

TITUS

1 From Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. I encourage God's own people to have more faith and to understand the truth about religion.

² Then they will have the hope of eternal life that God promised long ago. And God never tells a lie! ³ So, at the proper time, God our Savior gave this message and told me to announce what he had said. ⁴ Titus, because of our faith, you are like a son to me. I pray that God our Father and Christ Jesus our Savior will be kind to you and will bless you with peace!

What Titus Was To Do in Crete

⁵ I left you in Crete to do what had been left undone and to appoint leaders for the churches in each town. As I told you, ⁶ they must have a good reputation and be faithful in marriage. Their children must be followers of the Lord and not have a reputation for being wild and disobedient. ⁷ Church officials are in charge of God's work, and so they must also have a good reputation. They must not be bossy, quick-tempered, heavy drinkers, bullies, or dishonest in business. ⁸ Instead, they must be friendly to strangers and enjoy doing good things. They must also be sensible, fair, pure, and self-controlled. ⁹ They must stick to the true message they were taught, so that their good teaching can help others and correct everyone who opposes it. ¹⁰ There are many who don't respect authority, and they fool others by talking nonsense. This is especially true of some Jewish followers. ¹¹ But you must make them be quiet. They are after money, and they upset whole families by teaching

what they should not. ¹² It is like one of their own prophets once said, "The people of Crete always tell lies. They are greedy and lazy like wild animals."

¹³ That surely is a true saying. And you should be hard on such people, so you can help them grow stronger in their faith. ¹⁴ Don't pay any attention to any of those senseless Jewish stories and human commands. These are made up by people who won't obey the truth. ¹⁵ Everything is pure for someone whose heart is pure. But nothing is pure for an unbeliever with a dirty mind. That person's mind and conscience are destroyed. ¹⁶ Such people claim to know God, but their actions prove that they really don't. They are disgusting. They won't obey God, and they are too worthless to do anything good.

Instructions for Different Groups of People

2 Titus, you must teach only what is correct. ² Tell the older men to have self-control and to be serious and sensible. Their faith, love, and patience must never fail. ³ Tell the older women to behave as those who love the Lord should. They must not gossip about others or be slaves of wine. They must teach what is proper, ⁴ so the younger women will be loving wives and mothers. ⁵ Each of the younger women must be sensible and kind, as well as a good homemaker, who puts her own husband first. Then no one can say insulting things about God's message. ⁶ Tell the young men to have self-control in everything. ⁷ Always set a good example for others. Be sincere and serious when you teach. ⁸ Use clean language that no one can criticize. Do this, and your

enemies will be too ashamed to say anything against you. ⁹Tell slaves always to please their owners by obeying them in everything. Slaves must not talk back to their owners ¹⁰or steal from them. They must be completely honest and trustworthy. Then everyone will show great respect for what is taught about God our Savior.

God's Kindness and the New Life

¹¹ God has shown us how kind he is by coming to save all people. ¹² He taught us to give up our wicked ways and our worldly desires and to live decent and honest lives in this world. ¹³ We are filled with hope, as we wait for the glorious return of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He gave himself to rescue us from everything that is evil and to make our hearts pure. He wanted us to be his own people and to be eager to do right. ¹⁵ Teach these things, as you use your full authority to encourage and correct people. Make sure you earn everyone's respect.

Doing Helpful Things

3 Remind your people to obey the rulers and authorities and not to be rebellious. They must always be ready to do something helpful ² and not say cruel things or argue. They should be gentle and kind to everyone. ³ We used to be stupid, disobedient, and foolish, as well as slaves of all sorts of desires and pleasures. We were evil and jealous. Everyone hated us, and we hated everyone. ⁴ God our Savior showed us how good and kind he is. ⁵ He saved us

because of his mercy, and not because of any good things that we have done. God washed us by the power of the Holy Spirit. He gave us new birth and a fresh beginning. ⁶ God sent Jesus Christ our Savior to give us his Spirit. ⁷ Jesus treated us much better than we deserve. He made us acceptable to God and gave us the hope of eternal life. ⁸ This message is certainly true. These teachings are useful and helpful for everyone. I want you to insist that the people follow them, so that all who have faith in God will be sure to do good deeds. ⁹ But don't have anything to do with stupid arguments about ancestors. And stay away from disagreements and quarrels about the Law of Moses. Such arguments are useless and senseless. ¹⁰ Warn troublemakers once or twice. Then don't have anything else to do with them. ¹¹ You know that their minds are twisted, and their own sins show how guilty they are.

Personal Instructions and Greetings

¹² I plan to send Artemas or Tychicus to you. After he arrives, please try your best to meet me at Nicopolis. I have decided to spend the winter there. ¹³ When Zenas the lawyer and Apollos get ready to leave, help them as much as you can, so they won't have need of anything. ¹⁴ Our people should learn to spend their time doing something useful and worthwhile. ¹⁵ Greetings to you from everyone here. Greet all of our friends who share in our faith. I pray that the Lord will be kind to all of you!