

Scriptures are able to make you wise. And that wisdom leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup>All Scripture is given by God. And all Scripture is useful for teaching and for showing people what is wrong in their lives. It is useful for correcting faults and teaching the right way to live. <sup>17</sup>Using the Scriptures, those who serve God will be prepared and will have everything they need to do every good work.

**4**<sup>1</sup>Before God and Jesus Christ I give you a command. Christ Jesus is the one who will judge all people—those who are living and those who have died. He is coming again to rule in his kingdom.\* So I give you this command: <sup>2</sup>Tell everyone God's message.\* Be ready at all times to do whatever is needed. Tell people what they need to do, tell them when they are doing wrong, and encourage them. Do this with great patience and careful teaching.

<sup>3</sup>The time will come when people will not listen to the true teaching. But people will find more and more teachers who please them. They will find teachers who say what they want to hear. <sup>4</sup>People will stop listening to the truth. They will begin to follow the teaching in false stories. <sup>5</sup>But you should control yourself at all times. When troubles come, accept them. Do the work of telling the Good News.\* Do all the duties of a servant of God.

<sup>6</sup>My life is being given as an offering for God. The time has come for me to leave this life here. <sup>7</sup>I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have served the Lord faithfully. <sup>8</sup>Now, a prize is waiting for me—the crown\* that will show I am right with God. The Lord, the judge who judges rightly, will give it to me on that Day.\* Yes, he will give it to me and to everyone else who is eagerly looking forward to his coming.

### Personal Notes

<sup>9</sup>Do your best to come to me as soon as you can. <sup>10</sup>Demas loved this world too much. That is why he left me. He went to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia. And Titus went to Dalmatia. <sup>11</sup>Luke is the only one still with me. Get Mark and bring him with you when you come. He can help me in my work here. <sup>12</sup>I sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

<sup>13</sup>When I was in Troas, I left my coat there with Carpus. So when you come, bring it to me. Also, bring my books. The books written on parchment\* are the ones I need.

<sup>14</sup>Alexander the metalworker caused me so much harm. The Lord will punish him for what he did. <sup>15</sup>He fought against everything we teach. You should be careful that he doesn't hurt you too.

<sup>16</sup>The first time I defended myself, no one helped me. Everyone left me. I pray that God will forgive them. <sup>17</sup>But the Lord stayed with me. The Lord gave me strength so that I could tell the Good News\* everywhere. He wanted all those who are not Jews to hear that Good News. So I was saved from the lion's mouth. <sup>18</sup>The Lord will save me when anyone tries to hurt me. He will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. Glory\* forever and ever be the Lord's. Amen.\*

### Final Greetings

<sup>19</sup>Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila and to the family of Onesiphorus. <sup>20</sup>Erastus stayed in Corinth. And I left Trophimus in Miletus—he was sick. <sup>21</sup>Try as hard as you can to come to me before winter.

Greetings to you from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers and sisters here.

<sup>22</sup>The Lord be with your spirit. Grace\* be with you.

# Titus

**1**<sup>1</sup>Greetings from Paul, a servant of God and an apostle\* of Jesus Christ. I was sent to help God's chosen people have faith and understand the truth that produces a life of devotion to God. <sup>2</sup>This faith and knowledge make us sure that we have eternal life. God promised that life to us before time began—and God does not lie. <sup>3</sup>At the right time, God let the world know about that life. He did this through the telling of the Good News message,\* and he trusted me with that work. I told people that message because God our

Savior commanded me to.

<sup>4</sup>To Titus, a true son to me in the faith we share together.

Grace\* and peace to you from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

### Titus' Work in Crete

<sup>5</sup>I left you in Crete so that you could finish doing what still needed to be done. And I also left you there so that you could choose men to be elders\* in every town. <sup>6</sup>To be an elder, a man must not be guilty of living in a wrong

way. He must be faithful to his wife,<sup>a</sup> and his children must be faithful to God.<sup>b</sup> They must not be known as children who are wild or don't obey. <sup>7</sup>An elder<sup>c</sup> has the job of taking care of God's work. So people should not be able to say that he lives in a wrong way. He must not be someone who is proud and selfish or who gets angry quickly. He must not drink too much, and he must not be someone who likes to fight. He must not be a man who will do almost anything for money. <sup>8</sup>An elder must be ready to help people by welcoming them into his home. He must love what is good. He must be wise. He must live right. He must be devoted to God and pleasing to him. And he must be able to control himself. <sup>9</sup>An elder must be faithful to the same true message we teach. Then he will be able to encourage others with teaching that is true and right. And he will be able to show those who are against this teaching that they are wrong.

<sup>10</sup>This is important, because there are many people who refuse to obey—people who talk about worthless things and mislead others. I am talking especially about those who say that men who are not Jews must be circumcised\* to please God. <sup>11</sup>These people must be stopped, because they are destroying whole families by teaching what they should not teach. They teach only to cheat people and make money. <sup>12</sup>Even one of their own prophets said, "Cre-tans are always liars. They are evil animals and lazy people who do nothing but eat." <sup>13</sup>The words that prophet said are true. So tell those people that they are wrong. You must be strict with them. Then they will become strong in the faith, <sup>14</sup>and they will stop paying attention to the stories told by those Jews. They will stop following the commands of those who have turned away from the truth.

<sup>15</sup>To people who are pure, everything is pure. But to those who are full of sin and don't believe, nothing is pure. Really, their thinking has become evil and their consciences have been ruined. <sup>16</sup>They say they know God, but the evil things they do show that they don't accept him. They are disgusting. They refuse to obey God and are not capable of doing anything good.

### Following the True Teaching

**2** <sup>1</sup>You, however, must tell everyone how to live in a way that agrees with the true teaching. <sup>2</sup>Teach the older men to have self-control, to be serious, and to be wise. They must be strong in faith, in love, and in patience.

<sup>3</sup>Also, teach the older women to live the

<sup>a</sup>**1:6 faithful to his wife** Literally, "a man of one woman."

<sup>b</sup>**1:6 faithful to God** This word can mean "trustworthy" or "believers." Here, both meanings may be included. Compare this verse with 1 Tim. 3:4.

<sup>c</sup>**1:7 elder** Here, literally, "overseer." See "elders" in the Word List.

way those who serve the Lord should live. They should not go around saying bad things about others or be in the habit of drinking too much. They should teach what is good. <sup>4</sup>By doing this they will teach the younger women to love their husbands and children. <sup>5</sup>They will teach them to be wise and pure, to take care of their homes, to be kind, and to be willing to serve their husbands. Then no one will be able to criticize the teaching God gave us.

<sup>6</sup>In the same way, tell the young men to be wise. <sup>7</sup>You should be an example for them in every way by the good things you do. When you teach, be honest and serious. <sup>8</sup>And your teaching should be clearly right so that you cannot be criticized. Then anyone who is against you will be ashamed. There will not be anything bad they can say about us.

<sup>9</sup>And tell this to those who are slaves: They should be willing to serve their masters at all times; they should try to please them, not argue with them; <sup>10</sup>they should not steal from them; and they should show their masters that they can be trusted. Then, in everything they do, they will show that the teaching of God our Savior is good.

<sup>11</sup>That is the way we should live, because God's grace\* has come. That grace can save everyone. <sup>12</sup>It teaches us not to live against God and not to do the bad things the world wants to do. It teaches us to live on earth now in a wise and right way—a way that shows true devotion to God. <sup>13</sup>We should live like that while we are waiting for the coming of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. He is our great hope, and he will come with glory.\* <sup>14</sup>He gave himself for us. He died to free us from all evil. He died to make us pure—people who belong only to him and who always want to do good.

<sup>15</sup>These are the things you should tell people. Encourage them, and when they are wrong, correct them. You have full authority to do this, so don't let anyone think they can ignore you.

### The Right Way to Live

**3** <sup>1</sup>Remind your people that they should always be under the authority of rulers and government leaders. They should obey these leaders and be ready to do good. <sup>2</sup>Tell them not to speak evil of anyone but to live in peace with others. They should be gentle and polite to everyone.

<sup>3</sup>In the past we were foolish too. We did not obey, we were wrong, and we were slaves to the many things our bodies wanted and enjoyed. We lived doing evil and being jealous. People hated us and we hated each other. <sup>4</sup>But then the kindness and love of God our Savior was made known. <sup>5</sup>He saved us because of his mercy, not because of any good things we did. He saved us through the washing that made us new people. He saved us by making us new through the Holy Spirit.\* <sup>6</sup>God poured out to

us that Holy Spirit fully through Jesus Christ our Savior. <sup>7</sup>We were made right with God by his grace.\* God saved us so that we could be his children and look forward to receiving life that never ends. <sup>8</sup>This is a true statement.

And I want you to be sure that the people understand these things. Then those who believe in God will be careful to use their lives for doing good. These things are good and will help everyone.

<sup>9</sup>Stay away from those who have foolish arguments, who talk about useless family histories, or who make trouble and fight about what the Law of Moses teaches. These things are useless and will not help anyone. <sup>10</sup>Give a warning to all those who cause arguments. If they continue to cause trouble after a second warning, then don't associate with them.

<sup>11</sup>You know that people like that are evil and sinful. Their sins prove they are wrong.

### *Final Instructions and Greetings*

<sup>12</sup>I will send Artemas and Tychicus to you. When I send them, try hard to come to me at Nicopolis. I have decided to stay there this winter. <sup>13</sup>Zenas the lawyer and Apollos will be traveling from there. Do all that you can to help them prepare for their trip. Be sure that they have everything they need. <sup>14</sup>Our people must learn to use their lives for doing good and helping anyone who has a need. Then they will not have empty lives.

<sup>15</sup>All the people with me here send you their greetings. Give my greetings to those who love us in the faith.

Grace\* be with you all.

# Philemon

<sup>1</sup>Greetings from Paul, a prisoner for Jesus Christ, and from Timothy, our brother.

To Philemon, our dear friend and worker with us. <sup>2</sup>Also to our sister Apphia, to Archippus, who serves with us in the Lord's army, and to the church\* that meets in your home.

<sup>3</sup>Grace\* and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### *Philemon's Love and Faith*

<sup>4</sup>I remember you in my prayers. And I always thank my God for you. <sup>5</sup>I thank God because I hear about the love you have for all of God's holy people\* and the faith you have in the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup>I pray that the faith you share will make you understand every blessing we have in Christ. <sup>7</sup>My brother, you have shown love to God's people, and your help has greatly encouraged them. What a great joy and encouragement that has been to me.

### *Accept Onesimus as a Brother*

<sup>8</sup>There is something that you should do. And because of the authority I have in Christ, I feel free to command you to do it. <sup>9</sup>But I am not commanding you; I am asking you to do it out of love. I, Paul, am an old man now, and I am a prisoner for Christ Jesus. <sup>10</sup>I am asking you for my son Onesimus. He became my son while I was in prison. <sup>11</sup>In the past he was useless to you. But now he has become useful<sup>a</sup> for both you and me.

<sup>12</sup>I am sending him back to you, but it's as

hard as losing part of myself. <sup>13</sup>I would like to keep him here to help me while I am still in prison for telling the Good News.\* By helping me here, he would be representing you. <sup>14</sup>But I did not want to do anything without asking you first. Then whatever you do for me will be what you want to do, not what I forced you to do.

<sup>15</sup>Onesimus was separated from you for a short time. Maybe that happened so that you could have him back forever, <sup>16</sup>not to be just a slave, but better than a slave, to be a dear brother. That's what he is to me. And I know he will mean even more to you, both as your slave and as one who shares your faith in the Lord.

<sup>17</sup>If you accept me as your friend, then accept Onesimus back. Welcome him like you would welcome me. <sup>18</sup>If he has done any wrong to you or owes you anything, charge that to me. <sup>19</sup>I, Paul, am writing this in my own handwriting: I will pay back anything Onesimus owes. And I will say nothing about what you owe me for your own life. <sup>20</sup>So, my brother, as a follower of the Lord please do this favor<sup>b</sup> for me. It would be such a great encouragement to me as your brother in Christ. <sup>21</sup>I write this letter knowing that you will do what I ask, and even more than I ask.

<sup>22</sup>Also, please prepare a room for me. I hope that God will answer your prayers and that I will be able to come and see you.

<sup>b</sup>**20 please do this favor** Paul here makes another wordplay on the name Onesimus, using a verb related to it.

<sup>a</sup>**11 useless... useful** Paul here makes a play on words with the name Onesimus, which means "useful."

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