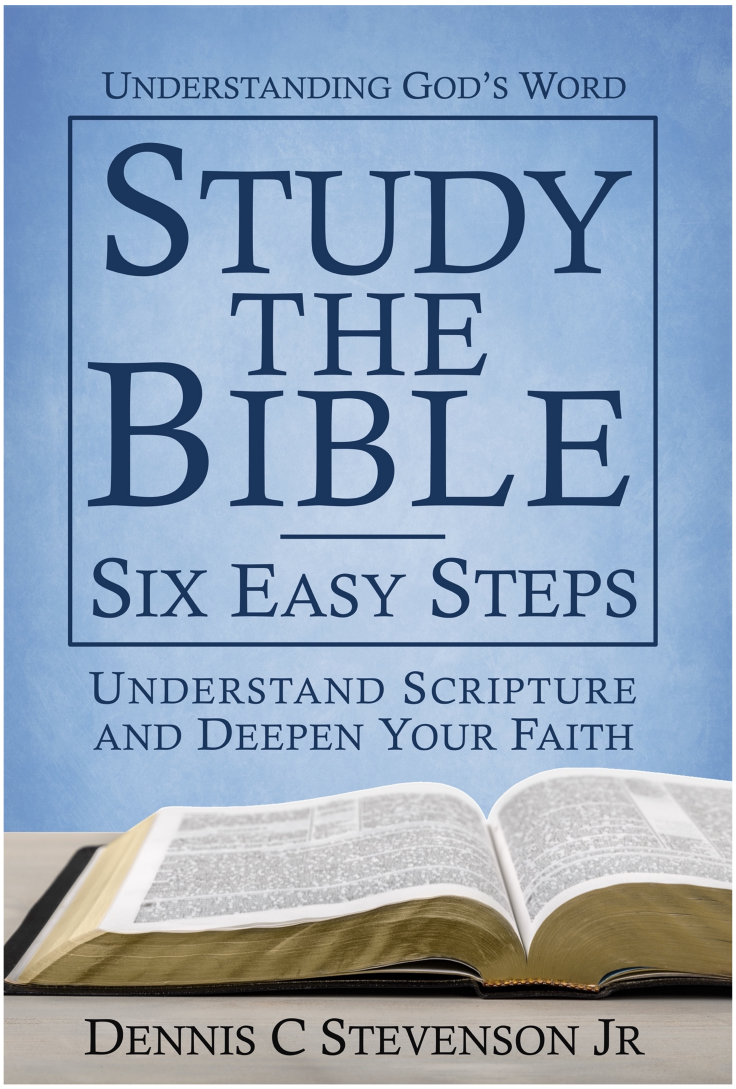

TITUS - A BIBLE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Study the book of Titus in the New Testament of the Bible. A study over six weeks focusing on one chapter per week. This study follows the approach used in Study the Bible – Six Easy Steps.

Dennis C Stevenson Jr

Titus - A Bible Study

How to approach studying the Bible

1. *Read the entire book: Establish author, audience and context*
2. Read the chapter: Identify the message being communicated
3. Identify questions that you want to have answered: Use resources to find answers.
4. Read the chapter: Identify the message being communicated
5. Map the audience & message: Apply the message to your life
6. Compare your conclusions with others: Trace back any differences to the text

Session 1: Setting the Context

Objective: Become familiar with the contents of the book of Titus and understand what it is trying to communicate

Step One: Read the book and identify the author and everything they reveal about themselves.

- The apostle Paul is the author
- Paul identifies himself as a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ
- Paul defines his activity as preaching what he has been entrusted – and this comes from a command of God our Savior
- Paul was with Titus in Crete but left him there and gave him instructions about what to do.
- Paul describes his own history as foolish, disobedient, led astray, a slave to passions, full of malice, envious and hateful.
- Paul plans to winter at Nicopolis and wants Titus to meet him there after Artemas or Tychicus comes to relieve him at Crete

Step Two: Read the book and identify the audience and everything revealed about them.
Map the audience – how close or far are they to us today?

- The single recipient of this letter is Titus
- Titus is like a son to Paul in faith (implying Paul was influential in his conversion?)
- Titus's task was to bring order to the church on Crete and see to the appointing of proper elders/overseers in the various towns.
- Titus came from a similar ungodly background as Paul

Step Three: Read the book and highlight or mark key words that jump out of the text at you.
These could be key connecting words reviewed in chapter 4, or words that seem important to the book (e.g. repetition, topical).

- Commands (imperative sentences) are paired with explanations or reasons (that, since, so that, for, knowing). Even Paul's reference to the instructions he left Titus come with a reason (so that)

- Only once do commands stand alone with no explanation or reason – but these are looking back on a whole section where reasons are already given.
- Highlights two true or trustworthy statements
- And: extended to include "likewise" and some "or"
- But: Extended to include some "not"
- Seems to be a theme of manifested/appeared
- In matters not related to Titus's reason for being in Crete, Paul asks him to "do your best". It seems to be a different quality of instruction from the doctrinal instruction.
- The book seems to be a mixture of a few strong theology sections surrounded by very practical what-to-do sections.

Step Four: Read the book and summarize each paragraph with 1-3 key words from the paragraph.

- 1:1-4 Paul: apostle for God's elect
- 1:5-9 Put in order!
- 1:10-16 Rebuke and silence deceivers!
- 2:1-10 Sound doctrine & good works
- 2:11-15 God's grace appeared
- 3:1-11 Devote to good works
- 3:12-14 Do your best
- 3:15 Greetings and farewell

Step Five: Make a list of questions that you have based on what you've read.
Use your resources to look up information to answer the questions.

When was this book written?

> [ESV Study Bible] Mid-60's AD; Between Paul's 1st and 2nd imprisonment in Rome. This is approximate only; there is no textual evidence; goes mostly on tradition.

What were the circumstances of Paul's visit to Crete?

> [Halley's Bible Handbook] Probably on his way east (toward Jerusalem) after being released from his first Roman imprisonment. This occurs after the narrative of Acts ends. Like the question of timing, it's approximate and not completely certain.
>
> [Unger's Bible Dictionary: Crete] Crete is an island in the Mediterranean. It is 150 miles long 6-35 miles wide. Paul stopped there in Fair Haven while a prisoner on his way to Rome the first time. Traditionally Titus ended up there as the bishop over all the churches on the island

What do we know of Titus's personal history?

> [Unger's Bible Dictionary: Titus] He was converted by Paul, was a gentile, but not circumcised (Gal 2:3-5). He appeared to be one of Paul's traveling companions or protégés (similar to Timothy). He also dealt with the troubled church in Corinth for Paul. He was with Paul when Paul was arrested the second time and went with him to Rome where he traveled to Dalmatia (2 Timothy 4:10)

Who made the poem about the Cretans being liars? Is it true?

> [Unger's Bible Dictionary] The classics abound with references to the untruthfulness of the Cretans. This was frequently applied to them and the phrase *kretizein* (to play the Cretan) was synonymous with "to play the liar".
>
> [Halley's Bible Handbook] The quote is attributed to the Cretan poet, prophet and religious (pagan pantheon) reformer Epimenides (6th-5th Century BC)

Step Six: Write out in one sentence or a short paragraph what you <u>currently</u> understand the book of Titus to be about.

This should be a concise version of all the information captured above:

- Author
- Audience
- Setting
- Reason for writing
- Key points made

Paul is writing to Titus his protégé after leaving him on Crete, encouraging him to bring order to the Cretan churches by installing elders and rebuking those who would tear down the church with bad teaching while himself living an exemplary life of godliness. Paul emphasizes the hope in God that changes and motivates Christians to pursue godliness and resist wicked living.