



Small Books, Big Messages

Titus – Part One
Sermon Study Guide
October 25, 2020

Introduction

In this series, called “Short Books, Big Messages,” we will be studying some of the shorter letters and epistles in the New Testament. Here, we will learn some truths that are often overlooked in churches but are so pertinent to us that these writings have been included in God’s Word. We begin our study with a look at an epistle titled “Titus”. This letter, along with I and II Timothy, are also called the Pastoral Epistles.

Background

The Apostle Paul wrote this epistle to Titus, a young convert of Paul’s who had proven himself useful to both Paul and to the people in the churches that Paul had started. Titus was probably written in AD 63, just after Paul’s first imprisonment, shortly after he wrote I Timothy. Paul had traveled with Titus to the island of Crete, a place known for deplorable behaviors such as dishonesty, gluttony, laziness, and immorality. While in Crete, Paul led many people to Christ and started churches in different cities. Titus stayed with Paul in Crete during this time.

Map of Crete



Paul continued his missionary travels, and left Titus on the island of Crete to organize and establish leadership in the new churches. Titus was charged to:

- Address the false teachings creeping in from the Judaizers.
- Appoint Elders/leaders in the churches.
- Deal with the sinful lifestyles of the Cretans.
- Teach good/sound doctrine to these new churches.

This was a lot to do for a young man pastoring a challenging church.

- How is Paul's description of himself at the beginning of this letter significant? (1:1)
- How did Paul describe the faith that he had? (1:1-2)
- Note Paul's reference to Titus. What kind of relationship did these two believers have? (1:4)
- What were the beginning issues that Paul felt he needed to encourage Titus about? (1:1-4)

Crete, a small island in the Mediterranean Sea, had a large population of Jews. The churches were probably founded by the Cretan Jews who had been in Jerusalem at Pentecost more than 30 years before Paul wrote this letter. (Acts 2:11)

Read Titus 1:5-9

- Why did Paul leave Titus in Crete? (1:5)
- For what reason was it necessary to appoint elders in the towns? (1:5, 10)
- What qualifications were necessary to be an elder in these churches? (1:6-9)

- Why is it necessary for an elder to be blameless? (1:7)
- What does it mean that an elder is to use hospitality? (1:8)
- What is the result of holding firm to the "trustworthy message"? (1:9)
- From this passage, what were overseers not to be? (1:7)
- From this passage, what are the elders to be like in their character?

Read Titus 1:10-16

In the church there will some who are rebellious and bring in false doctrine. Paul addresses these false teachers so that the elders can protect the church.

- How should believers respond to "rebellious people" in the church? (1:10-13)
- What were the rebellious people doing that Paul so strongly condemned? (1:11)
- What did Paul tell the believers to pay no attention to? (1:14)

- How is it possible to learn whether a person truly knows God? (1:16)

Note: This teaching about leadership in the church is also worth in applying to how we will hire people in the business world and even how we look for a marriage partner.

Read Titus 2:1-15

Notice the overriding emphasis as Paul teaches Titus what needs to happen in the church.

- What main theme begins this chapter? (2:1)
- What should older men be taught? (2:2)
- What must older women be taught? Why? (2:3-5)
- What responsibility do older women have? (2:4)
- What should younger women be taught? (2:4-5)
- Why is it important for Christian women to live this way? (2:5)

- What advice did Paul give to younger men? (2:6-8)
- Who should set an example for others? How? (2:7)
- What response did Paul hope for? (2:8)
- How did Paul instruct slaves? Why? (2:9-10)

Slavery was common in Paul's day. Paul did not condemn slavery in any of his letters, but he advised slaves and masters to be loving and responsible in their conduct (Ephesians 6:5-9). The standards set by Paul can help today in the employee and employer relationship. Slavery in this time was not the type of bondage it was in America's history. In Paul's time, it was used to pay off your debts and punishments.

- What does the grace of God bring? (2:11)

- What should all Christians, whether old or young, be taught? (2:11-14)

- What motivation do we have to live righteous lives? (2:12-14)

- How did Paul emphasize the importance of teaching all Christians? (2:15)

Closing

When the church teaches its people to live in these ways, we will live good and holy and happy lives under God's grace. We will also maximize our impact on the world around us. Let's get about doing this work so we can be courageous and great for God.

In the first two chapters Paul tells Titus to teach the Scriptures as well to live them out. We must also teach, encourage, and correct others – when necessary. Next week, we will talk about how to get to the place that you can indeed live this way.