

TITUS

BACKGROUND:

In 63 A.D. Paul, the apostle, writes probably from Corinth to Titus, who had been left on the island of Crete in the Mediterranean to carry on the work there. Titus is not mentioned in Acts but the 13 references to him in Paul's epistles make it clear that he was one of Paul's closest and most trusted companions. An uncircumcised Greek convert of Paul, Titus was brought to Jerusalem by Paul, where he became a test case on the matter of Gentiles and liberty from the Law (Gal. 2:3). On Paul's third missionary journey Titus was sent on three occasions to Corinth. He is not mentioned again until Paul leaves him in Crete. Paul spoke to this reliable and gifted associate as his "brother," (II Cor. 2:13); his "partner and fellow worker," (II Cor. 8:23), and his "son" (Titus 1:4).

Titus was to begin the challenge of organizing new converts into local churches. Paul shares with him wisdom regarding church organization and administration. Leaders must be chosen on the basis of proven character and conduct; false teachers must be quickly detected and removed; all church members must be encouraged to live lives worthy of the gospel. Key verses are 1:5 and 3:8.

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF TITUS

- I. Appoint Elders ("overseers").
 - A. Introduction (1:1-4)
 - B. Ordain Qualified Elders (1:5-9).
 - C. Rebuke False Teachers (1:10-16).
- II. Set Things In Order (2:1-3:15).
 - A. Speak Sound Doctrine (2:1-15).
 - B. Maintain Good Works (3:1-11).
 - C. Conclusion (3:12-15).

PHILEMON

BACKGROUND:

Philemon is the shortest and most intimate of all of Paul's epistles. It is a masterpiece of diplomacy and tact in dealing with human

slavery. Onesimus, a slave of Philemon, had stolen from his master and run away to Rome where he came in contact with Paul, who was under house arrest. After his conversion, Onesimus faced another confrontation, this time with his master, Philemon. Paul sends him back with this letter in his hand, urging Philemon to extend forgiveness. Onesimus had left him as his slave and returns as his brother in the Lord. Paul says "Receive him as you would me." (v.17).

This letter was written and delivered at the same time as Paul's letter to the Colossians, in 60 or 61 A. D. It is one of the four prison epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon).

The key word of this epistle is "forgiveness." Christian love and courtesy dominate the letter. Unlike the other epistles, Paul wrote with his own hand (v.19). In this epistle we see the way that Christianity was destined to impact social conditions in the world.

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF PHILEMON

- I. Prayer of Thanksgiving for Philemon (1-7).
- II. Petition of Paul for Onesimus (8-16).
- III. Promise of Paul to Philemon (17-25).

HELPS: Before turning to these, read prayerfully the Word of God, praying that the Holy Spirit will guide you and instruct you.

If you don't own a Bible dictionary, encyclopedia, atlas, or reference search, don't worry. They are all available on the link below.

http://www.preceptaustin.org/2_corinthians_commentaries_3.htm

This excellent website is full of helps including commentaries. You will find John MacArthur, Ray Stedman and John Piper along with Charles Spurgeon and the Intervarsity Press Commentary (Navigators) as well as Matthew Henry's Commentary.