

Lesson #15

PREPARATION FOR LESSON: Read Philemon – study that part of the lesson. Then read Titus and study it.

ORDER OF PAUL'S LATER WRITINGS

Eph, Phil., Col. Philemon	1 Tim. Titus	2 Tim.
AD 58-60 House Arrest (Rome)	60-66 Liberty	67-68 Imprisoned (Rome)

BACKGROUND

Paul: under house arrest in Rome c. 60 AD.

Onesimus: A runaway slave from Colosse who had stolen money and come to Rome.

Thru Paul, he believes in Jesus and becomes Paul's assistant. His name means *useful*.

Philemon: A wealthy believer and businessman in Colosse; he is the *master* of Onesimus.

Philemon had also believed in Jesus thru Paul's ministry and now is a church leader. The church meets in his home. Paul and Philemon are close friends.

Sometime after Onesimus becomes a believer, he tells Paul of his past. Altho Paul wants to keep him in Rome, he knows the law says he must send him back. But he also knows that a slave owner has the right to severely punish or kill a runaway slave. So Paul writes as a friend of both the master and the slave. Rather than command, he asks Philemon to welcome Onesimus back, not as a slave, but as a brother. He is asking Philemon to free him and hire him as an employee. The first job he should give him is to send him back to Rome to assist Paul. Paul offers to reimburse the amount Onesimus stole, but then reminds him how much he, Philemon, is in debt to him spiritually.

In the Christian life, when people genuinely repent and acknowledge their wrong, we are to extend forgiveness.

In regards to slavery, Paul knows it is a social evil. No one has a right to own other people. As long as Christians own slaves, they have no right to tell the world what to do. Paul's responsibility is to teach believers what they should do.

This note was written c. 60 AD, along with Ephesians and Colossians. They were sent with Tychicus and Onesimus.

THEME Forgiveness

OUTLINE

Thanksgiving	vss. 1-7
Appeal	vss. 8-16
Requests	vss. 17-25

APPLICATION:

This book gives a permanent example of what slave owners should do - free their slaves and hire them as employees.

This book also gives a spiritual picture of ourselves.

- God created us for a relationship with Him.
- In willful disobedience we ran away and robbed Him of praise and honor.
- Jesus made the payment for our willful disobedience.
- When we accept His payment, He says to His Father,
*Where they have wronged You, whatever they owe You, put it on MY account.
Welcome him, receive her as You would receive Me.*
- We were separated from God for a while.
Because we accepted the payment of Jesus, we can now be with Him forever.

TITUS

THEME Instruction for a Christian leader: correct teaching and correct living need to be emphasized

The words *Doctrine/Teaching* are used 7 times; *Doing good* - 7 times; *Self-controlled* - 5 times.

OUTLINE

Organizing a local church	1
Teaching the people	2-3



BACKGROUND for the book of Titus

Titus was a young Greek man who had believed in Jesus thru the preaching of Paul. He accompanied Paul on some of his journeys. Because of his assertive personality, he was often sent as Paul's trouble-shooter when there were problems.

About a year after Paul was freed from house arrest, he and Titus start a new work on the island of Crete. Over the next year, there are believers; churches are started. But these people do not have a background in the Old Testament. They have a culture that makes it hard for them to mature and develop in their Christian life. They need a lot more training and experience before any of them are qualified to be church leaders. Paul wants to get back to the churches in Ephesus and northern Greece. So he leaves the island while Titus stays to finish up the things that need to be done.

The people in Crete are dishonest, greedy, lazy, gluttonous, and do not care how they get their money. They have been this way for at least 10 generations. The following quotes from history verify this.

- *Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons.* Epimenides in 600 BC, as quoted in Titus 1:12.
- *They are the only ones in whose estimate no profit is disgraceful.* Polybius in 175 BC.
- *Only the people of Crete consider highway robbery an honorable profession.* Cicero in 75 BC.

Their way of life created a new verb in the Greek language. To *cretize* meant to cheat, lie, or deceive. New believers on the island of Crete have a background and culture that will be difficult to overcome. Correct teaching and belief are essential in a church, but they are never enough. There must also be changed lives. The evidence of godliness is not just in their words, but in their actions. They need to focus on correct living.

After Titus appoints local church leaders, he is to meet Paul in Nicopolis (western Greece). This letter is probably written from Macedonia c. fall of 63 AD.

EXPLANATION of 2:5 *Train younger women ...to be subject to their husbands.*

This does not mean to accept abuse or be a doormat. It means they should learn how to work with and not against their husbands - not to continually put them down in front of others. They need to learn how to respond so they can work as a team. It is always understood a wife cannot stay if she or the children are being abused.

DEVELOPED OUTLINE**Chpt. 1**

Titles of church leaders: two Greek words are used interchangeably for the same position of local church leaders.

presbuteros: elder, pastor.

episkopos: overseer, pastor.

Qualifications of church leaders: the title *elder* shows he should be older and mature.

No accusation of home life - *one wife* at a time; no bigamy or sexual activity outside of marriage, using God's definition of marriage - only between a man and a woman.

No accusation of their personal life: can no longer live like the typical people of Crete.

No accusation of their teaching: they must know what they believe and why.

Responsibilities of church leaders: the title *overseer* describes what he should do.

To encourage/motivate others thru right teaching; to refute false teachers, showing why they are wrong.

Chpt. 2

Teach correctly: all church members are to receive teaching; older women are to have a teaching ministry in the Church; they are to teach younger women.

Live correctly: for 3 reasons...

... so that no one will discredit Scripture, critics will be silenced and teaching about God is attractive.

Hope in the Greek language means *certainty*.

God's grace provides salvation thru Jesus, the ability to live the Christian life, and certainty that Jesus will return.

Chpt. 3

We were born connected to a sin nature that automatically made us rebellious. When we accept the payment of Jesus, God the Father disconnects us from the sin nature and connects us to a new nature, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

No one ever needs to be a prisoner of their past. "Baggage" passed down thru our families can be stopped.

By the power of the Holy Spirit within us and help from others, **we** can be set free. Our lives **can** change! This is good news - it is part of the Gospel message.

