

# Titus

## Salutation

**1:1** From Paul,<sup>1</sup> a slave<sup>2</sup> of God and apostle of Jesus Christ, to further the faith<sup>3</sup> of God's chosen ones and the knowledge of the truth that is in keeping with godliness, **1:2** in hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the ages began.<sup>4</sup> **1:3** But now in his own time<sup>5</sup> he has made his message evident through the preaching I was entrusted with according to the command of God our Savior. **1:4** To Titus, my genuine son in a common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior!

## Titus' Task on Crete

**1:5** The reason I left you in Crete was to set in order the remaining matters and to appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. **1:6** An elder must be blameless,<sup>6</sup> the husband of one wife,<sup>7</sup> with faithful children<sup>8</sup> who cannot be charged with dissipation or rebellion. **1:7** For the overseer<sup>9</sup> must be blameless as one entrusted

with God's work,<sup>10</sup> not arrogant, not prone to anger, not a drunkard, not violent, not greedy for gain. **1:8** Instead he must be hospitable, devoted to what is good, sensible, upright, devout, and self-controlled. **1:9** He must hold firmly to the faithful message as it has been taught,<sup>11</sup> so that he will be able to give exhortation in such healthy teaching<sup>12</sup> and correct those who speak against it.

**1:10** For there are many<sup>13</sup> rebellious people, idle talkers, and deceivers, especially those with Jewish connections,<sup>14</sup> **1:11** who must be silenced because they mislead whole families by teaching for dishonest gain what ought not to be taught. **1:12** A certain one of them, in fact, one of their own prophets, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."<sup>15</sup> **1:13** Such testimony is true. For this reason rebuke them sharply that they may be healthy in the faith **1:14** and not pay attention to Jewish myths<sup>16</sup> and commands of people who reject the truth. **1:15** All is pure to those who are pure. But to those who are corrupt and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their minds and consciences are corrupted. **1:16** They profess to know God but with their deeds they deny him, since they are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for any good deed.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Grk "Paul." The word "from" is not in the Greek text, but has been supplied to indicate the sender of the letter.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Traditionally, "servant" or "bondservant." Though δούλος (*doulos*) is normally translated "servant," the word does not bear the connotation of a free individual serving another. BDAG notes that "'servant' for 'slave' is largely confined to Biblical transl. and early American times...in normal usage at the present time the two words are carefully distinguished" (BDAG 260 s.v.). The most accurate translation is "bondservant" (sometimes found in the ASV for δούλος), in that it often indicates one who sells himself into slavery to another. But as this is archaic, few today understand its force.

<sup>3</sup> **sn** Undoubtedly the background for the concept of being the Lord's slave or servant is to be found in the Old Testament scriptures. For a Jew this concept did not connote drudgery, but honor and privilege. It was used of national Israel at times (Isa 43:10), but was especially associated with famous OT personalities, including such great men as Moses (Josh 14:7), David (Ps 89:3; cf. 2 Sam 7:5, 8) and Elijah (2 Kgs 10:10); all these men were "servants (or slaves) of the Lord."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Grk "for the faith," possibly, "in accordance with the faith."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Grk "before eternal ages."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** The Greek text emphasizes the contrast between vv. 2b and 3a: God promised this long ago but now has revealed it in his own time.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Grk "if anyone is blameless..." as a continuation of v. 5b, beginning to describe the elder's character.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Or "married only once," "devoted solely to his wife." See the note on "wife" in 1 Tim 3:2; also 1 Tim 3:12; 5:9.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Or "believing children." The phrase could be translated "believing children," but the parallel with 1 Tim 3:4 ("keeping his children in control") argues for the sense given in the translation.

<sup>10</sup> **sn** The overseer is another term for the same official position of leadership as the "elder." This is seen in the interchange of the two terms in this passage and in Acts 20:17, 28, as well as in the parallels between these verses and 1 Tim 3:1-7.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Grk "as God's steward."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Grk "the faithful message in accordance with the teaching" (referring to apostolic teaching).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Grk "the healthy teaching" (referring to what was just mentioned).

<sup>13</sup> **tc** † The earliest and best mss lack καί (*kai*) after πολλοί (*polloi*; so **N A C P** 088 81 104 365 614 629 630 *al sy co*), though the conjunction is found in several significant witnesses, chiefly of the Western and Byzantine texts (D F G I Ψ 33 1739 1881 *ℵ lat*). Although it is possible that some scribes omitted the word, thinking it was superfluous, it is also possible that others added the conjunction for clarification. Judging by the pedigree of the witnesses and the inconclusiveness of the internal evidence, the shorter reading is considered to be most likely original. NA<sup>27</sup> puts the conjunction in brackets, indicating some doubts as to its authenticity.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Grk "those of the circumcision." Some translations take this to refer to Jewish converts to Christianity (cf. NAB "Jewish Christians"; TEV "converts from Judaism"; CEV "Jewish followers") while others are less clear (cf. NLT "those who insist on circumcision for salvation").

<sup>15</sup> **sn** A saying attributed to the poet Epimenides of Crete (6th century B.C.).

<sup>16</sup> **sn** Jewish myths were legendary tales characteristic of the false teachers in Ephesus and Crete. See parallels in 1 Tim 1:4; 4:7; and 2 Tim 4:4.



courtesy to all people. **3:3** For we too were once foolish, disobedient, misled, enslaved to various passions and desires, spending our lives in evil and envy, hateful and hating one another. **3:4**<sup>1</sup> But “when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, **3:5** he saved us not by works of righteousness that we have done but on the basis of his mercy, through the washing of the new birth and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, **3:6** whom he poured out on us in full measure<sup>2</sup> through Jesus Christ our Savior. **3:7** And so,<sup>3</sup> since we have been justified by his grace, we become heirs with the confident expectation of eternal life.”<sup>4</sup>

### Summary of the Letter

**3:8** This saying<sup>5</sup> is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on such truths,<sup>6</sup> so that those who have placed their faith in God may be intent on engaging in good works. These things are good and beneficial for all people. **3:9** But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies,<sup>7</sup> quarrels, and fights about the law,<sup>8</sup> because they are useless and empty. **3:10** Reject a divisive person after one or two warnings. **3:11** You know<sup>9</sup> that such a person is twisted by sin<sup>10</sup> and is conscious of it himself.<sup>11</sup>

### Final Instructions and Greeting

**3:12** When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. **3:13** Make every effort to help<sup>12</sup> Zenas the lawyer<sup>13</sup> and Apollos on their way; make sure they have what they need.<sup>14</sup> **3:14** Here is another way that our people<sup>15</sup> can learn<sup>16</sup> to engage in good works to meet pressing needs and so not be unfruitful. **3:15** Everyone with me greets you. Greet those who love us in the faith.<sup>17</sup> Grace be with you all.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Verses 4-7 are set as poetry in NA<sup>26</sup>/NA<sup>27</sup>. These verses probably constitute the referent of the expression “this saying” in v. 8.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or “on us richly.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** This is the conclusion of a single, skillfully composed sentence in Greek encompassing Titus 3:4-7. Showing the goal of God’s merciful salvation, v. 7 begins literally, “in order that, being justified...we might become heirs...”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Grk* “heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

<sup>5</sup> **sn** *This saying* (*Grk* “the saying”) refers to the preceding citation (Titus 3:4-7). See 1 Tim 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11 for other occurrences of this phrase.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Grk* “concerning these things.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Cf. 1 Tim 1:4.

<sup>8</sup> **sn** *Fights about the law* were characteristic of the false teachers in Ephesus as well as in Crete (cf. 1 Tim 1:3-7; Titus 1:10, 14).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Grk* “knowing” (as a continuation of the previous clause).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Grk* “is perverted and is sinning.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Grk* “is sinning, being self-condemned.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Grk* “Eagerly help.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Although it is possible the term νομικός (*nomikos*) indicates an expert in Jewish religious law here, according to L&N 33.338 and 56.37 it is more probable that Zenas was a specialist in civil law.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Grk* “that nothing may be lacking for them.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Grk* “that those who are ours” (referring to the Christians).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Grk* “and also let our people learn.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Or “faithfully.”

<sup>18</sup> **tc** Most witnesses (N<sup>2</sup> D<sup>1</sup> F G H Ψ 0278 01 lat sy bo) conclude this letter with ἁμῖν (*amēn*, “amen”). Such a conclusion is routinely added by scribes to NT books because a few of these books originally had such an ending (cf. Rom 16:27; Gal 6:18; Jude 25). A majority of Greek witnesses have the concluding ἁμῖν in every NT book except Acts, James, and 3 John (and even in these books, ἁμῖν is found in some witnesses). It is thus a predictable variant. Further, early and excellent witnesses (N\* A C D\* 048 33 81 1739 1881 sa) lack the particle, rendering the omission the preferred reading.