

THE BOOK OF TITUS

BY:

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With thanks to our study group

**(As always, revisions are necessary when new
information is obtained)**

INTRODUCTION

I. WHO IS THIS MAN TITUS?

He seems to appear out of nowhere. He is never mentioned in the book of Acts by Luke throughout Luke's account as he journeyed with Paul. His name only appears thirteen times in the New Testament, all in Paul's letters. We find his name eight times in II Corinthians; twice in Galatians; once in II Timothy; and in the salutation of this epistle.

Furthermore, in 1:5 of this epistle Paul says that he left Titus in Crete. Yet there is no other account of Paul ever being in Crete except in Acts 27 where he was a prisoner on a Roman freighter headed for Rome and his ship ducked under the island to ride out a storm (Acts 27). This was definitely not the occasion whereby Paul evangelized Crete and assigned Titus to develop the ministry there.

So, we are left with many questions: When did Paul first become acquainted with Titus? Paul apparently led him to faith (Titus 1:4) but when and where? Titus seems to have developed into a trustworthy leader/apostle for Paul to have set him in charge of the ministry in Crete. When did this training and the placement occur? We do know from Galatians 2:3 that Titus was a gentile.

So, we are left to piece together as best we can the story of Paul and Titus.

As we develop a timeline for this relationship, we find that Paul's first mention of Titus is in his early letter to the churches of Galatia. In chapter 2:1-3, he mentions that Titus accompanied him to Jerusalem. This was probably the Jerusalem conference reported in Acts 15 between the first and second missionary journey. So, Titus had to have been at Antioch of Syria, Paul's home church. But Titus is not mentioned by Luke in chapter 15 of Acts. But of course, Luke was not there. Titus was likely a young man, new in the Lord, and had not played a notable role in Paul's life thus far. So, we can conclude that it looks like Titus was involved in the church at Antioch (in Syria) as there were numerous Gentile converts there.¹

After Paul's (Saul of Tarsus) conversion, and before the first missionary journey, he attempted to evangelize Damascus and Jerusalem, but the Jews who saw and heard him either tried to have him killed or were deathly afraid of him because of the vicious persecution he led. Ultimately, Barnabas (who was with him) and the leaders in Jerusalem perceived the threat to his life and sent him to Tarsus.²

In fact, before Paul even came to Antioch, Acts chapter 11 tells us that the church in Antioch was growing, and many Gentiles were coming to the faith. Titus may have been among those coming to the faith or did so after Paul was brought from Tarsus to

¹ Galatians 2:9,12.

² Acts 9:19-30.

Antioch. This occurred because the apostles in Jerusalem had sent Barnabas to Antioch. He became impressed with what the Lord was doing. But they needed a stronger teacher. So, Barnabas sought out Paul in Tarsus and brought him to Antioch. Then we read, “And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”³

Titus was not with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. But after this journey, (as noted above) he accompanied Paul, Barnabas and others not mentioned by name to Jerusalem. This account is found in Acts 15 and Galatians 2:1-3. The following is a proposed chronological outline of the story followed by a fuller explanation with conjecture.

³ Acts 11:26

A PROPOSED CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF PAUL AND TITUS' MINISTRY TOGETHER

- I. Following the Day of Pentecost attending Jews who believe spread the Gospel to Antioch of Syria. (Acts 2:1-41) A later persecution spread the Gospel further. (Acts 11:19-20) Paul converted c. 35 A.D.)
- II. The church at Antioch grows and Barnabas goes to Tarsus and brings Paul there to teach. Over the next year or so, considerable numbers of people were taught about the Lord. Titus is in the congregation at this time. (Acts 11:19-26 - c. 33-50 A.D.)
- III. Titus is not on the first missionary journey with Paul, Barnabas and John Mark. (c. 48-50 A.D.)
- IV. Titus accompanies Paul, Barnabas and other leaders from Antioch to Jerusalem for the major conference regarding the place of the Gentiles in God's plan of redemption. (Galatians 2:1-10) (c. 50-51 A.D.)
- V. Titus is not on the second missionary journey as Luke's narrative is nicely detailed. (c. 52-54 A.D.)
- VI. Titus accompanies Paul and his team on the third missionary journey. Little detail about the early part of this journey in Luke's narrative in Acts. Names are not mentioned until much later in his narrative. (c. 55-58 A.D.) We know Titus was on this journey from Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth. (II Corinthians 2:12-13; 7:5-7; 8:6; 8:16-20; 8:23; 9:5)
- VII. After Paul's third journey, he is arrested and imprisoned at Caesarea. Appealing to Caesar, he is transferred by Roman freighter to Rome. (Acts 21:27-28:31.) Luke is with him, and others as well, but Titus likely returned to Antioch. (c. 59/60 A.D.) Paul is imprisoned for about two years there.
- VIII. Paul is released from prison and for the next five years is able to continue his journeys. The consensus is that he once again gathered a team (including Titus) and ultimately visits Spain, which he had hoped to do. (Romans 15:24; 28) (c. 61/62-63/64 A.D.)
- IX. Then, perhaps traveling by ship on the Mediterranean from Spain, Paul, Titus and others stop in Crete, evangelize there and Paul leaves Titus there to lead the new church while he continues on. It is possible that Apollos accompanied Paul on this trip as a part of his team. I propose the Paul and some who had accompanied him travel to Jerusalem and then up to Antioch and then revisits the churches in Galatia and Asia. He and Apollos are together or reconnect perhaps at Ephesus for a united ministry. (c. 65 A.D.)
- X. Later, from Macedonia, Paul writes Titus. The letter appears to be delivered by Apollos (who is accompanying Paul) and Zenas. This is the letter we have now. Later after Artemis or Tychicus arrive at Crete (one of them sent by Paul) he wishes to meet Titus at Nicopolis (in Dalmatia on the west coast of Greece.) We think this occurred as Paul had sent one of those men to replace Titus so Titus could travel to Paul as Titus is mentioned as being with Paul in Rome a while later.
- XI. So, a gap in time occurs at this juncture, and next we find Paul back in Rome. He may have deliberately gone to Rome to visit and minister there not realizing the danger but was arrested and imprisoned - this time in chains. Several of his companions are there including Titus. Prisca and Aquila, seeing the threat after Nero's setting fire to the city and blaming Christians, have moved to Ephesus. Paul writes to Timothy there (II Timothy) explaining his situation. He notes that Titus has gone back to Dalmatia. Tradition says that Titus lived out his days and died there by beheading and Paul was executed in the last year of Nero's reign. (c. 67-68 A.D.)

A SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

I. First journey. Leaving from Antioch in Syria, Paul, Barnabas and John Mark visit synagogues in the Cilician/Galatian region of modern Southeast Turkey. John mark leaves the troupe midway and in Lystra Paul is stoned and left for dead. Acts 13-14. (c.48-50 A.D.)

II. The Jerusalem conference to debate the place of the Gentiles in God's plan of salvation. Acts 15:1-35; Galatians 2. (50-51 A.D.) Titus is with this entourage.

III. Second missionary journey. Paul and Silas lead this lengthy journey from Antioch in Syria. In Lystra he recruits Timothy and continues this journey to Asia Minor, Macedonia (where he and Silas were beaten and imprisoned in Philippi) and on into Greece, across the Aegean Sea to Ephesus and then to Israel and back home to Antioch. Acts 15:36-18:22 (c.52-54 A.D.)

IV. Third missionary Journey. Paul and his team including Titus once again leave Antioch and travel to Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece and back again through those regions ultimately to sail out from Ephesus and dock at Caesarea. Going into Jerusalem, he is falsely accused, arrested and spends at least two years in the prison in Caesarea.⁴ Appealing to Caesar (the young Nero) he and his team are shipped to Rome (not without incidents) where he is imprisoned, under house arrest in rented quarters for about two years. Luke concludes his narrative in Acts at this point and likely returns to Philippi or Troas sometime afterward. Paul writes many letters from Rome, and from these and others, we can deduce his case was thrown out and he was released. Acts 18:23-28:31 (c.55-61 A.D.)

V. Fourth missionary journey. Deduced from Paul's letters, historians, tradition and educated conjecture, Paul looks to have assembled a team once again that included Titus, and traveled either by ship or overland to Spain, possibly Barcelona. From there, he, Titus and others sail to Crete where Paul leaves Titus to lead and serve there (Titus 1:5). The next time we have a record of Paul, he is in Macedonia (likely Philippi) where he writes the book of Titus.

Getting to Macedonia after leaving Titus in Crete, my opinion is (becoming familiar with Paul's traveling patterns) he continues from Crete to Jerusalem where he greets the church, then goes north to Antioch. From there he once again travels to Asia Minor where he reconnects with Apollos, Timothy and others, and then they travel up into Macedonia where Paul reconnects with Luke and others. From there he writes Titus. It is evident that considerable time has passed between Paul leaving Titus in Crete and the later letter to him.

As instructed, Titus meets Paul in Nicopolis (in Dalmatia) for the winter visit. (3:12) The next time we see Paul he is in a Roman prison, this time in serious trouble under the reign of a now mad emperor Nero. Luke is with him as were others, but not under arrest. Titus returns to Dalmatia. Others leave Paul for other pursuits. Paul writes Timothy (II Timothy) and begs him to come and visit amidst a sorrowful letter. According to tradition, Paul is executed in Rome near the end of Nero's reign.

⁴ Acts 24:27

A FULLER EXPOSITION OF PAUL AND TITUS' MINISTRY TOGETHER.

I. The beginning.

On the Day of Pentecost (fifty days after Passover) the Holy Spirit came with power on the disciples of Jesus and the subsequent miraculous events were witnessed by thousands of Jews from all over the Roman Empire who made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Passover/Unleavened Bread/Pentecost celebrations. Thousands were brought to faith in Christ and took the message back to their hometowns. One of these towns was Antioch of Syria. In Acts 6:5 we read, "...they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch." The word Had gone to Antioch and many Jews had come to faith.⁵ Acts 11:19-20 tells us, "So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and *began* speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus." Soon, Antioch became the home church for Saul (Paul), Barnabas, Silas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and others (Acts 13:1) including Titus (though he is not mentioned in this reference) - and it was in Antioch where the believers were first called "Christians."

II. Paul's missionary journeys and Titus.

Barnabas had brought Paul to Antioch. After more than a year there teaching "considerable numbers"⁶, The Lord sent Paul, Barnabas and a team on the first missionary journey.⁷ It is clear that Titus was not with them. Yet Titus was at Antioch, had become a believer, one of the gentile believers, and joined Paul, Barnabas, Barsabbas, (leading men in the congregation at Antioch) and others, including Titus, to Jerusalem to present the truth that the Gentiles are included in the redemptive plan of salvation and not just the Jews.⁸ Paul, in Galatians 2:1-3 confirms this,

"Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but *I did so* in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain. But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek,

⁵ Nicolas was a Jew who had placed his faith in Christ and was chosen as a "deacon" in the Jerusalem church.

⁶ Acts 11:26

⁷ Acts 13:4-14:28

⁸ Acts 15

was compelled to be circumcised.”

Soon, the second missionary journey took place. There is no mention in Acts of Titus with the team on this journey as Luke details the journey well. At Lystra, Paul did recruit Timothy, circumcised him and then Timothy joined Paul and remained with him for many years. Was Titus along with them? In my opinion, no. I propose that it was the third missionary journey where Titus joined Paul. Why? Several reasons.

To propose this, we must fill in the blanks to determine that Titus was on Paul’s third missionary journey with him and his team as Luke never mentions Titus in the entire book of Acts. We must glean information about Titus from Paul’s letters, just as we did from the Galatians account above.

Our source for this conclusion is from Paul’s second letter to the church at Corinth written from Ephesus where Paul spent three years ministering and teaching in the city during the third missionary journey. Luke records the conclusion of the second journey and the beginning of the third in Acts 18:22-23,

22: “When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and went down to Antioch. 23: And having spent some time *there*, he left and passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.”

This was the start of his third journey. Luke was not there so we have him referring to Paul as “he” and makes no mention of Paul’s companions. However, we know that Paul had others with him and later some names are revealed. I propose that Titus was with him as well as Timothy and others we come to know about.

Luke notes that Paul “passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.” We also know that on his third journey Paul came to Ephesus from Antioch in Pisidia. The third journey narrative begins in Acts 18:23 and picks up at 19:1 after comments about Apollos. Luke does not mention any of Paul’s companions throughout this account until verse 22 where he says, “And having sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.” So, we know that there were others who “ministered to him.” I propose that among these was Titus.

Here is why. In writing to the church at Corinth after he had gone to Macedonia and Greece, even to them, he later writes to them,

12: “Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ and when a door was opened for me in the Lord, 13: I had no rest for my spirit, not finding Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went on to Macedonia.” (II Corinthians 2:12-13)

Paul and his team only traveled west through Troas into Macedonia twice. They returned going east several times, but only twice going west, specifically on the second and third journeys. Thus, if I am on target, this retelling in II Corinthians was about the third journey. But where did Titus go? It looks like Paul sent him off ahead, perhaps with Timothy and Erastus, and perhaps to connect with Luke in Troas, but was not there when Paul arrived. Why? Luke may have still been in Philippi, as he seems to have made a personal connection there. So, Paul, not finding Titus at Troas, continued on into “Macedonia”, most likely Philippi where Titus, coming from Corinth, met him and gave him news.

In II Corinthians 7:5-7 Paul recounts,

5: For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within. 6: But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus; 7: and not only by his coming, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced even more.”

So apparently Titus found his way to Corinth, visited there, and then on his way back through Macedonia, connected with Paul once again. He was able to relay the latest news from the troubled church.

Later in II Corinthians, chapter 8, we read of Paul’s appeal to them for funds for the poor in Jerusalem, using the generosity of the churches in Macedonia as an example. He then sends Titus and two others with him to both take this letter and make an appeal to the church there for help.

8:6, “So we urged Titus that as he had previously made a beginning, so he would also complete in you this gracious work as well.”

II Corinthians 8:16-20 tells is the story.

16: “But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus. 17: For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord. 18: We have sent along with him the brother whose fame in *the things of the gospel has spread* through all the churches; 19: and not only *this*, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and *to show* our readiness, 20: taking precaution so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift;...”

The Corinthian people would likely have more wealth to give than those in Macedonia, so Paul is not embarrassed to ask them. They may have already promised they would help (II Corinthians 9:5). In 8:23, Paul makes a comment about Titus that helps us know Paul's respect for him.

"As for Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brethren, *they are* messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ."

By this time Titus and Paul have been in a teaching/learning/ministry/relationship for about ten years. When he finally writes to Titus it would be about another ten to fifteen years later depending on whether Paul undertook a fourth missionary journey after his release from the Roman incarceration. In my (and many others) opinion, he did so. We will look at that shortly.

So, Paul's involvement with Titus would have covered some thirty years. His affection for Titus is evident in 1:4,

"To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior."

That Titus was Paul's "true child" may reflect that Titus was brought to faith in Christ by Paul, as was Timothy whom Paul also calls his child.⁹

III. Later work and journeys with Titus.

At the conclusion of Paul's third missionary journey he and many of his helpers visit Jerusalem to greet the church there and bring to them the generous offering from the churches of Macedonia and Greece. While on the temple grounds, he is arrested on trumped up charges.¹⁰ He is then confined in Caesarea for more than two years.¹¹ Though Luke remains for a time, he then goes about compiling his gospel and his "Acts" narrative. Titus likely returns to Antioch. Aristarchus (from Macedonia) is with Paul during this time, likely in rented quarters or staying with friends. Aristarchus has been Paul's primary support for years.

In frustration because his "trial" is a travesty, Paul finally appeals to Caesar. He was aware that he had not broken any Roman law and that his case would likely be thrown out. So, Paul, Luke, Aristarchus and perhaps others are shipped to Rome on a Roman freighter carrying other prisoners, cargo, grain and a total of 276 persons.¹² This voyage

⁹ I Timothy 1:2

¹⁰ Acts, chapters 21-26.

¹¹ Acts 24:27

¹² Acts 27:37

was not without serious incident.¹³ The Roman Emperor at that time was the young Nero, who, during his early reign under the tutelage of Seneca and Burrus rescinded the ban on the Jews Claudius had imposed and did well early on.

Paul is under “house arrest” for at least two years and during that time is able to move about sharing the Word of God with many including members of Caesars “own household” some who had come to Christ. In the conclusion of a letter from there to the church at Philippi, Paul says, “Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.”

(4:21-22)

Paul was finally released from this imprisonment and, gathering a team, including Titus who had come there or met Paul on the way. Apparently, they headed ultimately to Spain. This was a long-desired destination for Paul.

On his third missionary journey and in his earlier epistle to the church at Rome (which he did not found) he wrote,

“For this reason¹⁴ I have often been prevented from coming to you; but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you whenever I go to Spain—for I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while—but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints.”

“For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. Yes, they were pleased *to do so*, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things. Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain.” (Romans 15:22-28)

Little did Paul know the means by where he would visit Rome. Even the Lord said to him as he was in the throes of his witness and conflict in Jerusalem, "Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also."¹⁵

IV. Conjecture

There is considerable evidence that Paul and his team did indeed come to Spain. Not

¹³ Acts, chapters 27-28.

¹⁴ So as to not “build on another man’s foundation.”

¹⁵ Acts 23:11

only do we have his comments on this goal, but many early church fathers, a Spanish historian,¹⁶ noted that he went to Spain and in Barcelona on the Mediterranean coast, an ancient site hosting the church and (later monastery) of Saint Paul stands in ruins today. Tradition says that this site was built in memorial of St. Paul's visit to Spain.

After leaving Spain, we read that Paul and his team arrived in Crete where, after some ministry (Apollos may have begun the church there) Paul left Titus there to head up the work.¹⁷

I propose that, (knowing Paul's previous patterns) he traveled eastward once again visiting the church in Jerusalem, then up to Antioch to see his oldest friends. Then, as would be his habit, he might have traveled on through Galatia, Phrygia, and into Asia Minor visiting the churches on the way and stopping in Ephesus as he would love to see Priscilla and Aquila again, I am sure. From Ephesus he continues on into Macedonia, especially Philippi to see his most beloved friends. Along this route he connects with Apollos again and they are together in Macedonia when the letter to Titus is written.¹⁸ Paul closes the letter with,

“When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way so that nothing is lacking for them. Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful. All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in *the* faith. Grace be with you all. (3:12-15)

Paul is with a large group of people, and this would indicate Philippi. It also shows that the people there know Titus. Among those with Paul are Artemas and Tychicus as well as Apollos and Zenas. Luke may have rejoined Paul here as well. They look to be the deliverers of the letter to Titus, along with either Artemus or Tychicus. I believe it was Artemus for reasons I will explain later.

Paul wants Titus to meet him at Nicopolis, in Dalmatia on the west coast of Greece as he intends to spend the winter there. I propose that Titus did go to meet Paul at Nicopolis.

Now, we have a gap. The next thing we know is that Paul is once again in a Roman prison, this time in chains, and likely the Mamertine prison in Rome. It may be that after the winter's stay at Nicopolis, Paul continued his journey with Titus and others. In due time he may have felt inclined to visit the church in Rome not realizing the danger, but

¹⁶ M. Diaz Y Diaz

¹⁷ Titus 1:5

¹⁸ Titus

was arrested and imprisoned, this time in chains. Several of his companions are there including Titus and Luke.

From Wikipedia we read,

“The Great Fire of Rome was an urban fire that occurred in July of 64 AD. The fire began in the merchant shops around Rome's chariot stadium, , on the night of July 19. After six days the fire was brought under control, and before the damage could be measured, the fire reignited and burned for another three days. In the aftermath of the fire, two thirds of Rome had been destroyed.

According to Tacitus and later Christian tradition, Emperor Nero blamed the devastation on the Christian community in the city, initiating the empire's first persecution against the Christians. Historians Brent Shaw, a Princeton classicist, and Richard Carrier have cast doubt on the traditional view that Nero blamed the Christians for the fire.”

Nero's contrived vendetta against the Christians in 64 for starting this fire is easily seen as the reason many left Rome as well as the cause for the arrest of Paul and others. Paul, knowing that many of Caesars household were fellow believers may have underestimated Nero's demise and insanity. He was arrested, confined, but able to have visitors come to see him and write letters.

Paul was confined for up to three years. In his last letter (II Timothy) he describes his situation and tells Timothy about some of the people we have come to know and their activities. Timothy is in Ephesus. The year is 67-68 A.D.

First, he mentions Phygelus and Hermogenes of whom Timothy is aware as they likely resided in Ephesus. Paul is very unhappy with these two men and warns Timothy about them saying, “You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.”

He then notes a faithful servant, Onesiphorus (1:16). This man came to Rome to visit Paul though Paul was hard to locate. But he did so and “refreshed” Paul while there. He returned to Ephesus sometime later. Paul mentions him again in his closing as well as Prisca and Aquila. “Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.” (4:19)

But Paul is lonely. “Only Luke is with me” he says. So, he entreats Timothy to come and see him. “Make every effort to come to me soon” he says in 4:9. He repeats this request in 4:21, “Make every effort to come before winter.” And in 4:11 and 13 he says, 11: “Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.” And, 13: “When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments.”

As to those who had visited him, he says, “...Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens *has gone* to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.”

Titus returned to Dalmatia, likely Nicopolis, where tradition says he spent the remainder of his life there ultimately suffering martyrdom by being beheaded. Tradition is less than helpful regarding Titus’ later days. It seems he stayed in Dalmatia and the surrounding territory, though some have him returning to Crete and dying there at a ripe old age. Others have him concluding his work in Venice, Italy, where he was executed by beheading. In 1966, his (supposed) head was returned to Crete from St. Marks in Venice where it had been venerated since the 9th century.

Paul notes that he had Tychicus to Ephesus, perhaps with II Timothy? (4:12) I proposed that earlier, while in Philippi, Paul debated whether to send Atremis or Tychicus to Crete so Titus could be free to come to meet Paul at Nicopolis. Since Tychicus is now known to be in Rome with Paul and sent to Ephesus, and this is why I conclude that Paul decided to send Artemus to Crete.

Finally, it is cold in the dungeon in Rome. He asks for a cloak and some parchments. He also asks Timothy to bring John Mark with him as well, “...for he is useful to me for service.” (4:11) It is gratifying to see the reconciliation between Paul and John Mark. There was an angry split at the beginning of the second missionary journey nearly fifteen years earlier. My guess is that Barnabas had a hand in this reuniting.

It is fairly well established that Paul was executed in Rome just a short time before Nero engineered his own death in 68.

II. THE PLACE AND DATE OF THE WRITING OF THIS EPISTLE.

It is proposed by many that Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment and continued his work in a fourth missionary journey. I concur with this proposal and arguments for its validity can be found in other sources.

During this period, Luke, though rejoining Paul later in his second Roman imprisonment, recorded nothing of this period.¹⁹ So, a detailed record is not available. The only thing we have is Paul's own letters in which he barely sketches out what transpires. There was a period of about five years from his release from the first Roman imprisonment and his second incarceration.

Following his release from the first Roman imprisonment, Paul would have gathered a team as he always did, and it looks like Titus was among them. Paul had the goal of visiting Spain, and there is a strong tradition and good evidence he did so. From there he and his team, including Titus, came to Crete, where they began a work on the island about which, in 1:10-16 Paul said,

10: "For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11: who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not *teach* for the sake of sordid gain. 12: One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." 13: This testimony is true. For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith, 14: not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. 15: To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. 16: They profess to know God, but by *their* deeds they deny *Him*, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed."

Paul's travels after leaving Titus on Crete are unknown. Knowing Paul's pattern, he may well have traveled on to Jerusalem, greeted the church there, then went on to Antioch. From there we can surmise he once again visited the churches of Cilicia, Galatia, and Phrygia stopping in Ephesus to visit Timothy and many of his friends there. He may have reconnected with Apollos as well at Ephesus, or Apollos could have been with Paul on this 4th journey. Then on to Macedonia, likely Philippi where he and his team, including Apollos, stayed for a time.

¹⁹ II Timothy 4:11

From here he writes Titus. The year? Around 66 A.D. It was Paul's custom to use an amanuensis (secretary) to actually write his letters as he dictated. This was apparently due to his injury early in his career when he was stoned at Lystra on his first missionary journey.²⁰ Tertius mentions himself at the conclusion of Romans and in several of his epistles Paul notes that he is signing the letter in his own hand²¹ leaving the impression they were dictated by Paul and written by someone else.

Postulating he did winter in Nicopolis and was visited by Titus (Titus 3:12) we then have another gap because just a year or two later he ends up in Rome and is again arrested, this time by an Emperor who has gone insane and blames Christians for all the Empire's problems and the great fire in Rome which he himself set in 64 A.D., just four years prior to his death. While Paul was in chains awaiting his execution, Titus, among others was with him. He had left the work on Crete in the hands of others. But possibly due to the persecution, Paul says Titus departed for Dalmatia.²² This is the last scriptural reference to Titus. Soon Paul is executed just prior to Nero's suicide.

III. PURPOSE OF THE LETTER

The content of the letter strongly suggests that Paul was concerned about the disorder in the Christian gatherings on Crete. Either he had received word (most probably) or simply was aware of the chaotic kinds of encounters Titus would be faced with.

The letter is totally an instruction about establishing order in the churches there and what kind of order Paul expected in the churches whether leaders or members. This must be done due to the influx of Jewish men who brought their legalism into the congregations which would twist the provisions of the New Covenant attempting to negate them causing chaos and confusion among the people.

Two things stand out in Paul's instructions to Titus. First is that the gospel must not be compromised and that those who try to distort it must be silenced. Second is that those who are true believers must conduct their lives in a manner that reflects Christ. Paul even gives instructions about this for the older men and women, the younger men and women and those who are held in slavery.²³ To accomplish this, Paul outlines the kinds of people who should be in leadership positions because of this calamity. Paul had to

²⁰ Acts 14:19-20.

²¹ Romans 16:22; I Corinthians 16:21; Colossians 4:18; II Thessalonians 3:17; (Galatians was apparently written by Paul himself in a large script – 6:11). Other writers may have been Silvanus (Silas), Timothy and some others who accompanied Paul when he wrote.

²² II Timothy 4:10

²³ Applicable today to employees.

deal with this in nearly all the early churches.²⁴

Paul includes the most vital and basic “doctrines” of the gospel. These must be emphasized and opponents severely reprimanded and silenced.²⁵

Paul is also sending Apollos and Zenas to him to deliver this letter and to assist before continuing on their way. He then sends either Tychicus or Artemis later on. Then, Paul asks Titus to join him in Nicopolis (in Dalmatia) and spend the winter there with him.

²⁴ The Book of Galatians is dedicated to this problem and is Paul’s angriest epistle. This book should be required reading for every Christian. My commentary on the book can be found at: www.bibleclassroom.org.

²⁵ Titus 1:11; 1:13; 2:15

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO TITUS

CHAPTER ONE

1:1-4, Salutation and greeting,

1: “Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2: in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, 3: but at the proper time manifested, *even* His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior, 4: To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.”

1: Here, the use of the phrase “bond-servant of God” is the only time Paul employs it. This may be due to the theme he also introduces in verse two – that God promised the hope of eternal life to those who believed; and verse three where he notes “God as our savior.”

The word “apostle” is from the Greek “ah-pohs-tel-ohs” meaning, “a messenger”, from “ah-poh-stell-oh”, meaning, “to arrange or establish away from.”

So, Paul notes he is a servant of God, but sent by Jesus the messiah on a mission. This mission is for “the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth...” This means that Paul’s mission is to strengthen the faith of God’s people giving them knowledge of the truth entrusted to Paul (verse 3). This truth is “according to godliness” which means literally “according to good or proper worship or devotion.”

2: This truth claims the “hope of eternal life.” The word hope is “el-pis”, a feminine noun, not an adjective or verb. This is not “wishful thinking” such as “I hope the ticket I bought wins me the lottery.” No, it is a secured reality, like a treasure in a vault that God has placed there and will open it one day as He promised “long ages ago.”

This would have been before the foundation of the world, even as Jesus said, "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'” Matthew 25:34²⁶

²⁶ See also: Proverbs 8:23-31; John 17:24; Acts 15:18; Romans 16:25; 1Peter 1:20-23; and Revelation 13:8

3: There are two possible nuances here for the intent of the phrase, “manifested His word” (“even” supplied by the translators).

The first is based on the phrase, “At the proper time.” In Galatians 4:4-5 Paul writes,

4: “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5: so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”

Here, we might interpret “His word” as an allusion to Christ, as John does in his gospel (John 1:1-2). He uses the word “phan-eh-rah-oh” that has been translated “manifested.” It means “revealed,” “made known,” “made visible” or “recognized.” Paul uses the same word in this sense in Romans 3:21-26; 16:25-27 (nearly identical in phraseology), Colossians 3:24-28. John’s gospel uses this word frequently to describe the appearance of Christ.²⁷

So, the proclamation with which Paul was entrusted would be about Christ.

The second idea would be that it is in the proclamation Paul is entrusted with that God’s word is “manifested.” This seems more in sync with the way he uses this word in the previously mentioned references. Either way, Paul’s proclamations on his mission to the saints was by commandment.

4: As with Timothy (I Timothy 1:2 and II Timothy 1:2) he calls Titus his “True child.” This likely stems from Paul being instrumental in bringing Titus to faith at Antioch (of Syria).

“Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior” is Paul’s typical salutation and blessing in most of his epistles. This reflects Paul’s desire that his believing readers rest in the assurance that all is well between them and God. They have nothing to fear or worry about.

1:5,

5: “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,”

5: Or, “I left you in Crete for the following reasons...” “...that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you.”

To “set in order” means to arrange things in an orderly fashion in which there is no disruption or chaos within the leadership. “What remains” is “what is lacking” in the orderly manner in which a congregation ought to function. What seems to have happened is revealed in verses ten and eleven,

10: “For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11: who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not *teach* for the sake of sordid gain.”

²⁷ 1:31; 2:11; 17:6; 21:1; 21:14.

Titus, a Gentile, may not have been equipped to deal with these disruptive Jews. Paul left Titus - no doubt a capable leader and teacher - on the most chaotic and immoral island in the Mediterranean. Perhaps this is why the Jews there may have insisted on discipline according to the Law for the members of the congregations there.

Paul had directed Titus to appoint elders in every city on the island, and apparently word got back to him that things were getting out of control and that this directive had not been accomplished. He had similar counsel for Timothy at Ephesus. Both men were novices at being a pastor or overseer of a congregation. To Timothy he wrote, "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe." I Timothy 4:12.

He also tells Timothy the same things about appointing godly leadership in light of the character of many of the disreputable people in Ephesus.²⁸

"Elders" is "pres-bu-ter-ohs" specifically describing an older man who has seniority and experience. This man has earned respect and honor in his later years due to learning wisdom. Age alone does not necessarily qualify an older man to be a leader or model citizen. Paul told Timothy,

"The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages." Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful (*of sinning*). (I Timothy 5:17)

The church at Ephesus was years older than the one on Crete and elders in leadership had been the pattern for a long time. But not so in Crete.

So Paul writes instructions for these men to and now details his thoughts about the need to appoint elders laying down qualifications for such a man. I can imagine Titus having a challenge in finding this sort of man on Crete. It isn't easy even here in the United States.

1:6-9,

6: *namely*, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. 7: For the overseer

²⁸ I Timothy 1:3-7; 3:1-13; chapter 6 etc.

must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, 8: but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, 9: holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.”

6: “...namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.”

“Above reproach” describes a man who cannot be called out to answer for an offense. This is what the Greek word “ahn-eg-kleh-tohs” means.

The intent of the phrase “the husband of one wife”²⁹ has been debated. Basically, it means a man who has not had more than one woman in intimacy, has only been married a single time and has been faithful to his wife.³⁰

“Having children who believe” is self-explanatory. However, I have known many people whose children not only don’t believe, but are rebellious against the faith, or even agnostic or atheist. This is normally the result of parental conduct and training - itself being ungodly or distorted. “...not accused of dissipation or rebellion.” The man or his children? In this case it is the children.

7: “For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,”

Paul uses the word “e-pis-coh-pohs” here (overseer) rather than “elder.” He sees the “elder” as an “overseer.” The English translates this as “bishop.” Paul is not setting up a church hierarchy as many churches have done, but a description of the service these men are to perform. A “steward” is a manager (or overseer) of the important affairs of his master – in this case God.

“Not self-willed” brings to the forefront the central problem with everything.³¹ Paul saw this problem and wrote to the church at Philippi, “*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*” (Philippians 2:3-4)

²⁹ I Timothy 3:12.

³⁰ For further discussion, see my article on “Divorce and Remarriage” at my website: www.bibleclassroom.org under “controversial topics.”

³¹ For a close look at this topic, see: see my article on “Self-Centeredness, The Problem with Everything” at my website: www.bibleclassroom.org under “controversial topics.”

“Not quick tempered” does not mean that he never gets angry, but that it is under control so a benefit can result. We recall his counsel to the church at Ephesus, “BE ANGRY, AND *yet* DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger...” (Ephesians 4:26) We know that Jesus got angry at times. Anger is to be for the right reasons and controlled so it can produce positive results.

“Not addicted to wine” dose not mean that wine is never to be consumed. Wine was drunk at every meal, even by children in ancient times, but always with a view to propriety. Even as today, alcoholism was rampant.

A “pugnacious” man is one given to physical attacks and blows against another person. “Not fond of sordid gain.” Well, here is a common attribute of so many, “greed” and lust for money.

8: “but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,”

“Hospitable” means that this man opens his heart and home to others, even strangers. “Loving what is good” is one word in the Greek, “φιλάγαθος” (phil-aga-thos) that translates to a lover of good, goodness or kindness. “Sensible” translates literally to “a mind that is alive.” Prudent or of sound mind would fit also. The word for “just” “δίκαιος” (dik-ai-ohs) is also translated “righteous.” “Devout” is pious. “Self-controlled” is “ἐγκρατής” (eg-kpa-tehs) and is strength or power over oneself.

9: “holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.”

He is not to be in confusion about the truth of the Word of God nor distracted from it by all sorts of persuasive but erroneous thoughts. I have found that in today’s churches, many people state how “confused” they are about the things they hear and are supposed to believe. It is an epidemic.

Even when the truth is clear, if it clashes with what people believe, it is often disregarded. To refute those who “contradict” the truth will seldom persuade those who are the contraditors but may help those who need clarification.

The reason for this counsel by Paul is because of the next section from 1:10-2:1.

1:10-2:1,

10: “For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11: who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not *teach* for the sake of sordid gain.

12: One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, ‘Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.’ 13: This testimony is true. For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith, 14: not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. 15: To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. 16: They profess to know God, but by *their* deeds they deny *Him*, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed. 2:1 “But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.”

10-11: Money has always been a good reason for charismatic speakers to teach things that are untrue as they “tickle the ears” of people eager to belong to something that supplies their needs in some way. Both Jews and Gentiles are included here as we see in verse 12. Since the beginning, false religions, cults, and pseudo Christian organizations have sprung up by the thousands, most with the leader’s agenda of achieving fame or fortune. The result is confusion and conflict even within families.

12: This Cretan prophet quoted by Paul was a man named Epimenides who lived in the 7th century B.C.

13-14: It isn’t only in ancient Crete that myths and commandments of men comprise religion. We have it here also, well, everywhere. Reproving these severely (or sharply) may correct their distortions of the truth.

15-16: The key to understanding Paul’s intent is the word in the second phrase, “unbelieving.” So, “To the pure, all things are pure...” (or, “to the clean all things are clean”). In other words, those sound in faith have been cleansed and purified by the blood of Christ, therefore there is nothing unclean in itself that affects them, regardless of what the legalists and religious con men try to impose on unsuspecting souls. They are free from any form of contamination and their hearts are pure before God and they live their life unto the Lord. But for the defiled and unbelieving they emphasize all the things that are unclean that keep a man from God. So, their hearts are filled with nothing but this legalistic nonsense the avoidance of which they think makes them right with God. At the same time, by the way they conduct their lives, “...they deny *Him*, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.”³²

³² [We discussed in our study group the pastors and “religious” leaders who condemned books and films such as “Harry Potter” and Star Wars” as evil though they had never read or seen the material themselves. Because these stories contained references to witches and “forces” they were assumed to be satanic when the fact is that they were simply more stories about the battle between good and evil and not once was there an attempt to lure people into witchcraft or evil at all. If the mention of witches or of Satan in literature was evil, then the “Chronicles of Narnia” by C. S. Lewis would have to be banned as well as, uh, the Bible. So, unless one reads the material before speaking out, one ought to keep still.]

2:1 In contrast to all of this Titus is instructed to, “speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine (teaching).” “Sound doctrine” is actually “healthy” or “not diseased” “teaching or instruction,” not “doctrine” in the sense we understand that term as a specific formula of certain churches or denominations.

This verse is a transition applying both to what has just been said regarding the teaching of the word of God and the gospel and what follows regarding the conduct of those who believe. There is a “sound instruction” about the “orderliness” of the people of the Lord. He enters this discussion in chapter two.

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO TITUS

CHAPTER TWO

2:1 (See end of chapter one comments as this verse fits better there.)

2:2-5,

2: “Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. 3: Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, 4: so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5: *to be* sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.”

2: “Older men” is the same word as in 1:5 translated “elders.” The change in translation is due to the structure of offices in churches in later centuries. 1:5 should actually be translated “older men.”

These older men are to be “temperate,” that is abstaining from drunkenness. “Dignified” is honorable, reputable and respected. “Sensible” is temperate, self-controlled. They are to be sound in faith, love and perseverance. “Sound in faith” “ὑγιαίνω” (hu-gih-ai-noh) “sound” means healthy and not diseased or corrupted. “Love” here is “agape” indicating caring for another above oneself even to the point of sacrifice. “Perseverance” comes from the word that literally means “to remain under.”

3: “Older women” is the feminine of “πρεσβύτης” (pres-bu-tays) “older men” and so “πρεσβύτις” (pres-bu-tis). “Reverent” is to be a “proper temple” (implication “of the Lord”). For “malicious gossips” Paul chose the word “διαβολούς” (di-ah-boh-lous) or (“of Satan” - or “of the devil”). The remainder of the verse is self-explanatory.

4: These attributes need to be ingrained in the older women so that they can walk beside the younger women and mentor them in “loving” their husbands (phil-eh-oh) not “agape” (as they are not instructed to be a sacrifice for them – this is the husbands role (Ephesians 5:25); and the same word is used for the children.

5: Continuing the role of the older women, they are also to be “sensible” - “temperate, self- controlled;” “pure” is “undefiled” or “chaste” and this word comes from “holy” meaning “set aside for the Lord’s service.” “Workers at home” means being a “good

homemaker;” “Subject to their husbands” is to “conduct themselves in an orderly manner in respect to their husband’s leadership. “...so that the Word of God may not be dishonored” could mean one of several things. First, is that if a woman comes to faith and her husband remains an unbeliever, this would apply as Paul notes in I Corinthians, chapter 7. Second, there is to be no cause for accusation against a believer or his household. A cantankerous wife or husband could cause others to point the finger and dismiss the effect of God’s word.

One of the problems we have in this age is the disunity and disharmony in married households. This is not an attraction to Christ, but a distraction.

2:6-15,

6: “Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; 7: in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified, 8: sound *in* speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us. 9: *Urge* bond slaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, 10: not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect. 11: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12: instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13: looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, 14: who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. 15: These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.”

6: “Young men” is “neo-teros” and probably implies a man from his Bar-Mitzva to thirty years of age in Paul’s thinking, but in general a man of about twenty years of age to thirty.³³ “Sensible” is the same word as in 1:8 and 2:2, “temperate, self-controlled.”

7-8: To Titus personally, Paul instructs him to, “be an example of “good (beneficial) deeds”; “purity in doctrine” (is “uncorrupted teaching”); “dignified” (is “serious,” “honorable”); “sound in speech” (is “without corruption in all you say”); thus, “beyond reproach.” Someone said, “We are not to be advertisements for Jesus, but the evidence of Jesus in our lives.” This is so any opponent will have nothing bad to say about believers. If only this could be the standard today.

³³ See: Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 1967 edition, Eerdmans Publishing, volume 4, page 897.

9-10: Slavery was rampant in the first century. Conquerors subjected the defeated people to slavery regardless of their gender, religion or background. This was a practice that still exists in some parts of the world today. Paul is speaking especially to those slaves who have come to Christ and seeks to have them be witnesses of the Lord to their masters. His counsel is repeated in several of his letters, and Peter says the same thing in his epistle.³⁴ In today's society, his comments could apply to employees.

"Pilfering" is "embezzling." This would be like an employee taking home paper clips, paper, or other goods from the office without permission or even stealing money. The word "good" is "agathos" indicating the quality of one's faith, where "kalos," also translated "good" is the beneficial result of one's deeds. "Adorn" means that the master is to see the slave "clothed with" the instructions God has given him.

11-14: A fabulous summary of the gospel and it's intended effect. This summary is the reason for the previous instructions. It is because of this that the instructions are given.

11: "Grace" is "kah-ris" meaning that God's favor and blessing has "appeared," that is become visible or known. This would be in the person of Jesus.³⁵ The phrase, "bringing salvation to all men" does not mean that all men are thus saved. The word "bringing" is not in the text. Literally it translates, "For the grace of God has appeared, the salvation of all men." The King James Version, The Revised Standard Version and The New International Version have it better; "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men..." (KJV) and, "For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men." (RSV) and, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men." (NIV)

12-13: This appearance of "grace" "trains" us ($\pi\alpha\iota\delta\epsilon\upsilon\omega$), not just "teaches" us but trains us like parents ought to train their children, even using discipline. It trains us, "to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus."

The grace of God infuses within us the repulsion to become involved in anything corrupt or filthy but to live in quite the opposite manner, with a sound, stable mind and in a way that pleases and honors God in all we do and say. It further sets our eyes, not on this age, but on the blessed hope of Jesus' return in glory.

14: We are to do this because it is the reason Jesus came, suffered and gave His life for us, that God might, at last, have a people who really belong to Him and show it by the

³⁴ See: Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22-25; I Timothy 6:1-2; I Peter 2:18-25.

³⁵ Romans 5:15 for example.

way they live and serve. “Good” here is “kalos” and speaks of the beneficial, helpful or even beautiful result of one’s deeds. We emphasize once again that “good deeds” are not a means to please God or gain salvation, but a result of already achieving that status by faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. (See 3:5)

15: Titus is instructed to speak and “exhort” (“urge,” “appeal to”) and to “reprove” (“refute,” “repudiate,” “contest”) with all authority (to “command” or “order”). This is to be done in a fashion that cannot be disregarded.

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO TITUS

CHAPTER THREE

3:1-2,

1: “Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, 2: to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.”

These two verses properly belong in chapter two as Paul is still addressing both the older and younger men.

1: Paul is still concerned about the conduct of believers, “...so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.” (2:8) The translation in verse 1 is good and needs no further explanation. “Subject to” means “conduct oneself in an orderly fashion” within the authority under whom one dwells. The only exception would be a demand that a believer rejects Christ and one’s faith. “Rulers” (“Ar-che”) are the highest authority and “authorities” (“ex-ou-sia”) are those with local power.

2: “Malign” is to “defame” or “speak evil of” even if they are disreputable (“no one”). The remainder of the verse is adequate.

Now, Paul waxes eloquently in a fine summary of the gospel.

3:3-7,

3: “For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. 4: But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, 5: He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6: whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7: so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life.”

3: A life that is empty and void within seeks to be filled. In this world, regardless of the era - ancient or modern – people without God sink to every depth to find some sort of

fulfillment, meaning to life or happiness. They become “enslaved” to “various lusts” and, as in those days, alcohol, sex, drugs, theft, brutality, war or buying things in the world, spending money well into unrepayable debt and the like have gone on until now and will continue. The beautiful answer is as follows.

4: “The kindness” of God is the most descriptive and potent word Paul could use.³⁶ “God our Savior” is, “God who ‘delivers’, ‘rescues’ or ‘protects.’” “Love” is “φιλανθρωπία” (phil-an-thro-pia), “love for all mankind.” “Appeared” is “ἐπιφαίνω” (epi-phai-noh) to “shine light upon.” In Romans 2:3-4 he wrote,

“But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same *yourself*, that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?”

“Kindness” is not “just being nice.” It includes a dedicated mission for the benefit of all by One whose nature is that of a deep, moral goodness and character. Though the “wrath of God” is often presented by preachers as the reason one should repent and believe, here Paul points to God’s kindness and love.

5-6. “Saved” is the same as “savior” in verse four. And now a critical verse separating the provisions of the New Covenant from the Old (as interpreted and taught by the Jews). He did so, “not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness.” This would be specifically “deeds” or works in obedience to the Law. Remember he is refuting the influence of Jews among the congregation (1:10-11; 3:9). Though the word “faith” is not used, it is understood that the “we” and “us” Paul uses in this statement are believers in Christ.

A comment on “good deeds.” Six places in this letter Paul mentions “deeds,” (1:16; 2:7; 2:14; 3:5; 3:8; and 3:14). He is clear about two things regarding “deeds” (“ἔργον”) “ergon” – “work” or “works”). First, no amount of “good deeds” or “works” will qualify a person to receive mercy or salvation from God (3:5). Doing “good deeds” in order to gain favor resulting in eternal life from God is not possible. “Religion” teaches this, but not the Bible. Paganism and all other forms of human instituted religious works or activities are ignored by God.

Still (second), His people are instructed to engage in “good deeds” - not in order to gain favor from God - but because they have already gained mercy, favor and salvation from

³⁶ Χρηστότης (krees-toh-teehs) a deep moral goodness or character.

God. Their “good deeds” and godly conduct are to be a testimony of God’s mercy and grace attracting so that nothing bad can be said about His people. Unfortunately, the world looks upon the human controlled “Christian Church” as a representative of God’s people and in so doing sees much that would repel them from Christ rather than draw them to Him.

So, He saves us because of His mercy. In Romans 9:16 he wrote, “So then it *does* not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.”

God’s mercy is toward those who believe (3:8) and “saved us” by, “...the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.” This is a spiritual act, not a physical one. Physical baptism is not intended here though some churches might use this verse to support a ritual. God has transformed our lives from this world and the corporeal, temporal to the spiritual eternal. Paul writes this in Colossians 1:13-14, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

Though we remain in this world in the flesh in His service to humanity, our real citizenship and residence is in His kingdom. Verses 6 and 7 reiterate this,

6-7: All of this is from God, “whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life.”

“Justified” is the same as “made righteous” and this is God’s gift through Jesus Christ in whom we place our faith, trust and our very lives.

3:8-11,

8: “This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men. 9: But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. 10: Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, 11: knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.”

8: All that Paul has expressed in verses 4-7 is a truth that one can fully put their trust and faith in. The word “trustworthy” is from the same root as “faith.” In I Timothy 1:15

he wrote, “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*. ”

Titus is to speak of these things with “confidence” and “firmness” so those who are believers will “give thought to” or “take heed” or “take the lead” in engaging in good deeds.

“These things’ are good and profitable for men.” What things? The doctrine or the good works that believers are to do – or both? Well first, it is the teaching of truth as the following verse deals with the “foolish controversies” about the God’s truth. Second, could include good deeds as both issues are good and profitable for everyone.

9: Once again Paul cautions Titus against getting into arguments and debates with others who insist on their opinion as this is unprofitable and worthless.

10: “Factious” is “*αἵρετικός*” (hair-eh-ti-kohs) from which we derive the word “heretic” meaning to “cause division” or “cause schisms.” Warned a second time he is to be “rejected” – literally “asked to stand aside.”

11: A man such as described in verse 10 is “perverted” (*ἐκστρέψω*) to “turn inside out” and is “sinning” – “missing the mark or target.” “self-condemned” is one who has “rendered judgment against himself.”

3:12-15,

12: “When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. 13: Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way so that nothing is lacking for them. 14: Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful. 15: All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in *the* faith. Grace be with you all.”

12-13: Most likely it was Artemas that was sent to Crete.³⁷ While Titus awaited the arrival of these men (Apollos and Zenos – verse 13) he undertook to accomplish Paul’s instruction. Relieved of his duty sometime after the arrival of these men, he did go to Nicopolis (in Dalmatia) by my estimation.³⁸ It is possible that Apollos and Zenas came

³⁷ See introduction, Page 13, paragraph 3.

³⁸ See introduction, pages 12-13.

to Crete and then continued on their way after being resupplied by Titus and the church there.

14: Once again Paul reiterates the need for “our people” to learn to engage in “good works.” “Our people” would be the believers among the chaotic assembly. In this context it seems to be that the people Paul is addressing are to help the needy. This may come as a result of their employment or as acts of generosity. Either way or both, they are to bear the fruit of their faith by helping the less fortunate.

15: In this verse, Paul reveals he is with a number of people who are sending their greetings Titus. This supports the idea that he, Apollos, Zenas, Artemus, Tychicus and others are with him and that he is likely at Philippi at the time of this writing.

He asks Titus to pass along those greetings to those in the congregation who, in faith, love them as well.

“Grace be with you all” is Paul’s typical way of concluding his letters. “Grace” is “Kar-is” and conveys God’s favor, kindness, blessing and joy.

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