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Titus

1 Greetings from Paul, a servant of God and an apostle* of Jesus Christ. I was sent to help the faith of God's chosen people. I was sent to help those people to know the truth. And that truth shows people how to serve God. **2**That faith and that knowledge come from our hope for life forever. God promised that life to us before time began—and God does not lie. **3**At the right time God let the world know about that life. God 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.

4To Titus. You are [like] a true son to me in the faith we share together.

Grace (*kindness*) and peace to you from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Titus' Work in Crete

5I left you in Crete so that you could finish doing the things that still needed to be done. And I also left you there so that you could choose men to be elders* in every town. **6**To be an elder, a man must not be guilty of living in a wrong way. He must have only one wife. His children must be dependable.* They must not be known as children that are wild and don't obey. **7**An elder* 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 a person who is proud and selfish

or who becomes angry quickly. He must not drink too much wine. He must not be a person who likes to fight. And he must not be a person who always tries to get rich by cheating people. **8**An elder must be ready to help people by accepting them into his home. He must love what is good. He must be wise. He must live right. He must be pleasing to God. And he must be able to control himself. **9**An elder must faithfully follow the truth the same as we teach it. An elder must be able to help people by using true and right teaching. And he must be able to show the people who are against the true teaching that they are wrong.

10There are many people who refuse to obey—people who talk about worthless things and lead other people into the wrong way. I am talking mostly about those people who say that all non-Jewish people must be circumcised.*

11An elder* must [be able to show that those people are wrong and] stop them from talking [about those worthless things]. Those people are destroying whole families by teaching things that they should not teach. They teach those things only to cheat people and make money. **12**Even one of their own prophets (*teachers*) [from Crete] said, "Cretan people are always liars. They are evil animals and lazy people who do nothing but eat." **13**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. **14**Then those people will stop accepting Jewish stories. And they will stop following the commands of those people who don't

apostle A person Jesus chose to represent him in a special way.

Good News, message The news that God has made a way for people to have their sins forgiven and live with him forever.

elder(s) A group of men chosen to lead a church. Also called "overseers" and "pastors" (shepherds), they have the work of caring for God's people. See Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11; Tit. 1:7,9.

dependable This word can also mean "believers".

elder Here (verse 7), literally, "overseer."

circumcised To have the foreskin cut off. This was done to every Jewish baby boy. It was a mark of the agreement God made with Abraham. Read Gen. 17:9–14.

accept the truth. ¹⁵To people that are pure, all things are pure. But to people who are full of sin and don't believe, nothing is pure. Really, those people's thinking has become evil and their knowledge of what is right has been ruined. ¹⁶Those people say they know God. But the evil things those people do show that they don't accept God. They are disgusting people. They refuse to obey and are useless for doing anything good.

Following the True Teaching

2 You must tell the people there the things they must do to follow the true teaching.

²Teach the older men to have self-control, to be serious, and to be wise. They should be strong in the faith, strong in love, and strong in patience.

³Also, teach the older women to be holy* in the way they live. Teach them not to speak against other people or have the habit of drinking too much wine. Those women should teach what is good. ⁴In that way they can teach the younger women to love their husbands and children. ⁵They can teach the younger women to be wise and to be pure, to take care of their homes, to be kind, and to be willing to serve their husbands. Then no person will be able to criticize the teaching God gave us.

⁶In the same way, tell the young men to be wise. ⁷You should do good things to be an example in every way for the young men. When you teach, be honest and serious. ⁸And your teaching should be clearly right so that you cannot be criticized. Then any person who is against you will be ashamed because he has nothing bad that he can say against us.

⁹And tell these things to the people who are slaves: They should be willing to serve their masters at all times; they should try to please their masters; they should not argue with their masters; ¹⁰they should not steal from their masters; and they should show their masters that they can be trusted. The slaves should do these things so that in everything they do, they will show that the teaching of God our Savior is good.

¹¹That is the way we should live,¹ because God's grace (*kindness*) has come. That grace

can save every person. And that grace has been given to us. ¹²That grace teaches us not to live against God and not to do the bad things the world wants to do. That grace teaches us to live on earth now in a wise and right way—a way that shows that we serve God. ¹³We 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. ¹⁴He gave himself for us. He died to free us from all evil. He died to make us pure people that belong only to him—people that are always wanting to do good things.

¹⁵Tell the people these things. You have full authority (*power*). So use that authority to help the people and to correct them when they are wrong. And don't let any person treat you like you are not important.

The Right Way to Live

3 Tell the people to remember always to do these things: to be under the authority of rulers and government leaders; to obey those leaders and be ready to do good; ²to speak no evil against any person; to live in peace with other people; to be gentle and polite to all people.

³In the past we were foolish people 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. ⁴But then the kindness and love of God our Savior was made known. ⁵He saved us because of his mercy (*love*), 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.* ⁶God poured out (*gave*) to us that Holy Spirit fully through Jesus Christ our Savior. ⁷We were made right with God by his grace (*kindness*). God saved us so that we could be his children and look forward to receiving life that never ends. ⁸This teaching is true.

And I want you to be sure that the people understand these things. Then the people who

Spirit, Holy Spirit Also called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and the Comforter. Joined with God and Christ, he does God's work among people in the world.

holy Showing reverence and respect for God.

believe in God will be careful to use their lives for doing good. These things are good and will help all people.

⁹Stay away from people who have foolish arguments, people who talk about useless family histories, people who make trouble and fight about what the law [of Moses] teaches. Those things are worth nothing and will not help people. ¹⁰If a person causes arguments, then give him a warning. If that person continues to cause arguments, then warn him again. If he still continues causing arguments, then don't associate with him. ¹¹You know that a person like that is evil and sinful. His sins prove that he is wrong.

Final Instructions and Greetings

¹²I 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. ¹³Zenas the lawyer and Apollos will be traveling from there. Do all that you can to help them on their trip. Be sure that they have everything they need. ¹⁴Our people must learn to use their lives for doing good things. They should do good for people who need it. Then our people will not have empty lives.

¹⁵All the people with me here say hello to you. Say hello to those people who love us in the faith.

Grace (*kindness*) be with you all.