



PASTOR'S BIBLE CLASS

**Titus** and  
**Philemon**  
GOSPEL SHAPED BELIEVERS

STUDY GUIDE

AUTHOR/PRESENTER  
**DR. SAMUEL U. BULGIN**

ATLANTA BELVEDERE SDA CHURCH/[belvederesdachurch.org](http://belvederesdachurch.org)

---

## *The Epistle of Paul to Titus*

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

**T**itus is similar in content to First Timothy than it is to Second Timothy. It contains the Last Will and Testament of a father in the faith to his son in the gospel while other letters deal with church order and discipline.

Titus like Timothy was a trusted companion of Paul and an emissary to his churches. Paul won the acceptance of the Jerusalem church for Titus, as an uncircumcised Gentile Christian (Galatians 2:1-5). Titus was a gifted and skillful person who successfully reconciled the rebellious Corinthian church to Paul (2 Corinthians 7:6-16), and effectively served in collecting the offering for the church in Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:6, 16, 23).

Titus is presented as the key leader of the church in Crete appointed by Paul (1:5). His task was to organize and discipline the church (1:12). The last mention of Titus was in a mission to Dalmatia (2 Timothy 4:10) territory now in Yugoslavia.

Titus was a convert of Paul: “my true child in the common faith” (1:4).

**THEME**

Teach Christians in Crete to think straight and live right because this is what God expects of those who experienced His boundless generosity in Jesus Christ and are heirs of the eternal life He promised.

**HIGH POINTS**

The epistle is full of charm and help for effective Christian living.

Titus' task is to improve the understanding of Christian truth and the level of Christian living and service in the church at Crete.

This must be accomplished by sound doctrinal teaching (Titus 1:9; 2:1) as opposed to the sick teachings of the heretics.

a)	God wills the salvation of all men from their ungodly living and worldly passions.
b)	This salvation is both present (3:5) and future (3:7).
c)	The one who has been saved and awaits final salvation lives a self-controlled, upright, and godly life in the world (2:12). These Christians will exhibit such qualities as temperance, self-control, chastity, honesty, hospitality, kindness, submission to authority, brotherly helpfulness.
d)	Christians live in hope of the coming triumph of Christ (2:13) and of eternal life (1:2; 3:7).

## OUTLINE

- I. Greeting 1:1-4
- II. Body 1:5-3:14
  - A. Appoint suitable leaders/Bishops (1:5-16).
    - i. Their qualifications (1:5-9b).
    - ii. Their duties (1:9b-16).  
Curtailed of the activities of false teachers.
  - B. Teach and exemplify sound doctrine and right living in the church (2:1-3:11).
    - i. Instruct the various church groups: older men, older women, younger men, and younger women (2:2-15).
    - ii. Teach all church members their responsibilities toward the state, their fellow citizens, and their life of good deeds – and why (3:1-8).
    - iii. Avoid senseless controversy and those who promote it (3:9-11).
  - C. Perform acts of personal service and urge others to do the same (3:12-14).
    - i. Return to Paul after duty in Crete (3:12).
    - ii. Assist two traveling fellow Christians (3:13).
    - iii. Urge all Christians to do deeds of helpfulness (3:14).
- III. Final Greetings and Benedictions (3:15)

---

## *The Epistle of Paul to Philemon*

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

**P**hilemon on the surface appears to be a private communication between Paul and Philemon. However, while that might be true, it was also addressed to a house church. (vss. 1, 2).

The primary concern is the return of a runaway slave—Onesimus who is now a Christian brother (v. 6). Onesimus' situation was as much a concern of the church as it was that of his legal master.

The church needed to understand what had happened to the returning slave and be prepared to receive him warmly into its fellowship and to use its influence with his master to ensure an appropriate reception.

The epistle shows how the church must work for both personal and social change.

The epistle raises the question of who was the slave's owner and where did he live?

There are two views.

a)	He was Philemon of Colossae, one of Paul's converts, maybe from Ephesus (Col. 1:4, 2). Philemon's house in Colossae was the likely place of the house church.
b)	There are others who think that Archippus of Colossae the host of the house church there was the owner. Philemon was the overseer or Bishop of the churches of the Lycus Valley where Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis were located.

The first view is preferred based on the textual evidence.

## THEME

Philemon is considered to be a little gem of Christian love and tact and is unique in the canon of Scripture dealing with a domestic problem and with a wider social impact.

## THE NATURE OF PAUL'S APPEAL

It is a model of tactful persuasion.

- A. Onesimus' return is more than a private matter between master and slave.
- B. The mention of Philemon's reputation for loving attitude and actions (vss. 4-7) would stimulate him to yet another act of generosity.
- C. Paul's loving appeal rather than authoritative command based on status and rank, would tend to evoke a loving response (vss. 8, 9).
- D. Paul's high regard for Onesimus ("he is useful for you, and me", "he is my heart", "my child") would motivate Philemon to a like response (vss. 10-13).

- E. Paul's consideration for Philemon's rights as slave-owner is definitely geared toward him taking initiative to be generous (v. 14).
- F. Paul's suggestion that the hand of Providence is to be seen in the entire affair (vss. 15, 16) would move Philemon to gratitude to God instead of personal vengeance.
- G. The appeal to the common membership of Paul, Philemon, and Onesimus in the Christian brotherhood (vss. 16, 17) offers a theological ground for Paul's entreaty for mercy.
- H. Paul's willingness to assume financial responsibility for Onesimus' irresponsibility (vss. 18, 19) would have a strong effect.
- I. The request for a personal favor and a joyous anticipation that it would be abundantly granted (vss. 20, 21) would be hard to resist.
- J. The suggestion that Philemon will soon meet Paul face to face in a proposed visit (v. 22) would hasten speedy and favorable action.
- K. By adding the names of his companions (vss. 22, 24) Paul suggests that they also were joining him in the appeal for Onesimus.

## **PAUL AND THE INSTITUTION OF SLAVERY**

Neither Jesus, nor Paul or any of the First Century Christians had any plans to work for the abolition of slavery. However, while we can find a stated objective, the teaching of Jesus and the church undermined slavery.

- A. They set forth the infinite value of every person before God (Matthew 6:26; 10:29-31; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 15).

- B. The equality and essential oneness of all believers in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:11).
- C. They emphasized love and mercy toward the unfortunate and the needy as a central demand of Christian discipleship (Matthew 22:37-40; 25:31-46; John 13:35; 1 John 3:17; James 2:1-17).
- D. They occupied common ground in Christ.

This radical view and position could only radically affect, and in time, eliminate the institution of slavery.

## **OUTLINE**

- I. Greetings (vss. 1-7)
- II. Thanksgiving (vss. 4-7)
- III. Body
  - a. The entreaty Concerning Onesimus (vss. 8-21).
    - i. The tactfulness of entreaty (vss. 8-10).
    - ii. The profitableness of Onesimus (vss. 11-13).
    - iii. Mutual respect between Paul and Philemon (v. 14).
    - iv. The recognition of Providence (vss. 15, 16).
    - v. The sufficient mediatorship of Paul (vss. 17-19a).
    - vi. The double debt of Philemon (vss. 19b, 20).
- IV. Conclusion and Benediction (vss. 21-25)



---

## *Notes*

---



- I want to be baptized
- I need more Bible study
- Pray for me
- Please contact me

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Suffix \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Apt# \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**ATLANTA BELVEDERE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH**

3567 Covington Highway, Decatur GA 30032

404.299.1359 | 404.299.1336(fax)

belvederesdachurch.org

belvederesda@gccsda.com

Dr. Samuel Bulgin, Lead Pastor

Dr. Donnieval Walker, Associate Pastor

