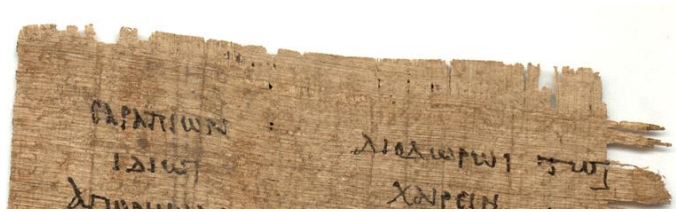


The Epistle to
Titus

New Testament Letters Series



Lesson 1-Having the Divine Qualifications

Focus: Ch. 1 v.1-16

- 1. Introduction:** *This letter was written from Paul to Titus, a young minister who Paul had been training up in the faith and work. The letter to Titus is the third of three Pastoral Epistles of Paul; the other two being 1st and 2nd Timothy. Although the person Titus is not mentioned in the book of Acts, yet Paul mentions him thirteen different times throughout his other epistles. From all that we can gather about Titus it is quite evident that he was one of Paul's most trusted and closest companions. Titus was a Greek convert of Paul's. He was not Jewish, nor was he circumcised (See Galatians 2:3; Titus 1:4). It is believed that he was probably from Syrian Antioch (the place where Christians were first called Christians), and would have been among the believers mentioned in Acts 11:26.*

This letter was written about AD 63, after Paul's first Roman imprisonment (and after the writing of his four prison epistles). It is believed that it was perhaps written from Corinth. Paul then took advantage of the travels of Zenas and Apollos (Titus 3:13) whose journey and destination would lead them right across the island of Crete where Titus had been sent to minister. They were able to carry this letter to Titus. After Paul's release from his first Roman imprisonment he had gone to Crete to spread the gospel around their cities. He'd then left Titus there to continue the work and to organize some of the churches.

The Mediterranean island of Crete is 156 miles [251 Km] long and 30 miles [48.3 km] wide. People inhabiting the island in the first century had become known for untruthfulness and immorality (See Titus 1:12, 13). The expression "to act the Cretan" became an idiom meaning "to play the liar." Besides all the sinful influences, there were also a number of Jews who lived on the island. A fair number of these Cretan Jews also were present at the preaching of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost and it is quite possible that some of them may have believed the gospel message and had already begun to share it a little bit with their countrymen on the island. Paul's letter to Titus stressed the necessity of righteous living for Christians! No doubt, this would have encouraged Titus to proclaim that message strongly in earnest effort to counteract the tides of evil that were running rampant upon the island of Crete.

2. The Greetings of Paul to Titus (v.1-4)

- Paul begins this letter with his signature greeting, "Paul..." "a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ." He expresses his living faith in God and his thankfulness of acknowledge or recognize the truth of God. **This truth of God is powerful** and results in the production of godliness in our lives.*
- (v.2) Paul here points out one of the characteristics about God—He cannot and does not lie! God only speaks truth. The "father of lies" is Satan, not God (John 8:44). God had planned for men to have "eternal life" from the very beginning—even before the world was. It was only through the entrance of sin into our world that sin and death came (Romans 5:12). Yet, we can have a bright and a sure hope through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior! (Romans 5:17; 6:23). Jesus stepped into our place to be slain for us even from the moment sin entered into the world (Revelation 13:8). But now in our times God has revealed the living Savior and men by the Spirit of God have preached of His saving power! In "due time" this message of holy and eternal truth was committed to the lips of faithful men chosen by God to proclaim His message of salvation far and near! (v.3) We also as recipients of that blessing are to be sharers of that blessing with others.*
- (v.4,5)—Grace and peace from the Lord were wished by Paul upon Titus, the young minister and messenger of God! **Paul always took great care and concern to train up new ministers and servants for the Lord who***

would be faithful in the work before them! People who would be faithful men for their time to carry forward the all important message of salvation and to in their turn, train up others as well.

3. The Qualifications of Elders, Church leaders, and Pastors (v.5-9)

- a. *The qualifications of God are not the qualifications that men have enacted. God uses those who are humble, faithful, and diligent for the work, having holy zeal. God looks to approve of the character, genuine abilities, and spiritual gifts. **Corrupt men may hand out important positions for money, ties of friendship, or even claims to having received training at various schools of Theology.** God looks more so at the character, mind, attitude, lifestyle, heavenly knowledge and wisdom given to a person by Himself. **These qualifications given in the Bible should ALWAYS be followed in the selection of men for responsible leader-ship positions within the church of God!** Sadly, many times they have not been. And for this very reason, many have suffered in various churches at various times, and they have been led away from the truth (even lost)!! **All of us will one day give an account to God for the choices we have made, and also the discretion used in choosing our leaders for the work of God!** We owe it to God to choose by His standards which are here outlined.*
- b. *(v.5) **It's important to note here the necessity of order and organization**, even within the early and growing church. Organization is key to success! God wants His people to be organized for service. Some people have made it their business to reject and to fight against all organization of churches. However, God's work is an organized work. God is a God of order and these principles must be followed for success. Even in the business world it is not hard to notice that those who are organized will be far more successful!*
- c. ***Qualifications:** A chosen leader for God's work needs to be an **upright and upstanding person**, managing their own family and household well—having things together and training up their kids well for the Lord. Their temperament should be good (not easily angered), a faithful steward of God, not greedy, etc. **The must live by the word of God so they can effectively teach by precept and example. Scripture is filled with examples, both negative ones, and positive ones**, which fully demonstrate to us the results of following these principles when choosing godly leadership, and or of failing to follow them. **Eli, failing to discipline his children correctly, allowed terrible sin and corruption to make the true religion of God to stink in the eyes of the people** (1 Samuel 2:22-25; 3:13). **Priests teaching for hire** (just for the money) was another sickening and corrupting sin (Malachi 3:9-12). These were “greedy for money” and loved ease. They were not spiritual. Only a spiritually minded person can truly understand the word of God and really save souls (1 Corinthians 2:13). **The basest people cannot rightly do God's work** (Ezekiel 22:26; 1 Kings 12:31; 13:33). **While the noble, holy, humble, righteous minded and diligent students of Scripture will be very blessed in God and His work** (2 Timothy 2:15; Joshua 1:8-10; Ezra 7:6; 7:10, 25). **God himself requires of us that we should select the very best who are according to His choosing for the work!** They should bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit well (Galatians 5:22,23), and should never be men who are “given to wine” (See Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35). God's people are to be sober minded and especially should His ministers be so! (1 Peter 5:8).*

4. The evil character of the wicked to be aware of (v.10-16)

- a. *(v.10-14) Among the Jews and others there were “many” who did not have the pure mind of God. Their manner of life, choice of words, choice of things to talk about, actions, and themes for contemplation all gave evidence that these men were not called upon by God to serve Him and that they would disgrace the name of Christ by their low ways if ever called upon to serve. Their hearts were for money, not holiness!*
- b. *(v.15-16) Pure-minded people keep all things in their lives pure. However, those who have a filthy mind will always give evidence of their corruption no matter where they are. Such wickedness and lowness of mind should never be tolerated in a minister of God. Let us choose men that are of God's choosing, not of our own worldly ways. **Be careful—surely corrupt men will often “profess to know God,” but their works deny him.** You can usually always tell more about someone's true character by their actions than merely by their words or profession.*

Questions for the Heart:

Would you like to live by the pure and holy standards of God's word in your life? _____