" ([Tit 1:5](#)). If Paul's plans as expressed in this epistle materialized, then Titus left soon after the arrival of Artemas or Tychicus, and met Paul at Nicopolis in northwest Greece (cf. [Ti 3:12](#)). We last read of Titus that he had gone to Dalmatia (in modern day Yugoslavia) during the final days of Paul's life ([2Ti 4:10](#)).

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING: The general consensus is that following his first imprisonment in Rome the apostle Paul was released and allowed to travel for several years before being arrested again. The following itinerary has been proposed by the Ryrie Study Bible:

- Paul was released from his house arrest in Rome (where we find him at the end of Acts), probably because his accusers did not choose to press their charges against him before Caesar ([Ac 24:1](#); [28:30](#)). Their case, therefore, was lost by default, and Paul was freed.
- Paul visited Ephesus, left Timothy there to supervise the churches, and went on to Macedonia (northern Greece).
- From there he wrote 1 Timothy ([1Ti 1:3](#)).
- He visited Crete, left Titus there to supervise those churches, and went to Nicopolis in Achaia (southern Greece, [Tit 3:12](#)).

- Either from Macedonia or Nicopolis, he wrote this letter to encourage Titus.
- He visited Troas ([2Ti 4:13](#)), where he was suddenly arrested, taken to Rome, imprisoned, and finally beheaded.
- From Rome, during this second imprisonment, he wrote 2 Timothy.
- It cannot be established with certainty, but it possible that Paul wrote this letter from Corinth, sometime around 63-66 A.D.

PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE: Like his first epistle to Timothy, this letter is written to a young preacher assigned a difficult task. Evidently the churches on the island of Crete were in need of maturation, and this letter is designed to assist Titus in that work. Therefore, Paul wrote to encourage Titus:

- **To see that qualified elders were appointed in every city (1:5-9)**
- **To preach things befitting "sound doctrine" (2:1)**
- **To exhort the brethren to be "zealous for good works" (2:14; 3:1, 8,14)**

THEME OF THE EPISTLE: The key phrase in this epistle is "**good works**"(1:16; 2:7,14; 3:1,8,14). An appropriate theme for this epistle might therefore be:

"MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS!"

KEY VERSE: [Titus 3:8](#)

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable for men."

OUTLINE:

INTRODUCTION (1:1-4)

I. INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING CHURCH ORGANIZATION (1:5-16)

A. QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS (1:5-9)

B. CHARACTERISTICS OF FALSE TEACHERS (1:10-16)

II. INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING CHRISTIAN CONDUCT (2:1-3:11)

A. FOR THE OLDER MEN AND WOMEN (2:1-3)

B. FOR THE YOUNGER WOMEN AND MEN (2:4-8)

C. FOR THE SERVANTS (2:9-14)

D. FOR THE BRETHERN IN GENERAL (3:1-11)

CONCLUSION (3:12-15)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION

1) What were the circumstances in which we first find Titus and Paul together? ([Ga 2:1-5](#))

- Titus had accompanied Paul in attending the conference in Jerusalem regarding circumcision.

2) Why was Paul adamant in not allowing others to compel Titus to be circumcised? ([Ga 2:3-5](#))

- Titus was a Greek, not a Jew; to force him to be circumcised would violate the truth of the gospel

3) With what church did Titus serve as Paul's messenger? ([2Co 7:6-7](#), [13-14](#))

- The church at Corinth

4) Why did Paul send Titus along with the second letter to Corinth? ([2Co 8:16-9:5](#))

- To make sure that the Corinthians' gift for the needy saints in Jerusalem would be ready

5) From where and when was this epistle to Titus possibly written?

- From Corinth, sometime between 63-66 A.D.

6) Where was Titus when this letter was written to him? (1:5)

- On the island of Crete

7) In this epistle, what three things does Paul exhort Titus to do? (1:5-9; 2:1; 3:1,8,14)

- To see that qualified elders were appointed in every city
- To preach things befitting "sound doctrine"
- To exhort the brethren to be "zealous for good works"

8) What is the theme of this epistle, as suggested in the introductory material?

- Maintain Good Works!

9) What is proposed as the key verse?

- [Titus 3:8](#)

10) According to the outline above, what are the main points of this epistle?

- Instructions concerning church organization
- Instructions concerning Christian conduct

THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

AUTHOR: PAUL, the apostle of Jesus Christ (1,9,19)

PLACE OF WRITING: ROME, about the same time the epistle to the Colossians was written. This deduction is based upon the following:

- 1) Like the epistle to the Colossians, the epistle to Philemon was written when Paul was in chains (1,10,13,23)
- 2) Timothy joined Paul in both epistles (1; [Col 1:1](#))
- 3) Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke joined in the salutation of both (23,24; [Col 4:10-14](#))
- 4) Onesimus, the subject of this epistle, was one of the messengers by whom the epistle to the Colossians was sent ([Col 4:7-9](#))
- 5) Archippus, to whom this epistle is partially addressed (2), is also addressed in the epistle to the Colossians ([Col 4:17](#))

TIME OF WRITING: If the epistle to Philemon was written about the time Colossians and the other "prison epistles" (Ephesians and Philippians) were written, then it was written during Paul's imprisonment at Rome, sometime during the period of 61-63 A.D.

BACKGROUND OF THE EPISTLE: Philemon was a member of the church at Colosse (cf. 1,2, with [Col 4:17](#)), and a very hospitable one at that (1,2,5,7). It is possible that he was one of Paul's own converts (19). It is also plausible that Apphia was his wife, and Archippus his son (1,2).

Onesimus had been one of Philemon's slaves (16), who had run away (15). It appears that he somehow traveled to Rome where he found Paul and was converted to Christ (10). He had become very dear to Paul, and was proving to be very useful (11-13).

But Paul did not think it right to keep Onesimus in Rome, and was sending him back to Philemon (12-14). This letter to Philemon is an appeal for him to receive Onesimus now as a brother in Christ, and for him to forgive Onesimus if he had done any wrong (15-21).

PURPOSE OF WRITING: From the content of the epistle, it appears that Paul had both a primary and secondary purpose:

- 1) **Primarily to secure forgiveness for Onesimus**
- 2) **But also to provide from himself a place of lodging after his release from imprisonment (22)**

THE VALUE OF THIS EPISTLE: This short, but valuable epistle has been described as:

- A Model Of Christian Courtesy
- A Manifestation Of Christian Love
- A Monument Of Christian Conversion

KEY PASSAGE:

"I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my pains, who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me." (10,11)

BRIEF OUTLINE:

Paul's Courtesy (1-3)
Paul's Compliment (4-7)
Paul's Counsel (8-21)
Paul's Conclusion (22-25)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION

1) Who is the author of this epistle?

- Paul

2) Where was he writing from?

- Rome

3) Approximately when was this epistle written?

- Sometime between 61-63 A.D.

4) What other epistles were written by Paul about the same time?

- Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians

5) What church possibly met in Philemon's home?

- The church at Colosse

6) Who was Onesimus?

- A runaway slave that had belonged to Philemon

7) What was Paul's purpose in writing this epistle?

- To secure forgiveness for Onesimus

- To provide for himself a place of lodging after his release from imprisonment

8) What are the key verses to this epistle?

- [Philemon 10-11](#)