

Summary of Titus and Philemon

Notes for 21 Oct

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Read: [Titus](#), [Philemon](#)

Titus

Titus was a Greek, apparently from Crete who is said to have studied Greek philosophy and poetry in his early years. He served as Paul's secretary and interpreter. In the year 49CE Titus accompanied Paul to the Council held at Jerusalem.

Titus was a troubleshooter, peacemaker, administrator, and missionary.

The book of Titus along with 1 and 2 Timothy are called the pastoral epistles because they deal principally with heresies and church discipline.

The letter urges Titus to appoint worthy elders to positions of responsibility, to preach sound doctrine, and to exemplify in his own life the virtues that are expected of all Christians. It works against the disruptive influence of "Jewish Myths" and teachings put forward by "those of the circumcision".

(A 4th Century CE epitaph from Crete identifies a Jewish woman named Sophie who is both elder and synagogue leader. Some churches in the 21st century still leave these rich qualities of at least half their congregation sitting in the pews, and both in leadership and pastoral quality, are the poorer for that.)

1. Titus 1:6-9.
Should these qualifications to be church elder apply today?
2. Titus 1:10,11.
To what extent should alternative views be tolerated by church leadership today?
3. Titus 1:12.
"Cretans are always liars, vicious brutes, lazy gluttons." Can this language be justified today?
4. Titus 2.
Do you think advice given in this chapter still applies today?
5. Titus 3, especially verse 5.
Do you think this chapter has got the balance of salvation by faith and the application of good works about right?
6. Titus 3:9.
Do we measure up to this in our discussions on Virtual Vestry?

Philemon

Philemon is the shortest of Paul's letters at 335 words.

It names a slave in a Christian household???

Paul wrote the letter from prison but there is some debate over which prison. Consequently, it is hard to date the letter. This is one of what is termed "captivity letters" because it was written from prison.

Apparently, some scholars inform us that the broad structure of the letter is consistent with Paul's style of writing.

Catherine mentioned last week about the love Paul had for Timothy. This may well have been replicated in his attitude towards Onesimus the slave, who may have served Paul while he was in prison.

If you can, please read the 335 words. We should perhaps discuss the tension in Paul's mind, perhaps wanting to free Onesimus from slavery and his civic duty towards Philemon.