

Through the Bible Book by Book

New Testament

by Myer Pearlman

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TITUS

Theme: The Epistle to Titus follows that of I Timothy in order of composition. After writing the last-named Epistle, Paul sailed with Titus to Crete where he left him to set in order the unorganized churches. Titus, a heathen by birth (Galatians 2:3), was probably one of Paul's converts (Titus 1:4). He was present with the apostle at the council at Jerusalem (Acts 15), where, in spite of the insistence of the Judaizers, Paul refused to circumcise him (Galatians 2:3). The apostle had great confidence in him and entrusted him with important missions (II Corinthians 7:6, 7, 13-16; II Corinthians 8:16-24).

Knowing that the untrustworthy and vicious character of the Cretians and the presence of false teachers would render his task a difficult one, Paul wrote Titus a letter to instruct and encourage him in his duties. The Epistle is short, containing only three chapters, but it compresses in a short compass a large amount of instruction embracing doctrine, morals and discipline. Martin Luther said of it: "This is a short Epistle, but such a quintessence of Christian doctrine, and composed in such a manner that it contains all that is needful for Christian knowledge and life."

We shall sum up the theme as follows:

- The organizing of a true church of Christ;
- An appeal to the church to be true to Christ.

When Written: Shortly after First Timothy, probably from some point in Asia minor.

Why Written: To instruct Titus in the organization of the Cretian church and to direct him in the method of dealing with the people.

Contents:

I. The Order and Doctrine of the Church. Ch. 1.

II. The Conduct of the Church. Chs. 2, 3.

I. The Order and Doctrine of the Church. Ch. 1.

1. Introductory: Paul's salutation to Titus. vv. 1-4.
2. Titus' special mission in Crete-to set in order the disorganized church. v. 5.
3. The qualifications for elders. vv. 6-9.
4. The reason for the exercising of great care in choosing elders - the presence of false teachers (vv. 10-16).

Concerning these teachers notice:

- (a) Their character: insubordinate and deceitful, and given to empty talk. v. 10.
- (b) Their motive: material gain. v. 11.
- (c) Their teaching: Jewish traditions and legends (v. 14); for example, commandments concerning the abstaining from certain foods (v. 15; compare Mark 7:1-23; Romans 14:14).
- (d) Their claims: they profess to be true teachers of the gospel, but their sinful lives belie their profession. v. 16.

Note that Paul in exposing the character of the Cretians (vv. 12, 13), quotes a Cretian poet, Epimenides (600 B. C.). Ancient writers speak of the Cretians' love of gain, ferocity, fraud, falsehood and general depravity. To "Cretianize" was proverbial for to lie, as to "Corinthianize" was for to be dissolute.

II. The Conduct of the Church. Chs. 2, 3.

- 1. The believer's conduct in relation to one another. 2:1-15.
- 2. The believer's conduct in relation to the outside world. 3:1-8.
- 3. What to avoid - discussions concerning celestial genealogies and minute points of the law of Moses. v.9.
- 4. Whom to avoid - heretics (vv. 10, 11).

A heretic is a person who causes a division in the church by teaching an unscriptural doctrine. In Paul's day, tainted morals were often the accompaniment of tainted doctrine.

- 5. Concluding instructions. vv. 12-15.

~ **end of Titus** ~

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