

## Titus 1:1-5 – Titus' Task in Crete

Titus along with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy make up what are known as the pastoral epistles. Most of Paul's New Testament letters, like Romans and Galatians, were written to churches. The pastoral epistles were written to two of Paul's trusted fellow servants in the Gospel. The content of the pastoral epistles, by nature, are at times different from Paul's letters to churches. The letter to Titus contains qualifications for elders, who are also referred to as overseers. Paul encouraged Titus to teach the truth and to combat false teachers. Sound teaching and doctrine produce godly living. As we saw in Galatians, true faith produces the fruit of the Spirit and good works.

### **Read Titus 1:1-5.**

We are told, with the first word, that Paul wrote the letter to Titus. Paul was not one of the original "twelve" apostles. How did Paul become an apostle? (1:1)

For about 1800 years, the church accepted that the pastoral epistles were in fact written by Paul the apostle. In the 1800s, some people began to raise questions about the authorship. One of the "problems" they saw was that a number of the words in the pastoral epistles didn't appear in Paul's other New Testament letters. We won't get into the arguments but I will say that it is shaky to point to word usage as the basis to question authorship. The content of the letters was different due to the recipients and purpose. These letters were also written toward the end of Paul's life. Surely someone who traveled as much as Paul over the years and who was exposed to various cultures and people would pick up some new words along the way. This "problem" and others raised by the servants of Satan can be debunked. We do not need to waste any more time talking about it. I can recommend some commentaries that thoroughly defend Paul's authorship.

How did Paul identify himself? What was Paul's mission as an apostle? (1:1)

What is the result of faith and knowledge of the truth? (1:1)

When did God promise eternal life? What did Paul say about the character of God? (1:2)

When was the promise of eternal life fully revealed? How was the promise revealed? (1:3)

What was Paul entrusted with? Who entrusted it to Paul? (1:3)

Titus is identified as the recipient of the letter. What do we know about Titus? We should at least remember Titus from Galatians chapter 2. What is the significance of the phrase “common faith”? (1:4)

“Grace and peace” was the traditional greeting. What words are used to describe Jesus? (1:4)

Why did Paul write this letter to Titus? The word “presbuteros” appears in this verse. Of course this word is where we get our English word “Presbyterian”. Why do we use the word “Presbyterian” to describe ourselves. (1:5)

Where was Paul when he wrote the letter? Titus was in Crete? Where is Crete? What do we know about Crete? (1:5)

When did Paul write this letter? One of the challenges of this letter is fitting it into a timeline. Some believe that it should fit within the timeline of Acts. The book of Acts never claimed to include all of Paul’s movements. One of the big discussions about the timing is whether or not Paul was released from his imprisonment in Rome, mentioned in Acts. If he was released, then there was a time in Paul’s life that was not covered by Acts. There is some evidence from early writings that Paul was released from prison. Many believe that Paul wrote the pastoral epistles after he was released from his imprisonment in Rome. Tradition has it that Paul was imprisoned a second time in Rome during the time of Nero and was executed then. Titus was obviously written while Paul was freely roaming about different countries.

Do you think that Paul had confidence that Titus would complete his mission? What had Titus done to give Paul confidence in him?