**Simple Studies**

**In**

**Titus**

**BY**

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**All Chapters are in Memory**

**Introduction**

The Epistle to Titus, who had been left in charge of the churches on the island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea, was written at about the time of First Timothy. It is similar to that Epistle in many respects, emphasizing the same truths. However, while the truth most emphasized in First Timothy is the importance of sound teaching, in Titus the truth most emphasized is the importance of God’s order for the conduct of the churches.

***I. Instructions for the Guidance of Local Churches (chapter 1).***

1. “Paul to Titus” (**Tit. 1:1-4**). The apostle greets Titus here, as he greeted Timothy in his First Epistle to him, as his gnesios teknon, his “genuine child.” We are not so well acquainted with Titus as with Timothy. We know that Titus was a Gentile whom Paul had brought to Christ (**Tit. 1:4**; **Gal. 2:3**). In **Acts 15:1-41** he was in the party with Paul and Barnabas when they went from Antioch in Syria up to Jerusalem to discuss with the apostles and elders there the relation of Christians to the law of Moses. Some of the Hebrew Christians at Jerusalem refused to recognize Titus as a Christian because he was not circumcised. Paul, who in other circumstances had circumcised Timothy on the principle of being all things to all men that he might gain some (**1Cor. 9:19**), resisted the demand of the legalizers at Jerusalem, that the gospel of Christ might continue with us (**Gal. 2:3-5**). Titus was Paul’s trusted messenger in gathering the offerings from among the churches for the poor saints at Jerusalem (**2Cor. 8:15-24**). The apostle speaks in **2Cor. 7:5-16** of the consolation and comfort brought to him by Titus after a visit to the Corinthian church.

2. “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou should set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee” (**Tit. 1:5-9**). From this passage it appears that Paul and Titus had visited Crete together, and that Titus had been left in Crete to watch over the young churches on that island. He now points out to Titus the importance of having the right men in charge of the various local churches. The Holy Spirit had chosen men to be elders or bishops, but it remained for the churches to recognize these men and install them in their office. “It is,” says Dr. Scofield, “not at all a question of the presence in the assembly of persons having the qualifications of elders, made overseers by the Holy Spirit (**Acts 20:28**); that such persons were in the churches of Crete is assumed; the question is altogether one of the appointment of such persons. These assemblies were not destitute of elders; but were ‘wanting,’ in that they were not duly appointed. There is a progress of doctrine in respect of the appointing of elders. Elder (presbuteros) and bishop (episcopos overseer’) designate the same office (compare verse 7; **Acts 20:17**; compare verse 28), the former referring to the man, the latter to a function of the office. The eldership in the apostolic local churches was always plural. There is no instance of one elder in a local church. The functions of the elders are: to rule (**1Ti. 3:4-5**; **1Ti. 5:17**), to guard the body of revealed truth from perversion and error (**Tit. 1:9**), to ‘oversee’ the church as a shepherd his flock (**Acts 20:28**; **John 21:16**; **Heb. 13:17**; **1Peter 5:2**). Elders are made or ‘set’ in the churches by the Holy Spirit (**Acts 20:28**), but great stress is laid upon their due appointment (**Acts 14:23**; **Tit. 1:5**). At first they were ordained (Greek, cheirotoneo, ‘to elect,’ ‘to designate with the hand,’) by an apostle; for example, **Acts 14:23**, but in Titus and 1 Timothy the qualifications of an elder become part of the Scriptures for the guidance of the churches in such appointment (**1Ti. 3:1-7**)” (Scofield Reference Bible).

3. “For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers” (**Tit. 1:10-16**). Many of these were “of the circumcision,” that is, Hebrews, whose mouths must be stopped. But of the Cretians themselves Paul quotes one of their own writers as saying: “The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies,” and Paul adds, “This witness is true.” These must be rebuked, and the people must be warned against listening to their false teaching. They professed to know God, but showed by their works that they were abominable and disobedient and unto every good work reprobate.

***II. Instructions for the Guidance of the Preacher (chapter 2).***

1. “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine” (**Tit. 2:1-10**). Let the preacher remember that it is his business to preach, and to give sound teaching in his preaching. These verses show what kind of people Christians ought to be, including aged men, aged women, young women, young men, and Christian bondservants or slaves.

2. “For” (**Tit. 2:11-15**). This little word “for” is really a big word, perhaps the biggest in the whole Epistle. It is like a very small hinge upon which a very large door may swing. All that precedes it consists mostly of good advice, telling people how they ought to live. Good advice is not confined to the Christian church nor to the Christian gospel. As a matter of fact the gospel of Christ is not good advice at all, nor is it merely good news. It is that, but it is much more than that, “for it is the power of God unto salvation” (**Rom. 1:16**). The power of God, mind you, not the good advice of God, nor even merely the good news of God. It is God’s own power.

And that is what makes this word “for” so important. Titus is commanded to preach these things to the people in Crete and to preach them in confidence, remembering the tremendous power of his message. He had a right to demand that the Cretian Christians should live the right kind of lives, “FOR the grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared to all men.”

That, of course, is Calvary, for there the Son of God delivered us from the penalty of sin, the wages of sin, which is death.

But salvation means more than deliverance from the penalty of sin. It means also deliverance from the power of sin. The grace of God teaches us that “denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present age.” The word for “teaching” is a word which means to bring under discipline. That is what a disciple is; a disciple is one who is brought under discipline. God does more than teach us. He takes us in charge, and proceeds to produce in us by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that godly life which we could not produce in our own strength.

And even more than that. The grace of God delivers us also from the presence of sin. This will be accomplished when our Lord returns, and for him we should be constantly waiting,—“looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people (a people for his own possession), zealous of good works.”

These are the things which the preacher is to preach: “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.”

***III. Instructions for the Guidance of Believers (chapter 3).***

1. “Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers” (**Tit. 3:1-2**). The government is God’s creation, God’s gift unto the world. The powers that be are ordained of God. (**Rom. 13:1-14**) and therefore we should obey magistrates, be ready to every good work; and in our dealings with other men we should “speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.”

2. "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish” (**Tit. 3:3-4**). Paul here tells what kind of man he used to be before he got saved. He was an enthusiastic Jew. The phrase, “love toward man,” comes from the Greek word philanthropia which, of course, gives us our English word “philanthropy.” The Greek word occurs only once again in the New Testament, where it is translated “kindness” (**Acts 28:2**).

3. “Not by works of righteousness which we have done” (**Tit. 3:5-7**). It is according to God’s mercy that we have been saved “by the washing (the bath) of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

Here, as in **John 3:5**, water and the Spirit are associated in relation to our salvation. The water is a type of regeneration through the Word of God, “the washing of regeneration.” Along with the bath of regeneration which eleven of the apostles had experienced and Judas had not (**John 13:10-11**), there is also “the renewing of the Holy Spirit,” and this renewing of the Holy Spirit is again spoken of in **Rom. 12:1-2**, where it is called, “the renewing of your mind.” The Spirit of God uses the Word of God in our new birth and also in our training as children of God (**John 7:37-39**; **Eph. 5:25-27**; **2Cor. 3:18**).

4. “This is a faithful saying” (**Tit. 3:8-11**). Here Paul enjoins upon us all that we should be “careful to maintain good works” (compare **Tit. 3:14**). Foolish questions, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law, are to be avoided. And the heretic after the first and second admonition is to be rejected. The word “heretic” means “one who makes a choice.” He chooses to believe and press his favorite doctrines, which may be false or true; but, if true, he stresses them out of proportion and presses them until he produces schism in the body, and, as the apostle here says, “He that is such is subverted, and sins, being condemned of himself.”

5. “When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter” (**Tit. 3:12-15**). This would indicate that Titus was not to be permanently stationed on the island of Crete, which would make it even more important that the needed elders or bishops should be appointed and set to work. Zenas the lawyer who is not elsewhere mentioned in Scripture, and Apollos whom we know very well are commended, and the Epistle closes with a little word of intimate fellowship: “All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.”