

Titus

Who Was Titus	Titus was a Greek follower of Jesus who colabored and traveled with Paul, accompanying him and Barnabas from Antioch to Jerusalem. Like Timothy and Silas, Paul trusted Titus immensely. He served the church at Corinth during some very difficult times (2 Cor 8:6; 16-17). Several years later, Paul and Titus traveled to the island of Crete, a large island off the coast of Greece. They started a network of churches there.
When in Crete, Don't Do as the Cretans Do	Cretean culture was notoriously bad in the ancient world. In fact, one of the Greek words for being a liar was <i>kretizo</i> , "to be a Cretan." They were known for treachery and greed. Most of the men on the island had served as mercenary soldiers to the highest bidder and the cities of Crete were known as being unsafe, plagued by violence and sexual corruption.
But God Had a Plan in Crete	From a worldly perspective, Crete was a place to avoid. From a spiritual one, however, the fields were wide unto harvest. It had a network of harbors that allowed access to the Mediterranean world, including three different continents (Africa, Asia, Europe). As a result, it was the perfect place to start a network of churches.
Purpose for Writing Titus	The network of churches they planted in Crete came under the influence of the corrupt leaders in Crete. The church began to look, act, and sound more like Crete and less like the bride of Christ. As a result, Paul left Titus there to straighten things out. This letter provides the instructions for doing that.
Themes of Titus	(1) What Christian leadership should look, and act like in a Cretan world. (2) How we live lives that are pleasing to the Lord in the midst of a Cretan culture.
Key Verses	<i>¹⁵ To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.¹⁶ They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for doing anything good (1:15-16)</i>
Straightforward Design	Introduction (1:1-4) Titus' Tasks (1:5-16) The New Household Paul Envisions for the People of God in Crete (ch 2) The New Humanity that the Gospel is Designed to Bring About (3:1-11) Final Remarks (3:12-15)

Introduction (1:1-4)

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ to further the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness—² in the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,³ and which now at his appointed season he has brought to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior,⁴ To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

****As with Timothy, Paul speaks to Titus in terms of familial endearment. Titus was his "true son" in our "common" (because Titus was Greek) faith.**

Titus' Tasks (1:5-16)

Appoint Elders (i.e., Pastors/Overseers) with Specific Qualities	⁵ The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and <u>appoint elders in every town</u> , as I directed you. ⁶ An elder <u>must be</u> blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. ⁷ <u>Since an overseer manages God's household</u> , he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁸ Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, <u>so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it</u> (1:5-9). **Over and over, we see in Paul's writings that an overseer has the primary duty to teach and the highest of ethical standards to emulate (a difficult, but high calling).
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Deal with Dangerous and Disruptive People in the Congregation	¹⁰ For there are many rebellious people, full of meaningless talk and deception, especially those of the circumcision group. ¹¹ They must be silenced, because they are disrupting whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach—and that for the sake of dishonest gain. ¹² One of Crete's own prophets has said it: "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons." ¹³ This saying is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith ¹⁴ and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the merely human commands of those who reject the truth (1:10-14).
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The Reason	<i>¹⁵ To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.¹⁶ They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for doing anything good (1:15-16)</i>
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The New Household Paul Envisions for the People of God in Crete (ch 2)	
Sound Doctrine	You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine (2:1)
That Produces Ethics	² Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. ³ Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. ⁴ Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, ⁵ to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. ⁶ Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. ⁷ In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness ⁸ and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us. ⁹ Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, ¹⁰ and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive (2:2-10)
A Word about 2:9	First-century slavery is not like the kind of slavery we Americans think of, because our nearest experience with slavery is the 19th-century African slave trade. While there were certainly slave traders in the ancient world, not all slavery was like that. Sometimes people would sell themselves into slavery, for example, to pay off a debt. They would live on their lender's property and get a roof and sustenance while they worked to pay off their debt. It was an alternative to being homeless or in prison. Although such a system could be abused, it did not have to be; there was nothing inherently abusive about this relationship.
And Says No to the World	¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ (2:11-13)

The New Humanity the Gospel is Designed to Bring About (3:1-11)	
Good Citizens, Not Cretan Christians	Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, ² to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone (3:1-2)
Look Like Jesus in a Cretan World	³ At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. ⁴ But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life (3:3-7)
Practice Self Control	⁹ But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless (3:9)
Handle Problem People Ethically	¹⁰ Warn a divisive person once, and then warn them a second time. After that, have nothing to do with them. ¹¹ You may be sure that such people are warped and sinful; they are self-condemned (3:10-11)

Final Remarks (3:12-15)	
¹⁴ Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order to provide for urgent needs and not live unproductive lives (3:14)	