

Set in Order the Things that are Lacking

Titus 1

The book of Titus was written by the Apostle Paul to Titus, a new pastor serving on the island of Crete. Crete was experiencing an influx of false teachers and doctrines contrary to the Word of God. Paul's letter was written to encourage Titus and explain what a healthy church and body of believers look like.

Read Titus 1:1-4.

1. How did Paul describe himself in verse 1a?

Bondservant – a low slave, bondman, a slave by choice; metaphorically, one who has chosen to give himself up wholly to another's will. Those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing His cause among men

Before Paul made the choice to be a slave to Christ, he lived a very different life under the name of Saul. The first mention of Saul comes in Acts chapter 8 at the stoning of Stephen, a spirit-filled believer of Jesus Christ, who confronted the religious leaders in a powerful speech recorded in Acts 7.

Read Acts 7:57-8:1-3 and 9:1-2.

2. Summarize Saul's feelings towards the followers of Jesus Christ and the actions he took against them.

3. How does Paul describe himself as he looks back at this part of his life? (1 Timothy 1:13a)

4. But God! Read 1 Timothy 1:13b-14. What did Paul experience in his encounter with Jesus Christ?

5. What reason does Paul give for the Lord showing him mercy? (1 Timothy 1:16)

Paul was “of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews.” He was an expert on the Law and a man of reputation among the who’s who of his day. But as Paul reflected on God's mercy and grace and the unmerited salvation of his soul, he concluded that the only reasonable response was choosing to lay down his own life and will for the will of his Lord and Savior.

6. In the book of Philippians, while writing from prison, Paul said that he had “suffered the loss of all things” and now considered those things rubbish. What had Paul come to value more than anything? (Philippians 3:7-11)

7. **THINK:** How do you think the opening line of Paul’s letter would have inspired and encouraged Titus in his own life and ministry?

8. Paul was a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ according to what two things? (Titus 1:1)

According to – the goal to which anything tends (tending to godliness, to awaken, produce faith)

Faith – conviction, in reference to Christ, it denotes “a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the Kingdom of God”

Elect – those who have obtained salvation through Christ

In other words, Paul was a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ with the **goal** of awakening and producing faith in believers and awakening their knowledge of the truth, which in turn awakens godliness.

9. As you consider the mercy and grace God has shown you, how can you wholly give yourself to the will of God and be a bondservant of Jesus Christ?

10. Spend some time praying and seeking His direction for the goals He has for you when you choose to serve Him and carry out His will. Record your goals below and commit to making them your focus as you move forward in your walk with the Lord.

11. What was Paul's great motivator? (v. 2)

12. What can we learn about Titus from the following passages?

Titus 1:4 _____

2 Corinthians 2:13 _____

2 Corinthians 8:23 _____

Galatians 2:1 _____

Titus was a Greek, a Gentile who came to know Jesus as his personal Savior through the goals and service of Paul, a bondservant of God. He became a trusted and loyal co-laborer with Paul. He accompanied Paul on his missionary journey from Antioch to Jerusalem and later served in the church located in Corinth. Later, Paul and Titus traveled to the island of Crete, where Titus remained, having been tasked with straightening out what was left unfinished.

Read Titus 1:5-9.

13. Why did Paul leave Titus in Crete? (v. 5)

At this time, there were approximately twenty known cities on the island of Crete. What *was lacking* in Crete was godly leadership to preach solid Biblical doctrine to the people. Titus was tasked with finding and appointing the proper leadership for teaching and implementing solid doctrine.

It is often said that God is a God of order. There are examples of God's order easily seen throughout creation. The sun, moon, and stars dictate an orderly and dependable rhythm in time and seasons. We do not have to look any further than our own bodies to recognize that we were created with order in mind. Even in the Godhead, order can be seen. God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are three distinct persons of the Trinity, functioning in perfect harmony. In the book of Titus, we will see **God's order for His church**, and as bondservants of Jesus Christ, we are called to submit to that order.

Elders - among Christians, those who presided over the assemblies (or churches)

Bishop - the superintendent, head or overseer of any Christian church

The words *elders* and *bishop* are synonymous; both refer to the presiding pastor of a church.

14. What are the four primary qualifications for a pastor? (v. 6)

These three passages (1 Timothy 3:2, 3:12, and Titus 1:6-7) have been interpreted by some to indicate an elder or deacon must be a married man. The issue is not the elder's or deacon's marital status, but his moral and sexual purity. This qualification heads the lists, because it is in this area that leaders are most prone to fail.... In the Greek, the phrase "husband of one wife" literally reads "one-woman man." For a man to be considered for a position of church leadership, and he is married, he must be committed to his wife. This qualification is speaking of fidelity in marriage and sexual purity. It is not a requirement of marriage.

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15. **THINK:** Why do you think when it came to a man who had children, his children needed to be faithful? (1 Timothy 3:4,5,12)

Blameless - cannot be called into to account, unproveable, unaccused

Steward of God - a Christian who rightly uses the gifts entrusted to him by God for the good of his brethren

16. How do the verses in Titus 1:7-9a further qualify what is meant by *blameless*?

Blameless – A Steward of God	
NOT	BUT

Hospitable – fond of guests, generous to guests, loving goodness

Soberminded – one who is able to think clearly and with clarity, curbing one's desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate

Just – rendering to each his due; passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them

Holy – undefiled by sin, free from wickedness, religiously observing every moral obligation, pure, holy, pious

Self-controlled – controlling oneself, temperate, exercising restraint as to the indulgences of desires or passions

Holding fast to the Word to – be sure of the faithful word, bringing it to the people with confidence and authority, not mixed with theological speculation and academic doubts (David Guzik)

17. Why were these qualifications important? (v. 9)

Exhort – instruct and teach

Convict – to convict, refute, to prove to be wrong, used of the exposure and the proving wrong of false teachers

Contradict – to speak against, declare to be false

Read Titus 1:10-16.

Titus not only faced the task of finding and appointing godly leaders who could minister to the difficult nature of the Cretan, but he also had to deal with Christian Jews (those of the circumcision) who professed to know God while their legalism and additions to the Gospel flat-out denied Him.

If the true Gospel of Jesus Christ was going to stand on the island of Crete, the church would need strong leaders who held fast to the Word of God and who weren't afraid to exhort and convict both the legalists and those devoid of character.

18. How did Paul describe those Christians with Jewish backgrounds? (v. 10)

Insubordinate – someone who will not submit to God’s order of authority (David Guizk)
Idle talkers – one who utters empty, senseless things; producing no goodness of life
Deceivers – a mind-misleader, a mind deceiver, a seducer

19. What needed to be done and why? (v. 11)

20. **THINK:** When it comes to the order God has placed in marriage (1 Corinthians 11:3) and in the church, are there any areas in which you are being insubordinate? Do not rush past this question. Take some time to pray and ask the Lord to show you.

Paul states that these insubordinate idle-talkers and deceivers did so for dishonest gain. Our first thought might be that there must have been money to be made in doing this. But often, the motivation for insubordination has nothing to do with money.

21. **THINK:** What else might be gained and seen as profitable for these legalists who wanted to add to the Gospel?

22. **THINK:** How is the general character of the Cretans described? Why do you think ministering to these kinds of people would require strong leaders? (v. 12)

23. How should these newly appointed leaders deal with the insubordinate legalists and the insubordinate Cretans, and why? (v. 13-14)

These Christians who came from Jewish backgrounds were having a particularly hard time letting go of their ideas and strict adherence to the Law. But it was imperative that they let go of their old ways and stop adding to the simplicity of the Gospel.

We deal with the same issues today, but adding to the Gospel isn't the only problem. Today, we see a dramatic swing to the other extreme. If God is love, then all manner of things can be overlooked and accepted. When we claim to know God, we are telling the people around us that we know and understand what God wants. But our insubordination and refusal to submit to God's order in things can likewise subvert people away from the truth of God's Word.

24. What is the danger of insubordination to God's Word and God's order? (v. 16)

Are you representing the truth of the Gospel? Is salvation by grace and through faith in Jesus Christ alone, evidenced by your submission to His appointed authority and order in things? Or are you choosing to reject portions of Scripture and God's order because it is easier or because you want the world's acceptance? Sound Biblical doctrine sets people free from the bondage of sin. The world does not need people professing to know God while walking them straight to the gates of Hell. Sound faith, dedication to holiness, and submitting to God's order in things matter.

25. How will you move forward in your walk with the Lord after having studied Titus 1?

A Closer Look at the Importance of Sound Doctrine

Titus 1:9

We have learned that Paul instructed Titus to organize what was lacking—sound doctrine. The definition of sound is *to be sound, to be well, to be in good health. It is also a metaphor for Christians whose opinions are free from any mixture of error.* The definition of doctrine is *teaching and instruction.*

Sound doctrine is *teaching and instruction that is free from error and brings good health.* Sound doctrine is the inerrant Word of God.

Gotquestions.org states that sound doctrine is important because *what we believe affects what we do.*

26. Read the following verses. What do they teach you about God's Word?

Isaiah 40:8

Matthew 4:4

2 Timothy 3:16-17

27. Look up the following verses. How are we to handle God's Word?

1 Thessalonians 5:21

2 Timothy 2:15

28. Read Romans 1:16 and consider 2 Timothy 2:15 (which you just read). What is key to maintaining a passion for sound doctrine?

The opposite of sound doctrine would be false doctrine or teaching. The Bible frequently warns against false teaching.

29. Read 2 Timothy 4:3. What would cause one not to endure sound doctrine?

30. How does 1 Timothy 6:3-5 describe one who does not consent to sound doctrine?

31. God's Word is complete. Psalm 119:89 tells us God's Word is settled in Heaven. Look up Revelation 22:18-19. What are the dangers of adding to or taking away from His Word?

The best way to distinguish truth from falsehood is to know the truth.

32. Read the following verses and write down what you learn about how you can stand firm in the sound doctrine of God's truth.

2 Timothy 1:13

2 Peter 1:20-21

1 John 4:1

As believers in Jesus Christ, we are called to uphold the truth of God's Word. It is not an easy calling and not a popular one. Be bold and stand firm in being counter-cultural.

Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."

- Matthew 7:14

Every word of God is pure! Commit today to endure sound doctrine.