

STUDY GUIDE AND STUDY QUESTIONS FOR TITUS

Historical Time and Background for Titus

This epistle is one of a group of three called the Pastoral Epistles because their primary focus is upon pastoral oversight of a church body. They are written as personal letters to two of the apostle Paul's disciples, Timothy and Titus.

The only other personally addressed epistle, also pastoral in content, is Philemon written as one of the four Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon. Titus was written in-between 1st and 2nd Timothy—after Paul's first imprisonment (about 62/63 AD) but before his second imprisonment (about 66 AD).

As typical with epistles, Titus is both instructive and exhortational regarding the role of pastors (elders/overseers) and their specific responsibilities and includes personal exhortations directed to Titus. Paul is Titus' mentor, so he is giving Titus guidance in the transition of Paul's handing off responsibility and authority to one of his disciples, his "true son in our common faith."

As the church spread throughout the world and the Roman empire a need arose to release apostolic oversight to other leaders whom Paul trusted.

Theme and Focus of Titus

The primary focus of this epistle is seen in verse 5 of the first chapter, "...set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city...." Titus was responsible to not only appoint elders (elders/overseers) but given specifics on how to select them and what their responsibilities would be, along with Titus' responsibility in the initial task.

There are three primary sub-themes or thematic links within Titus—the Gospel, sound doctrine, and good works or godly living. The Gospel is the foundation for faith and all sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is teaching that gives insight into what to believe and how to live the truth of the Gospel out in daily life. Godly living is the result of godly character bearing fruit in good works, as a person lives out (practices) the truth (sound doctrine) based on the Gospel.

Things to Look for when Studying Epistles

The general focus of an epistle is providing instruction in Christian doctrine and theology, and exhortation in the area of how to put this teaching into practical action (practice). Words and phrases are very important since they convey these truths and their practice in related thoughts.

Connective words become important because they indicate what thoughts are directly related to one another and their importance in priority to each other. Spiritual truth is conceptual and abstract, so it requires explanation and references that give insight and understanding into them. There is usually a summarizing statement or reason for the epistle being written that follows the initial greeting.

Whether the thoughts expressed are doctrinal or personal messages, it all needs to be seen and understood from the point of view of the author and original recipients of the epistle. Knowing the historical context of each epistle is both vital and valuable. Some of the historical context can be found within the epistle, but additional insight can be gained from study Bibles or other references.

Keep in mind that most epistles provide instruction and insight into the truth of the Gospel. This was necessary since many of the new churches were populated by Gentiles (non-Jewish people) who were unfamiliar with the Law, the distinction of the New Covenant of grace, and the significance of the Messiah, among other things.

The Gentiles were primarily pagan and polytheistic (having many gods) in their values and belief systems. Today this would apply to any segment of the population involved with naturalism, hedonism, materialism, agnosticism, pantheism, new-age and eastern philosophies and religion, and so on.

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR TITUS

CHAPTER 1

1. How does Paul describe himself in his greeting to Titus? How is Titus described by Paul and what do you think he is referring to?
2. What 3 things does Paul speak of in verse 1? How would you explain these things to a non-believer IYOW?
3. How is the Gospel expressed within verses 2–3? What specific things are mentioned? How can it be seen in the Bible that God promised eternal life before time began?
4. What are the 2 things Paul is expecting Titus to do in verse 5? How are these 2 things inter-related and connected to what is said in verse 1?
5. What are the many qualifications given for elders (overseers) in verses 6–9? What are specific things that should be present, and what behaviors are not to be present?
6. What are these qualifications directly related to? How can they be explained IYOW? What specific things is an elder (overseer) expected to do, or be able to do?
7. How are these qualities something that should be true for every believer? Do you personally struggle with any of these things or areas in your own life?
8. What are the specific reasons why this church needs the ministry of faithful elders/overseers? What is Titus exhorted to do in response to these issues?
9. What do you think Paul means by what he says in verse 15? How is this related to why there is a need for godly leaders?
10. What does your own life-example reflect to others (be specific)? What practical insights have you learned that you see can be applied in your daily life?

CHAPTER 2

Vss 1-10—

1. What are the 5 specific groups of people spoken of in vss1-10? What is Titus exhorted to do in regards to these different people groups?
2. How are these verses directly related to the previous chapter's exhortations? How would you characterize the types of things spoken to each of the groups?
3. What are the specific exhortations and expectations for each of the groups of people? How are these different people groups interconnected or related?
4. What are the underlying, general, and recurring themes in all these exhortations? What is the expected result of all these expectations?
5. Which of these people groups do *you* fit into or relate to best? How well do you fulfill these same expectations in your own life currently?
6. What are practical and specific things that need to change in your own life? What are specific ways these changes can be made in your life?

Vss 11-15—

7. What is being spoken of in verses 11-14? How are these verses directly related to the first 10 verses of Chapter 2?
8. IYOW—What is being described specifically in verse 11? How is verse 11 the basis for how believers are to live in this world?
9. What are some accounts in the Gospels that help us see this? How do the contrasting statements in verse 12 help explain both the struggle and way of life of a believer?
10. What is verse 13 speaking of specifically? How does it fit in or correlate to what is said in verses 11-12?
11. What is being described and explained in verse 14? How does this relate to what's said in verse 12 and is this God's work or ours?
12. What is Paul's exhortation to Titus in verse 15? How is it an extension of verse 1?
13. Who do you think would be included and excluded in this exhortation?
14. How would you connect your own testimony with the Lord to these verses? How would you put verses 11-14 IYOW for sharing the Gospel with unbelievers?

Chapter 3

1. What is Titus to remind people to do in vss 1-2? What are the 5 specific things mentioned? How are these things directly related to the Gospel stated in both 2:11-14 and 3:4-7?
2. How are vss 1-2 directly related to verse 3, and what point do you think Paul is making? How does verse 3 directly lead into vss 4-7? What is the main theological truth of vss 1-8?
3. What are the specific elements of the gospel in vss 4-7? What is included in these verses, but not mentioned in the 2 other declarations of the gospel in 1:2-3 and 2:11-14?
4. How do vss 4-7 provide a more complete, extended expression of the purpose of the gospel? What is the main point of vs 8 and how does it express the whole theme of this epistle?
5. What are vss 9-11 speaking about? What other verses are they directly connected to in Titus? What sin condemns these people? How is it different from what is usually considered sin?
6. What is the essence or general idea of the closing in vss 12-15? What are specific, practical things mentioned in vss 12-15 that tie in directly with vs 8?
7. Reviewing the epistle of Titus—what single truth has the Lord spoken and made known to you? What one practical truth are you able to take from Titus and put into practice in daily life?

IYOW = *In Your Own Words*