



TITUS

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP

(3 BIBLE STUDIES)

EXAMINATION APPLICATION

BIBLE STUDIES

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THE SMALL PRINT

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Your Commitment

I would encourage you to make a commitment to attending your group regularly. I realise that sometimes there are things that get in the way, but do prioritise studying the Bible with other. This will involve sacrifice, and effective use of your time, but I really believe that in doing so you will get the most out of studying the Bible and praying together in your small group.

Your Contribution

What you put into the group is going to determine what you get out of the group. I encourage you to contribute honestly to the discussion and workings of the group. I understand people come from different backgrounds with unique personalities & life experiences. But, we all have a big part to play, so I encourage you to be fully present and take ownership of your group.

Your Preparation

These materials are primarily for use in preparing and/or leading group discussions, but they will also be useful in keeping your thoughts together in one place. The materials provide you with the passage so that you can identify and highlight recurring themes and note down your own thoughts and questions. Also, the materials include questions designed to provoke thought, and help you reflect on what the passage meant, both at the time it was written, and also what it means for us now.

I would encourage you to make good use of these materials, as doing so will help you contribute and get the most out of the group discussions. The materials are, however, only “tools” – they are there to help you, and not to restrict you, or force you to think in a certain manner. I want to see God speaking to you through these passages, and if the questions or notes don't help you, simply don't use them!

I have also included within these materials an introduction to the book. Make of this what you will, but I hope that it is helpful in getting you started with these studies!

Your Leadership

Here are some useful pointers in how to lead your Bible study group. Be aware that included in this study guide are more questions than you can possibly ask and/or answer in one session. They are not designed to be used rigidly, and there will rarely be a need to ask every question! Make sure that you spend some time praying at the start and ensure you read & re-read the passages as much as possible. In relation to the passages, then consider the suggested questions with an open mind. There is rarely “a single right answer” and I would encourage you to share your thoughts with your group.

I have also included a number of quotations from relevant Christian literature, most of which are readily available online if you want to do further thinking or study. My prayer is that as you study together you would grow to love Jesus and experience Him more deeply.

I would appreciate your feedback and suggestions on how to make these materials even better!

*Steve McClure
Spring 2019*

INTRODUCING TITUS

Titus was one of Paul's core team and he often spoke warmly of him. Paul described Titus as his *true son in the faith* (Titus 1:4) and his *partner and co-worker* (2 Cor 8:23a). Titus himself was a Gentile (Galatians 2:3) and given his Roman name, it is likely that he was a Latin speaker who was also clearly fluent in Greek. It seems likely that Titus became a Christian through Paul's ministry (probably during AD37-47), while Paul was developing the network of churches in Syria-Cilicia (Acts 15:23,41). Strangely, Titus is never mentioned in the book of Acts, but there are a surprising number of references to him in Paul's letters. The theme of Developing leadership is very significant in and through the life of Titus. Paul had clearly been investing in his life for some time and like many others he spends time travelling with Paul. This was one of Paul's main strategies for developing people. One of the reasons that Paul develops this team of people is that he is then able to minister more widely – he simply could not do it alone. He had to work through others.

1. Leaders stand firm: Strong Beginnings: In Acts 11:27-30 we hear about a trip that Paul made with Barnabas & Paul to Jerusalem. It seems to have been motivated by Agabus' prophecy of famine and the desire of the Christians in Antioch to send a gift to the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. Galatians 2:1-5 also speaks into this and presents a dual aim of ensuring that the gospel not be watered down by those who Paul said had infiltrated their ranks. Titus's big role here appears to do with the decision for him not to be circumcised. Interestingly, Paul had chosen to circumcise Timothy (Acts 16:1-3) in order to ensure that there be no stumbling block for the Jewish Christians to believe (see 1 Cor 9:19-23). At first glance it seems pretty inconsistent not to circumcise Titus also, however the situation here in Jerusalem is quite different. There was a principle at stake for those who sought to argue that the gentiles need to be circumcised. There must therefore have been immense pressure for Titus to be circumcised in order to keep the peace. Paul however writes that *"he was not compelled to be circumcised"* (v3). Both Paul and Titus stood firm, knowing that unlike in the case of Timothy, the truth of the gospel was at stake. There may well be times when we need to put aside the freedom we have in Christ for the sake of others perhaps on issues of food, drink or where we hang out with others. At the same time, there may well be other times when we too need to stand firm for the sake of the truth of the gospel. The good news of the gospel says that we are saved in Christ alone. Good works should flow from that Salvation, but they do not contribute to it.

2. Leaders keep the peace: Ambassador to Corinth: Paul founded the church in Corinth and spent 18 months developing the work there before moving on to Ephesus. During that time the door opened for Paul to visit Rome and so he set about making farewells to the churches and also to organise a gift for the church in Jerusalem. Titus played the role of Paul's ambassador to Corinth, and he dispatched him to set in motion this collection. The Corinthians, however, do not seem completely convinced and seek clarification from Paul. He therefore addresses this in the letter we know as 1 Corinthians, and he informs them that he is sending Timothy to check on how they were getting on (1 Cor 16:1-4). There were also worrying reports of a sex scandal in the church (1 Cor 5) and he asks them to remove the offender from the church. Timothy's visit does not appear to have been particularly successful because soon after Paul was forced to visit himself. This trip is described as a painful visit (2 Cor 2:1) and Paul himself appears to have been accused of seeking to fill his own pockets. Titus was tasked with delivering what was certainly a very difficult letter and undoubtedly, he would have found himself having to explain and defend it. Many tears had accompanied this letter but surprisingly the church responded favourably. While Paul waited to hear from Titus, he was clearly struggling and had *"no*

peace of mind" (2 Cor 2:12-13). However, once he had caught up with Titus there was much rejoicing. During this period of difficult tensions between Paul and the church in Corinth, the matter of the collection had been on hold. Using his gifts of tact and diplomacy, Titus was able to restore good relations and now once again he is able to exhort them to excel in their generosity. I think this valuable role played by Titus is easily missed, but it is clearly implied in 2 Corinthians 7-8. He was the peacemaker who was able to succeed in winning over the Corinthians, something both Timothy and Paul had struggled to do. We all need such people in our lives because such tensions are unavoidable. Differing personalities, opinions, visions and values can sometimes lead to conflict. In those times we need a Titus to help us navigate our way through!

3. Leaders develop others: Growing the work on Crete: Fast forward another 6 years (approx. AD63) and Titus is now on the island of Crete. Paul had founded the church in Crete and left Titus to finish the job by appointing elders in every town. Paul later sent a letter reminding him of the task at hand (Titus 1:5) and urging him to join him in Nicopolis (3:12-14). Paul said that he was sending either Artemas or Tychicus to take over so that Titus could be released. The letter is therefore very much about working in such a way that empowered others to lead. In chapter 1 Paul details the qualities required for those serving as elders. Then in chapter 2 Paul instructed Titus to teach sound doctrine and he detailed a plan for what to teach different generations of people within the churches: This is one of the clearest blueprints in the New Testament for intergenerational disciple-making. Paul is very deliberate in spelling out what Titus was to teach older men and women. Paul is very clear that the older women were in turn to teach the younger women and play a vital role in their discipleship. Paul also tells Titus what to teach the younger men but says nothing beyond teaching them self-control. The presence of the word '*similarly*' ties them into what Paul has said to the younger women and implies that he also sees the older men playing their part with the younger men also. In the final section of the letter (2:11-3:11) Paul spells out to Titus how Titus was to teach and model godly behaviour with those involved with the churches. The emphasis is twofold: Paul is very clear on what Titus should teach but he is also careful to ensure that he continues investing in Titus also. All in all, the example of the work in Crete was about developing others and specifically others who could lead and exert influence over the rest of the church. Organisational roles have their place but it's clear that Paul saw the need to foster a culture of disciple-making through the very fabric of the churches. It is in that sense that all of us are leaders and have the privilege to impact others.

In conclusion, I am really encouraged by the example of Paul and Titus. Firstly, I think it really demonstrates the power of investing in others who can, in good time, do likewise for others. Throughout history, this has been God's means to grow His people – often through ordinary people like us. Paul's interaction with Titus helps us see something of his strategy in developing others – he shows us what is possible. Secondly, we see the potential arising from ordinary people using the gifts God has given them. Titus proved very effective in his ministry both in Corinth (using his gifts of diplomacy and administration) and in Crete (using his gift as leader / pastor). He was a huge blessing in these places and likely further afield also. The final reference we have for Titus tells us that he had moved onto Dalmatia (2 Tim 4:10). It was the next step along the coast and maybe it was no surprise that this area became one of the most concentrated/populous Christian regions. Everywhere Titus went, he worked to lay foundations for faith and invested deeply in the people he was with. If we give our lives to such investment in others, the potential is huge – how are you going to invest your life?

Steve McClure, Winter 2022

STUDY 1 – TITUS 1 – STRUCTURED LEADERSHIP

INTRODUCTION: Paul had founded the church in Crete before leaving Titus to finish the job. Specifically, Paul charges him to set up local leadership structures to support the churches on Crete. In this first chapter Paul details the kind of qualities necessary for such organisational leadership roles.

SETTING THE SCENE: Considering a variety of leadership positions (church or workplace), what kind of gifts or qualities would you be looking for in a future leader? With those things in mind how would you go about preparing the next generation for the time when said position became available?

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INTRODUCING PAUL (v1-3): What impresses you about the way that Paul introduces himself in these verses? Why was this an important reminder both for Titus and for the Cretans? How would you summarise the task that Paul feels that he has been given as an Apostle of Jesus Christ?

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A MANDATE FOR TITUS (v4-5): What do these verses tell us about Titus and the task Paul had left him with in Crete? Once Titus' replacement (Artemas or Tychicus) arrived in Crete, Paul wanted Titus to join him in Nicopolis (3:12-13): how might this have shaped the nature and urgency of this task?

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REQUIREMENTS FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP (v6-8): What surprises you about what is or isn't included in Paul's list of requirements for these new leaders (see also 1 Timothy 3:1-13)? Why do you think Paul says so little about gifting and so much about character? For yourselves what might qualify/disqualify you from such leadership? Regarding the latter, how might you grow in these areas?

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THE TASK OF A LEADER (v9): How does this verse sum up what Paul sees as the main roles and responsibilities for a leader in the church? In what ways would the gifts and qualities mentioned in v6-8 help enable a leader to play these roles? What is your experience of contributing in these ways?

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CHALLENGING PEOPLE (v10-14): What is the reality of the work on the ground that necessitated such godly leadership in Crete (consider words like rebellious, meaningless, disrupting and dishonest gain)? How were the evident challenges in the church merely representative of the general character of the Cretans (v12-14)? What instructions does Paul give for how to deal with them?

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WALKING THE TALK (v15-16): Why is it so important to live out our beliefs consistently? In what ways were these corrupting influences failing to do this? What is your experience of such people and their impact in the Christian communities that you are (or have been) a part of?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: What is the overall picture of the quality of leadership and the resulting kind of Christian communities that Paul is eager to develop in Crete? What would be the big take away for you as you think about leadership both for yourself and for your community?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Praise God for your own leaders and for the roles they play in leading your Christian communities. Pray that God would raise up new leaders and help you play your part in leading others also. Ask God to protect His church from those with divisive and self-serving agendas.

MEMORY VERSE: TITUS 1:9

STUDY 2 – TITUS 2 – GENERATIONAL DISCIPLE-MAKING

INTRODUCTION: This second chapter contains very practical instructions about what Titus should teach different groups of people within the churches. In doing so there is the development of a culture of both grace (which is also a teacher), and disciple-making as the older invest deeply in the younger.

SETTING THE SCENE (v1): Paul often speaks about sound doctrine: what do you think he means by this somewhat lofty phrase (New Living Translation says: *Promote the kind of living that reflects right teaching*)? In contrast, how might we describe doctrine that is not sound (see 1:10-16)? Can you give practical examples of each from your own experience?

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FOR THE OLDER MEN (v2): Why do you think Paul instructs Titus to teach these specific things to the older men?? Is there anything missing that you might have expected to be there if he were writing to older men today? How might Titus (who was a much younger man) have felt about doing so?

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FOR THE OLDER WOMEN (v3-4a): Paul instructs Titus to similarly instruct the older women: what specific things does he mention and why are they so important both for the older women on Crete and in our communities today? Why was it so important that the older women taught the younger women?

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FOR THE YOUNGER WOMEN (v4b-5): How do you understand the very different list of things that were to be taught to the younger women? To what extent do you think Paul didn't want Titus from teaching the younger women directly (e.g., encouraging disciple-making culture or protecting Titus)?

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FOR THE YOUNGER MEN (v6-8): How do you understand Paul's implied comparison with what Titus was to teach others (similarly or in the same way)? Why is self-control and being an example of godly behaviour so important for this group? What things does Paul want Titus to model to them?

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FOR THE SLAVES (v9-10): Why was it important for slaves to be subject to their masters and work hard to please them and be proved trustworthy? In what ways might living this way make the teaching about God attractive? How would you apply this to our employee-employer relationships?

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THE ROLE OF GRACE (v11-15): In what ways do we search for salvation and how do they contrast with Paul's claim that the grace of God alone *offers salvation to all people* (v11)? What do you think it looks like for the grace of God to *teach us* to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions (v12a)?

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In saying no, what are the things that Paul wants us to say yes to instead? How often do we (or should we) think and be motivated by the return of our Saviour (our blessed hope)? What is your response to the strong mandate that Paul gives Titus here to teach, encourage and rebuke (v15)?

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DRAWING THINGS TOGETHER: What are the stand-out lessons for you about how a disciple-making church is to function in practice? How can you begin to make a greater contribution in building a disciple-making culture within the Body of Christ? In which of these areas do you also need to grow?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Thank God that His heart for us is not merely born out through structured leadership, but also through a disciple-making culture that runs throughout our Christian communities. Ask God to enable and equip you for play your part within the Body of Christ.

MEMORY VERSE: TITUS 2:15

STUDY 3 – TITUS 3 – SAVED FOR GODLINESS

INTRODUCTION: In the final chapter Paul outlines some things that he wants Titus to remind the churches about: these things include some specific instructions about godly behaviour (v1-2, 9-11) and a strong reminder of how Salvation had been worked out in their lives (v3-8).

SETTING THE SCENE: How would you summarise the message of the gospel? In your answer specifically address the following questions: What we were saved from? How and through whom were we saved? What were we saved for?

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OPENING INSTRUCTIONS (v1-2): Bearing in mind 1:12, why were these such important things for Titus to remind (and go on reminding) the churches in Crete? What might it look like to be ready to do whatever is good? How might living this way make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive?

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HOW WE ONCE WERE (v3): To what extent can you relate to Paul's strong words here about what we are like before we come to Christ? Specifically, would you say similar things about yourself? How does this help us understand Paul's commands in v1-2? In what ways are gratitude, humility, kindness & faith appropriate responses to such a verse?

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BUT...FOR THE LOVE OF GOD (v4-8): Why is Paul so eager to underline the fact that Christ saves us because of His mercy and not because of anything righteous on our part? How do you understand the implications Paul lays out here for all who have been saved (e.g., washed, renewed, justified, heirs)? In what sense are good works the *appropriate response to*, rather than *the means of salvation*?

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AVOID, WARN & REJECT (v9-11): Why are controversies, genealogies, arguments and quarrels so unprofitable in Paul's eyes (v9)? What do you imagine was the focus of such things? How do you react to Paul's process of escalating responses for those who are divisive (v10) and the strong words he has for such people (v11)? What is your own experience of the destructive nature of these things?

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SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS (v12-13): What do we know from elsewhere about the people mentioned in these verses (see Tychicus in Col 4:7 & Eph 6:21 or Apollos in Acts 18:24-28 & 1 Cor 3:4-6)? Why were these movements of people so important and what was Titus' role in facilitating them? How do such sections (which might initially seem insignificant) help ground the letter in reality?

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DEVOTED TO DOING GOOD (v14-15): What do you think it looks like to devote ourselves to doing good and what reasons does Paul give for doing so (v14)? Why is it important for Titus to finish his letter back where he started with the Grace of God (see 1:4)?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: As you reflect on the message of this chapter, what kind of impact would such words have had, both for Titus, and for those in the Cretan churches? What are the biggest take away lessons for you, both from this chapter, and from the letter as a whole?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Thank God for the wonder of His Grace worked out in our lives and for all that means for us who believe. Pray into some of Paul's specific instructions about how he wanted them, and by implication us, to live our lives in godliness, responding to the wonder of God's grace?

MEMORY VERSES: TITUS 3:4-5

MEMORY VERSES

STUDY 1: TITUS 1 – STRUCTURED LEADERSHIP

He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

Titus 1:9

STUDY 2: TITUS 2 – GENERATIONAL DISCIPLE-MAKING

These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

Titus 2:15

STUDY 3: TITUS 3 – SAVED FOR GODLINESS

⁴But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Titus 3:4-5