

*From
Grace
Flows
Goodness*



THE LETTER TO TITUS

Personal Devotions

Use this book to help you read your Bible every day. You will find a guide that will help you read through scriptures related to our sermon series, as well as the book of Proverbs. Scribble down your thoughts and questions and remember to pray and ask God to speak to you by his Spirit, through his Word.

Community Groups

Take this booklet with you to your Community Group each week. Our study material is based on the Sunday bible talks and have been provided for each week, so you could use this space to write down comments, questions and prayer points from the study that week.

Church

Bring the booklet along to church! Each week there is space in this booklet for sermon notes. Engaging with the sermon and jotting down notes is an awesome way to retain God's word and the lessons each week.

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* Thanks to our friends at Bridge Church for sharing their studies in Titus with us for this term.

Overview of Titus

Author

In the very first verse, Paul identifies himself as the author of the letter to his co-worker Titus, calling himself a “servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ” (Titus 1:1). Despite two centuries of questioning the Pauline authorship of all the Pastoral Epistles (1 & 2 Timothy & Titus), the text clearly claims to be from Paul, its theology aligns with Paul’s other letters, and any difference in style is certainly conceivable given the difference in situation and genre.

Who is Titus?

Titus was Paul’s beloved “partner and co-worker” (2 Cor 8:23), who seems to have been converted through his ministry (Titus 1:4). He had a Greek Gentile background but was not forced to be circumcised (Gal 2:3), in keeping with the Christian agreement to not require Gentiles to follow Jewish law before becoming followers of Christ (Acts 15).

Titus accompanied Paul to Jerusalem at the time of the apostolic council (Acts 15:2, Gal 2:1-3). Titus also accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey, during which the apostle sent him and two others to Corinth with the letter we call 2 Corinthians (2 Cor 2:12-13; 7:5-7; 7:13-15). He spent much time in Corinth and was involved with the church there (2 Cor 8:6), while continuing to be actively involved in Paul’s ministry. He even organized a fundraising effort for the needy saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:10-24) and urged the Corinthians to fulfill their promise to give to the poor.

When Paul left Crete to go to Nicopolis in Achaia (southern Greece) (Titus 3:12), he put Titus in charge of the churches at Crete. Paul left Titus in Crete to use his administrative gifts to consolidate the work there. Artemas or Tychicus probably relieved Titus in Crete so he could join Paul in Nicopolis, from where Paul sent him to Dalmatia (former Yugoslavia) (2 Tim 4:10). Tradition says that Titus returned to Crete and died there.

Paul clearly held Titus in a position of great respect as a friend and fellow worker for the gospel, praising Titus for his affection, his earnestness, and his bringing of comfort to others. However, at the end of 2 Timothy there is some question over Titus’ loyalty to Paul.

Place & Date:

The traditional understanding has been that Titus, like 1 Timothy, was written in the time between Paul’s first imprisonment (Acts 28) and a second imprisonment which led to his death. In this case, Titus would have been written from Nicopolis around AD63, around the same time as 1 Timothy. This is plausible in light of the strong similarities between the letters.

After leaving Timothy in Ephesus to minister there, Paul accompanied Titus to the island of Crete, where he intended Titus to lead and organize the island’s churches in their early years of existence. While the gospel had no doubt spread to Crete soon after Peter’s sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2:11), Paul and Titus likely did a good deal of evangelism on the island in the weeks before Paul commissioned Titus to a leadership position there.

Genre:

In form and content, Titus is readily identifiable as a New Testament epistle, with sections devoted to praise, instruction, moral exhortations, and closing. Like 1 and 2 Timothy, this is sometimes called a “Pastoral Epistle” because it is addressed to someone who had pastoral leadership responsibilities in a local congregation. Paul unpacks as many instructions as he can in a letter that is short by NT epistolary standards. Paul writes in a curt, authoritative, direct and business-like manner, using the imperative mood to produce a tone of urgency.

Setting:



The Setting of Titus

c. A.D. 62–64

Paul likely wrote Titus during a fourth missionary journey not recorded in the book of Acts. Writing from an unknown location, he instructed Titus in how to lead the churches on the island of Crete. The churches there had apparently been founded by Paul.

Background:

Paul had recently completed a journey to Crete. Paul’s typical pattern was to ensure churches were properly overseen and structured (see Acts 14:21-23), thus Paul left Titus in Crete to oversee the newly established churches there.

The motivation for writing seems to be the existence of false teachers amid the fledgling churches (Titus 1:10-16). Hence the description of elders (Titus 1:5–9) as well as the descriptions of proper Christian living (Titus 2:1–10; 3:1–3), appear to be worded for intentional contrast with these opponents. The content of the false teaching is not made explicit (as in 1 Timothy). There appears to be a significant Jewish element to the teaching since the opponents arise from “the circumcision party” (Titus 1:10) and are interested in “Jewish myths” (Titus 1:14) and perhaps ritual purity (Titus 1:15).

Paul’s primary concern is with the practical effect of the false teaching. In spite of their concern for ritual purity, the adherents of the false teaching did not live lives of godliness flowing out of the gospel, but instead lived in a way that proved they did not know God (Titus 1:16).

This false teaching, which in some way allowed for ungodliness, would have found a welcome home in Crete, which was proverbial in the ancient world for immorality.

But Paul expected the gospel, even in Crete, to produce real godliness in everyday life. In dealing with the false teaching, Paul also provides Titus a portrait of a healthy church. He describes:

- proper leadership (Titus 1:5–9);
- proper handling of error (Titus 1:10–16; 3:9–11);
- proper Christian living (esp. important for new believers in an immoral milieu; Titus 2:1–10; 3:1–2), and;
- the gospel as the source of godliness (Titus 2:11–14; 3:3–7).

The churches on Crete were just as susceptible to false teachers as any other church, so Paul directed Titus to establish a group of faithful elders to oversee the doctrinal purity and good conduct of the believers in Crete. Paul exhorted Titus to “speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1), a clear direction that this should be the young pastor’s primary role. Paul gave instructions to Titus about the roles of specific groups of people - older men, older women, young women, young men, and slaves - as well as general instructions to all believers about their conduct. Right living was essential because Christ “gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed,” saving us “by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit” (Titus 2:14; 3:5).

Titus still speaks to us today about the power of God in the life of a believer to produce godliness that makes the gospel attractive.

Why is Titus so important?

The doctrine of the incarnation is central to this letter. Three summaries of the incarnation provide a framework within which the Christian can view the work of God in the world and in individual lives (Titus 1:1-4, 2:11-14, 3:4-7). All three passages involve the manifestation, or appearance, of God in Christ, rooting the Christian faith in the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Only when God the Son took on human flesh in the person of Jesus was the believer’s faith in God made sure. In other words, since God poured out His grace on all humanity, He cleanses His people from their sin and purifies believers for Himself. This grace of God instructs us to live upright and godly lives in this present age (2:11–3:8).

Paul understood that when a body of believers embraces sound doctrine, the result is changed and purified lives that produce “good deeds” (mentioned in Titus 2:7, 14; 3:8, 14). God’s grace is thus the motivation for all good deeds.

How do I apply this?

The book of Titus reminds us that our beliefs about God impact every decision we make. Doctrine really does matter! Paul made clear that a church that teaches and preaches sound doctrine will see results in the lives of its people. Not only will people be saved from their sins, but God’s grace will also motivate them to live out that saving faith with renewed and purified lives.

So instead of focusing on forms of worship – music styles, building designs etc. – we must focus on right beliefs leading to right behaviour. Without right doctrine, our foundations are shifting and sinking sand. Nothing is more significant than a solid foundation in Christ. Nothing is more motivational than grace to live a life of good deeds.

Study #1

Titus 1:1-9

Study Focus:

- *Why biblical leadership is different.*
- *The importance of character for every believer.*

Daily Bible Readings:

- Monday: Titus 1:1-4
- Tuesday: Titus 1:5-7
- Wednesday: Titus 1:8-9
- Thursday: Proverbs 1 & 2
- Friday: Proverbs 3

1. The letter that we're about to read this term (Titus) is a personal letter from a spiritual father to a spiritual son (v4). As we start this term together, share with the group about someone who has been important in your faith journey. Why were they important? How did they encourage / challenge / inspire you? Why do you respect that person?

Read Titus 1:1-9 slowly by yourself for five minutes.

2. Mark up the text: underline, circle, questions / exclamation marks and note anything that you want to talk through.
3. Discuss the qualifications that Paul mentions here for elders. Why are these the things that should mark an elder (or Christian leader)?
4. It feels like we're living in a season of Christian leaders falling. Why do you think this is so common?

5. If Christian leadership is primarily about character, where does gifting or ability come into the conversation?

6. This is the character benchmark for leaders, but it's not just reserved for leaders. Character matters for everyone. If we've got recurring sin in our life, or some part of your character that isn't Christ-like, how do we grow through that?

7. Looking ahead over the next 12 months: what do you hope to be different about who you are as a follower of Jesus? What part of your character are you praying into?

8. As an application of this text, take a minute to a send a message of encouragement (or write a letter afterwards) to a leader or legend of integrity that you're thankful for.

PRAYER

- Thank God for the people who have impacted your Christian journey.
- Pray for each other, and the next leg of each other's spiritual journey with Jesus.
- If you're in a larger group, break into smaller groups to share honestly and vulnerable about character, repentance and sin – and then pray for one another.
- Pray for friends and family who don't yet know Jesus – that you might have an evangelistic opportunity to be a part of their spiritual journey moving forward.

5. Mahatma Ghandi famously once said, "I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians." Why do you think Christians fail to match their life to their beliefs?

6. We can't just look at other people's 'specks' and neglect our own 'planks' (Matt 7:3-5). Where do we (collectively or personally) fall into hypocrisy?

7. Read Proverbs 4:23 (a verse well worth memorising). Everything flows from our hearts. What are we doing and what will we do, to guard our hearts?

PRAYER

- Pray for God to reveal the places of our hypocrisy, and to strengthen our understanding of truth.
- Pray that we would be people who don't just believe the truth but live it out.
- Pray for the specific ways we want to guard our hearts.

Study #3

Titus 2:1-10

Study Focus:

- *Intergenerational discipleship within the church.*
- *Discipleship through relationships*

Daily Bible Readings:

- Monday: Titus 2:1-2 & Proverbs 9
- Tuesday: Titus 2:3-5 & Proverbs 10
- Wednesday: Titus 2:6-8 & Proverbs 11
- Thursday: Titus 2:9-10 & Proverbs 12
- Friday: Titus 2:1-10 & Proverbs 13

1. What relationships have impacted your faith the most? Share together.

Read Titus 2:1-10 slowly by yourself for five minutes.

2. Mark up the text: underline, circle, questions / exclamation marks and note anything that you want to talk through.

3. What does Paul choose these specific characteristics for each demographic? Are those the same qualities we should be teaching today (eg. women to be busy at home, slaves to be subject to masters)?

- Older men

- Olden women

- Young women

- Young men

- Slaves

4. There is a principle here in Titus as Paul outlines how older women speak into the lives of younger women (v4), and Titus sets an example for the younger men (v7). Do you think our church does a good job of modelling this? Discuss together.
5. How have you been blessed by older Christians who have walked ahead of you?
6. So much of discipleship is modelling from more mature believers. Yet so often we naturally drift to silos of the same demographic. How could we intentionally create more opportunities for intergenerational discipleship / relationships in, (a) our congregation, and (b) our church more broadly?
7. Pause and think for a minute – who is someone older you could learn from? Who is someone younger you could invest in? Consider a practical next step to get the ball rolling.

PRAYER

- Ask God to provide someone who can speak into your life in a Titus 2 way.
- Pray for our communities, congregations, and church – that we would grow in this.
- Pray for a chance to model / disciple another believer.

Study #4

Titus 2:11-15

Study Focus:

- *The connection between grace and godliness.*

Daily Bible Readings:

- Monday: Titus 2:11-15
- Tuesday: Proverbs 14 & 15
- Wednesday: Proverbs 16
- Thursday: Proverbs 17
- Friday: Titus 2:11-15 & Proverbs 18

1. Looking over your Christian life, what things have contributed to your growth over this time?

Read Titus 2:11-15 slowly by yourself for five minutes.

2. Mark up the text: underline, circle, questions / exclamation marks and note anything that you want to talk through.

3. If the grace of God teaches us to say no to all the stuff in v12, why is it still so hard to say no?

4. How do Christians change? What role does God play? What role do we play? Discuss together how you've seen this play out in your own life.

5. Share some of the ways you've grown in godliness or changed to be like Christ over your Christian life. If it's too uncomfortable to talk about yourself, encourage others in your group if you've seen them grow to be more like Christ.

6. Imagine you've got a newish believer in front of you who is wrestling with sin and wants to change. How are you going to counsel and encourage them in this?

7. What role does hope play in your Christian journey? How do you stoke and fan hope into flame in your life?

PRAYER

- Pray for strength, grace, and self-control in your fight against sin, and deep conviction to keep fighting!
- Ask for an increased vision of God and hope for the future.

Study Focus:

- *Praying for our brothers and sisters in Christ in nations where they are persecuted for faith in Christ.*

Daily Bible Readings:

- Monday: Proverbs 19
- Tuesday: Proverbs 20
- Wednesday: Proverbs 21
- Thursday: Proverbs 22
- Friday: Luke 9:18-27

This weekend in church we will be welcoming **Dave Miers** from Open Doors (and 'Christ our Refuge Church' in Brisbane). Open Doors seek to partner with churches across the world to stand with, support, and pray with Christians living in persecuted nations.

Open Doors is one of our mission partners at St Faith's.

This week in our Community Groups, we want to stop together, and focus in on praying for Christians in nations where daily they face all kinds of trials and persecutions for following Jesus – even death. Your leader will encourage you to pick one country from the Open Doors World Watch List, read up during the week about some of the challenges they face as Christians in that nation, inform your group, then help them to pray for Christians in that nation. You can find more information here:

<https://www.opendoors.org.au/world-watch-list/>

As you come together to pray, start by reading **Luke 9:18-27** and consider together the cost of following Jesus in our part of the world.

Study #5

Titus 3:1-8

Study Focus:

- *Living lives of good*
- *Living gospel-rich lives.*

Daily Bible Readings:

- Monday: Titus 3:1-2
- Tuesday: Proverbs 23
- Wednesday: Titus 3:3-8 & Proverbs 24
- Thursday: Proverbs 25
- Friday: Titus 3:1-8 & Proverbs 26

1. Think of someone who, for you, embodies someone living their whole life for Jesus. What is it about them that makes you think that? Share together.

Read Titus 3:1-8 slowly by yourself for five minutes.

2. Mark up the text: underline, circle, questions / exclamation marks and note anything that you want to talk through.

3. Do you think Christians are known for being 'good' people? Why or why not?

4. It sounds simply, but it's not. What is 'good'?

5. 'Be ready to do what is good'. Like an athlete on the bench is always warmed up and ready to jump into the game, we need to be always poised to lean into opportunities for good. What does

Study #6

Titus 3:9-15

Study Focus:

- *Living productive lives of goodness, to the glory of God.*

Daily Bible Readings:

- Monday: Titus 3:9-11
- Tuesday: Titus 3:12-15 & Proverbs 27
- Wednesday: Proverbs 28
- Thursday: Proverbs 29 & 30
- Friday: Titus 3:9-15 & Proverbs 31

1. We're at the end of Titus. What have you learnt? What have you loved?

Read Titus 3:9-15 slowly by yourself for five minutes.

2. Mark up the text: underline, circle, questions / exclamation marks and note anything that you want to talk through.
3. What are the controversies, or unprofitable/useless things that modern Christians can fixate on (v9-11)?
4. The call is to live productive lives of goodness (v14). What do you think a productive Christian life should look like? Especially considering the North Shore Sydney context, what could it look like?
5. I love the language of v14, 'our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good'. The Christian life is a journey. Sanctification is a process. We rely on grace at the start and we

rely on grace to the very end. All that being said, we keep pressing forward for Christ. Being honest on a scale of 1 to 7, where are you at in living a productive life of goodness (and why)?

6. Application often feels like adding more and more on top of our already exhausted lives. Yet Jesus talked about his way as a light and easy yoke full of rest (Matt 11:28-30). We may not need to add but reimagine our day-to-day lives to look like Jesus' way in our busy Sydney context.

So, take a few minutes to reflect on the spheres of life below. Write some notes in your booklet or on your phone. Then share with each other your reflections and pray specifically for each other.

- Work: what we do, how we do it, who we do it with.
- Hospitality: our homes, our table, our weekly life with others.
- Finances: our spending, generosity, and giving.
- Church: prioritising the people not programs.
- Family: relational richness, making room for others.
- Time: entertainment, extra-curriculars, margin.
- Friendship: depth and breadth.
- Serving: where we serve, and how we serve.
- Rest: pausing, ceasing and delighting.

pedals!

What's your next step in pedals!

Name	Friend	Next Step



Pray for their salvation. "Please soften:s heart so they accept you as their saviour".



Pray that God gives you an **Evangelistic Opportunity**.
"Please give me an opportunity to talk about You with"



Do they know you're a Christian? If not, **Drop** a Christian word in a sentence. "How was your weekend?.... I went to church...."
Do they know any other Christians? If not, **WHO** would be a good person to introduce them to? **Who** might they get along with? **And HOW** would you introduce them? For a social, coffee, beer, BBQ...? **WHEN** could you arrange this?



Ask. Have you asked them what they believe? If they've had any church experiences?
If it seems too soon for a spiritual convo, have you asked them what their interests are? Have you asked them **WHY** they like those interests? Have you asked them deeper questions? Have you shown a deeper and genuine interest in them?



Listen. Have you listened to their points of view? Their interests? Their struggles? Their loves? Their hates? Their beliefs? Their issues with Christianity?



Shore. Have you shared with them why you're a Christian? What it means to be a Christian? The difference that Jesus has made in your life?



Invite. Have you invited them to hear more? What do you think would be best for them? Alpha? Read the Word 121? Read a book or listen to a podcast in their own time? Come to church?

Notes & Prayer Points



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