

# INTRODUCTION

## PLACE OF ORIGIN AND DATE

At the time of writing Titus, Paul was in or on his way to Nicopolis where he planned to spend the winter (3:12). Titus had been left at Crete to complete the work which he and Paul had begun (1:5). The only other reference to Crete in the New Testament occurs when Paul spent time at the harbor of Fair Havens (Acts 27:8). Because of the brevity of that stay, it is unlikely that Paul engaged in evangelistic work at that time. While it is possible that Paul completed evangelistic work in Crete during some of the gaps in Acts (cf. the details in 2 Cor 11:23–29 which are not narrated in Acts), it seems probable that Titus – like 1 Timothy – occurred after Paul’s release from the “house arrest” of Acts 28:30 but before the later arrest assumed by 2 Timothy.

While Robinson argues for a date of A.D. 57 for Titus with Paul writing the work on his way to Jerusalem, thus finding a place for the book within the chronology of Acts, few scholars find this suggestion plausible. Those who hold that Titus is pseudonymous date the book in the second century (see on The Place of Origin and Date of 1 Timothy). Those who hold to Pauline authorship date the book before 2 Timothy and in the same time period as 1 Timothy, the mid 60s.

## DESTINATION AND AUDIENCE

In contrast to the work at Ephesus where Timothy was working with an established church, Titus’ task was to grow a

church in a climate that was less than desirable. Timothy's task was to maintain a healthy eldership, but Titus was called upon to appoint elders for a young church.

Titus himself is not mentioned in the book of Acts. He was a Gentile and became Paul's test case for circumcision, securing for Gentiles a gospel separate from the law (Gal 2:1, 3). In all likelihood he was one of Paul's converts (Titus 1:4). He was probably a co-worker with Paul from the early years of Paul's ministry and, as such, was trusted with some very difficult situations (2 Cor 2:3-4, 13; 7:6-16; 8:16-24). After Titus and Paul had evangelized the island of Crete, Titus had been left to set things in order in the churches. He was soon to be replaced by Artemas and to join Paul in Nicopolis (Titus 3:12).

As Titus ministered to the church in Crete, he confronted hostile environs. This small island in the Mediterranean Sea was, at best, an outpost. Its inhabitants were known for their lying, gluttony, and laziness (Titus 1:12, 13).

## THE CONTRIBUTION OF TITUS

Titus is very much like 1 Timothy. Only two passages (2:11-14; 3:3-7) have no corresponding material in 1 Timothy. Fee has noted that "Titus has often been viewed as a miniature 1 Timothy and, except for 2:11-14 and 3:3-7, has been treated with benign neglect."<sup>1</sup> There are, however, some striking differences between Titus and 1 Timothy. First the church at Crete had only recently been established while the church at Ephesus had been in existence for some time. As Fee has noted, even the lack of urgency in terms of Paul's instructions to the young evangelist and in terms of the false teachers may indicate that he is preparing the evangelist and the church for what they may face rather than what they are already facing.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fee, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

The dominant theme in Titus is good works (1:8, 16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14). These good works will provide this young church and its minister with a means of affecting outsiders (2:5, 7, 8, 10, 11; 3:1, 8).

# OUTLINE

- I. SALUTATION — 1:1-4**
- II. APPOINTING ELDERS — 1:5-16**
  - A. Qualifications of Elders — 1:5-9
  - B. Elders' Responsibilities Toward False Teachers — 1:10-16
- III. INSTRUCTIONS FOR VARIOUS GROUPS — 2:1-15**
  - A. Behavior and Sound Doctrine — 2:1
  - B. Instructions for Older Men — 2:2
  - C. Instructions for Older and Younger Women — 2:3-5
  - D. Instructions for Younger Men — 2:6-8
  - E. Instructions for Slaves — 2:9-10
  - F. The Theological Basis for the Christian Life — 2:11-15
- IV. STANDARDS FOR CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR — 3:1-11**
  - A. Respect for Government Authorities — 3:1
  - B. Respect for All — 3:2
  - C. The Theological Basis for Living with Non-Christians — 3:3-8
  - D. Final Warnings Concerning False Teachers and the Divisive — 3:9-11
- V. PERSONAL DIRECTIONS AND CLOSING SALUTATIONS — 3:12-15**