

TITUS

Set It in Order

AUTHOR	Paul, 1:1. Most critical scholars think a follower wrote the three Pastoral Letters about AD 90 to 130. See the 1 Timothy facts, p. ...
WRITTEN FROM	Probably Macedonia or Greece, on the way to Nicopolis, 3:12.
DATE WRITTEN	About AD 62 to 65, between Paul's two Roman arrests.
WRITTEN TO	Titus, a Greek believer Paul left on the island of Crete, 1:5.
WHY HE WROTE	To help Titus finish setting up the churches, choose good leaders, and stop false teachers.
KEY VERSE	Titus 3:5. He saved us, not by the righteous deeds we had done, but according to His mercy.



AN EARLY COPY OF TITUS

Papyrus 32, front and back, copied about AD 200. One side has Titus 1:11 to 15, right where Paul quotes the Cretan poet. The other side has 2:3 to 8. It is about 4 inches tall and is kept in the John Rylands Library in Manchester, England. Public domain.

Historical Setting

Acts never mentions Titus by name, but Paul's letters do. He was a Greek who was never circumcised, Galatians 2:3, and Paul sent him to fix problems in Corinth, 2 Corinthians 7 and 8. Most think that after Paul's first arrest in Rome, the two of them went to Crete, a big island south of Greece. Paul moved on and left Titus to finish the work. Crete had a bad name. Even Greeks used Cretan as a word for liar. Into that place Paul sends a short letter about good leaders, good lives and God's kindness.

What Was Going Wrong

NO LEADERS. The new churches had no elders yet, 1:5.
FALSE TEACHERS. Talkers who taught for money and upset whole families, 1:10 to 11.
MYTHS AND FIGHTS. Jewish myths, family lines and arguments about the law, 1:14 and 3:9.
BAD NAME. Cretans were known as liars, 1:12, so their lives had to back up the gospel, 2:5 to 10.

The Idiot Proof Summary

Titus is a short handbook for a young church on a tough island. Paul does not give Titus a fancy program. He gives him two things: leaders whose lives match their words, and a gospel that changes how people live. In the middle of it are two of the clearest verses in the Bible about who Jesus is and how we are saved.

Titus at a Glance

CH 1	LEADERS FOR CRETE Choose elders with good lives. Stop the false teachers.
CH 2	SOUND DOCTRINE, GOOD LIVES Every age and station lives the gospel. Grace teaches us.
CH 3	SAVED TO DO GOOD Not by works but by mercy. Now go do good works.

Where Jesus Shows Up

- TITUS 2:13** Our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. One of the clearest verses calling Jesus God. Isaiah 9:6.
- TITUS 2:14** He gave Himself for us to redeem us and make us His own people.
- TITUS 3:4 TO 6** God's kindness appeared, and through Jesus He poured out the Spirit. Joel 2:28.

What to Watch for in Titus

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES	2:11, 2:13, 3:5
PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE	3:6
ARCHAEOLOGY	1:5, 1:12, 2:9, 3:12
NOTABLE	1:16, 2:7-8, 2:12, 3:1-2, 3:4, 3:7, 3:14
JESUS SPEAKING	Words in red are Jesus speaking, or God the Father speaking from heaven.

Cool Stuff Most People Miss

- A POET IN THE BIBLE**
Paul quotes a Cretan poet from about 600 BC, 1:12.
- ONE OF THE OLDEST SCRAPS**
Papyrus 32, about AD 200, is one of the oldest pieces of the New Testament.
- SAME LEADERS, TWO NAMES**
Paul calls the same leaders elders in 1:5 and overseers in 1:7.
- LUTHER'S FAVORITE**
Martin Luther's Small Catechism, 1529, quotes Titus 3:5 to 8 to explain baptism.

What Happened Next?

Titus later went to Dalmatia, on the coast north of Greece, 2 Timothy 4:10. Church historian Eusebius, about AD 325, says Titus led the churches of Crete, and tradition says he lived there to an old age. A large church was built for him at Gortyn in the 500s, and its ruins still stand.

ARCHAEOLOGY

1

CHAPTER 1 IN 30 SECONDS

Paul left Titus on Crete with a to do list: finish the job and pick good leaders in every town. Not bullies, not drunks, not money grabbers. Why so picky? Because some teachers there are talking big and teaching junk for cash. Even a Cretan poet said Cretans are liars.

PAUL'S GREETING TO TITUS // 2 CORINTHIANS

8:16-24

¹Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness, ²in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began. ³In His own time He has made His word evident in the proclamation entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior.

⁴To Titus, my true child in our common faith:

Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

APPOINTING ELDERS ON CRETE // 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-7; 1 PETER 5:1-4

⁵The reason I left you in Crete was that you would set in order what was unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. ⁶An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, having children who are believers and who are not open to accusation of indiscretion or insubordination.

⁷As God's steward, an overseer must be above reproach—not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not greedy for money. ⁸Instead, he must be hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹He must hold firmly to the faithful word as it was taught, so that he can encourage others by sound teaching and refute those who contradict it.

■ **TIT 1:5 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Knossos, the great palace city of Bronze Age Crete, with clay tablets in Linear B, the oldest written Greek → FIELD NOTES p.4

■ **TIT 1:6 [NOTE] ELDERS AND OVERSEERS.** Paul calls the same leaders elders in 1:5 and overseers in 1:7. Jerome noticed this in the late 300s. For husband of but one wife, see the 1 Timothy 3:2 note, p.-.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH · FAR OLDER THAN PAUL

KNOSSOS AND THE CRETANS

TITUS 1:5 · 1:12 · ACTS 2:11 · ACTS 27:7 TO 13 · AMOS 9:7



Clay tablet KN Fp 13 from Knossos, written in Linear B. Photo vintagedept, CC BY 2.0.

WHAT IT IS

A clay tablet from the palace of Knossos on Crete, written in a script called Linear B. It is a list of olive oil given to gods, and even to a priestess of the winds.

HOW OLD IT IS

About 1450 to 1375 BC, nearly 1,500 years before Paul. The first palace at Knossos was built about 1900 BC. Tablets like this were only dried clay. Fires that burned the palace baked them hard, and that is why they lasted.

THE OLDEST GREEK

The British archaeologist Arthur Evans dug the palace starting in 1900 and found thousands of tablets. Nobody could read them. In 1952 a young English architect named Michael Ventris cracked the code: it was an early form of Greek, centuries older than Homer.

A REBUILT PALACE

Evans rebuilt parts of the palace in concrete and painted copies of its wall art. Visitors today see his best guesses mixed with the real ruins, so not everything there is ancient.

CRETE IN THE BIBLE

Amos 9:7 says the Philistines came from Caphtor, which most think was Crete. David's bodyguards, the Cherethites, 2 Samuel 8:18, may have been Cretans. Cretans heard the gospel at Pentecost, Acts 2:11, and Paul's prison ship sailed along Crete, Acts 27:7 to 13.

THE KING AND THE MAZE

Greek myths said King Minos ruled here, and a monster, half man and half

ARCHAEOLOGY NOTABLE

bull, lived in a maze called the labyrinth. Evans named the whole culture Minoan after Minos. The myths are not history, but the real palace was a maze of hundreds of rooms.

IN PAUL'S DAY

Rome took Crete about 67 BC, and Knossos became a Roman colony. Epimenides, the poet Paul quotes in 1:12, came from Knossos. The Roman capital, though, was Gortyn; see The Gortyn Law Code Field Notes page.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

This tablet is far older than Paul and says nothing about Titus. It shows how old and proud the island was where Titus had to work.

CORRECTING FALSE TEACHERS // 1 TIMOTHY 1:3–11

¹⁰ For many are rebellious and full of empty talk and deception, especially those of the circumcision, ¹¹ who must be silenced. For the sake of dishonorable gain, they undermine entire households and teach things they should not. ¹² As one of their own prophets has said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.”

¹³ This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sternly, so that they will be sound in the faith ¹⁴ and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of men who have rejected the truth.

¹⁵ To the pure, all things are pure; but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure. Indeed, both their minds and their consciences are defiled. ¹⁶ They profess to know God, but by their actions they deny

■ **TIT 1:12 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Bronze shields from the cave on Mount Ida where Cretans said Zeus was raised → FIELD NOTES p.5

■ **TIT 1:12 [NOTABLE]** Paul quotes Epimenides, a poet from Crete, from about 600 BC. Paul even calls him one of their own prophets.

■ **TIT 1:12 [NOTE]** THE CRETAN LIAR. The poet is Epimenides of Knossos, about 600 BC, as Clement of Alexandria said about AD 200. Acts 17:28 may quote the same poem, but that is debated. Teachers of logic later made the line a puzzle: if a Cretan says all Cretans lie, is he lying? That puzzle dates only from the 1800s. Paul is not playing games: he says this testimony is true, 1:13. See The Cave of Zeus Field Notes page.

■ **TIT 1:14 [NOTE]** JEWISH MYTHS. Probably made up stories built on Old Testament names and family lines, plus rules about clean and unclean food, 1:15. Writings of the time like the Book of Jubilees retold Genesis with many extra details. See 1 Timothy 1:4 and 3:9.

Him. They are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for any good deed.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH
FOR THE SHIELD · THE STORIES ARE MYTHS

THE CAVE OF ZEUS

TITUS 1:2 · 1:12 TO 13 · ACTS 17:28



Bronze shield from the Idaean Cave, Crete. Heraklion Archaeological Museum. Photo Syrio, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

A bronze shield given as an offering in the Idaean Cave on Mount Ida, the highest mountain on Crete. In the middle a god, most likely Zeus, lifts a lion over his head and stands on a bull. Two winged helpers beat drums.

HOW OLD IT IS

Late 700s or 600s BC. A shepherd found the first pieces in 1884, and the Italian archaeologist Federico Halbherr dug the cave in 1885.

THE MYTH

Greeks said Zeus was born on Crete and hidden in a cave so his father would not eat him. Young warriors called Curetes banged shields and drums so no one would hear the baby cry. Shields like this one remembered that story.

THE TOMB OF ZEUS

Cretans also showed visitors a tomb of Zeus. Other Greeks were shocked, because a god cannot die. The poet Callimachus, about 270 BC, wrote to Zeus: Cretans are always liars; they built a

■ **TIT 1:16 [NOTABLE]** Saying you know God and living like you do not are two different things. Your life is the loudest sermon you preach.

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES | ARCHAEOLOGY | NOTABLE

tomb for you, but you did not die. Paul quotes the same famous line.

THE PROPHET

The line comes from Epimenides of Knossos, about 600 BC. Old stories say he slept in a cave for 57 years and woke up a prophet. That is why Paul says one of their own prophets.

WHY IT MATTERS HERE

Paul just called God the One who cannot lie, 1:2. Now he uses a line Cretans all knew to tell Titus to correct the false teachers firmly, 1:13. The point is not that every Cretan is bad. He is sending Titus to them.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The shield shows the Zeus stories were real worship on Crete. It does not make the myths true.

2

CHAPTER 2 IN 30 SECONDS

Teach what fits sound doctrine. Older men, older women, young women, young men, even slaves all get a word, and it is the same word: live so well that nobody can trash the gospel. Why? Because God's grace showed up, and it trains us while we wait for Jesus.

TEACHING SOUND DOCTRINE

¹But as for you, speak the things that are consistent with sound doctrine.

²Older men are to be temperate, dignified, self-controlled, and sound in faith, love, and perseverance.

³Older women, likewise, are to be reverent in their behavior, not slanderers or addicted to much wine, but teachers of good. ⁴In this way they can train the young women to love their husbands and children, ⁵to be self-controlled, pure, managers of their households, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be discredited.

■ **TIT 2:3 [NOTE] OLDER WOMEN.** They are to be teachers of good and train the younger women. On women teaching in the church, see the two Big Question pages in 1 Timothy, p.--. On submissive in 2:5, see the Ephesians 5:21 note, p.--.

■ **TIT 2:5 [TEXT]** Managers of their households follows the oldest Greek copies, like Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus, which say workers at home. Later copies say keepers at home, the KJV wording.

⁶In the same way, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.

⁷In everything, show yourself to be an example by doing good works. In your teaching show integrity, dignity, ⁸and wholesome speech that is above reproach, so that anyone who opposes us will be ashamed, having nothing bad to say about us.

⁹Slaves are to submit to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, ¹⁰not stealing from them, but showing all good faith, so that in every respect they will adorn the teaching about God our Savior.

GOD'S GRACE BRINGS SALVATION

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to everyone. ¹²It instructs us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live sensible, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³as we await the blessed hope and glorious appearance of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

■ **TIT 2:7 [NOTABLE]** Titus was young and left to lead a messy church. Paul does not tell him to win arguments first. He tells him to live so well that critics have nothing bad to say.

■ **TIT 2:9 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** The Gortyn law code, Crete, about 450 BC, the longest Greek law inscription, with laws on slaves, marriage, divorce and family property → FIELD NOTES p.7

■ **TIT 2:9 [NOTE] SLAVES.** Many people in the Roman world were slaves. It was not based on race, and some bought their freedom, but people were still owned. Paul tells Philemon to take a runaway back as a dear brother, Philemon 16, and tells slaves to gain freedom if they can, 1 Corinthians 7:21. About AD 379 Gregory of Nyssa preached that no one should own a person. Later some used verses like this to defend American slavery, while Christians like William Wilberforce fought to end it.

■ **TIT 2:11 [NOTABLE]** Grace does not only save you, it trains you. The same grace that forgives also teaches you to say no to what hurts you and yes to a godly life.

■ **TIT 2:11 [FULFILLS]** He is Salvation to the ends of the earth ← IS 49:6 p.--

■ **TIT 2:13 [PROPHECY]** Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ → STILL TO COME

■ **TIT 2:13 [FULFILLS]** Called Mighty God (El Gabor) ← IS 9:6 p.--

■ **TIT 2:13 [NOTE] ONE PERSON, TWO TITLES.** In Greek one the covers both titles: the great God and Savior. In 1798 Granville Sharp, an English scholar who also fought slavery, showed that this pattern means one person, so both titles belong to Jesus. 2 Peter 1:1 is the same. The KJV, the great God and our Saviour, can be read as two persons, and the Jehovah's Witness Bible says the great God and of our Savior.

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN SCRIPTURE NOTABLE

¹⁵ Speak these things as you encourage and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH
FOR THE CODE · THE TITUS TRADITION IS LATE

THE GORTYN LAW CODE

TITUS 1:5 · 2:1 TO 10 · 1 MACCABEES 15:23



Part of the law code carved into a stone wall at Gortyn, Crete. Photo Zde, CC BY SA 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

Laws carved into a curved stone wall at Gortyn, in southern Crete. About 600 lines in 12 columns, some 30 feet long. It is the most complete ancient Greek law code ever found.

HOW OLD IT IS

Carved about 450 BC. The first pieces turned up in 1857. Federico Halbherr found the main wall in 1884 near a mill. The Romans had reused the stones in a later building, and that kept them safe.

READ IT LIKE AN OX PLOWS

The lines run right to left, then left to right, back and forth, the way an ox plows a field. The Greeks called it boustrophedon, ox turning.

SLAVES AND FAMILIES

The laws cover slaves, marriage, divorce, children, adoption and who inherits the family property. The fine for a crime depended on who you were: free, serf or slave. Harming a slave cost less than harming a free man.

TITUS AT GORTYN

In Titus' day Gortyn was the Roman capital of Crete and of Cyrene in North Africa. Jews lived there long before, 1

Maccabees 15:23. Eusebius, about AD 325, says Titus led the churches of Crete, and tradition makes him the first bishop at Gortyn. A big church named for him was built there in the 500s, and its ruins still stand.

WHY IT MATTERS HERE

Old laws like these ranked people by birth. Paul gives older men, older women, young people and slaves the same calling: live so that the teaching about God our Savior looks beautiful, 2:10.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

The code is about 500 years older than Paul and does not mention Christians. The stories about Titus at Gortyn come from later church tradition.

3

CHAPTER 3 IN 30 SECONDS

Be good neighbors and good citizens. We used to be a mess too, until God saved us, not because we earned it, but because He is kind. So do good works, skip the dumb arguments, warn a troublemaker twice, then move on. And Titus, meet me at Nicopolis for the winter.

HEIRS OF GRACE

¹ Remind the believers to submit to rulers and authorities, to be obedient and ready for every good work, ² to malign no one, and to be peaceable and gentle, showing full consideration to everyone.

³ For at one time we too were foolish, disobedient, misled, and enslaved to all sorts of desires and pleasures—living in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

⁴ But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, ⁵ He saved us, not by the righteous deeds we had done, but according to His mercy, through the washing of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶ This is the Spirit

■ TIT 2:14 [ALLUDES TO] Refers to ← PS 130:8; EZK 37:23; DT 14:2 p.~

■ TIT 2:14 [NOTE] HIS OWN POSSESSION. The KJV says a peculiar people. In 1611 peculiar meant your own special treasure. The Greek word is the one used for Israel in Exodus 19:5. It does not mean strange.

■ TIT 3:1 [NOTABLE] Written to Christians on an island Paul just called liars and lazy gluttons. Even so: speak evil of no one and be gentle to all people.

■ TIT 3:4 [NOTABLE] One of the clearest short summaries of the gospel in the Bible. God saved us because He is kind, not because we earned it, and made us heirs of eternal life.

■ TIT 3:5 [FULFILLS] God would sprinkle clean water and cleanse His people ← EZK 36:25 · MEDIUM p.~

NOTABLE

He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that, having been justified by His grace, we would become heirs with the hope of eternal life. ⁸

This saying is trustworthy. And I want you to emphasize these things, so that those who have believed God will take care to devote themselves to good deeds. These things are excellent and profitable for the people.

DEBATED THE BIG QUESTION

DOES BAPTISM SAVE?

The Washing of New Birth

TITUS 3:4 TO 7 · JOHN 3:5 · ACTS 2:38 · 1 PETER 3:21

WHAT PAUL SAID

God saved us, not by our good deeds, but by His mercy, through the washing of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 3:5. The KJV says the washing of regeneration. Christians have argued for centuries about one question: is that washing baptism, and does baptism save?

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS

In Acts, people were baptized right after they believed, often the same day, Acts 2:41, 8:36 to 38 and 16:33. The Didache, a church guide from about AD 100, says to baptize in running water, or to pour water on the head three times if there is none. Justin Martyr, about AD 155, calls baptism a washing and a new birth and quotes John 3:5.

BABIES OR BELIEVERS?

Tertullian, about AD 200, said it was better to wait until children were old enough to know Christ, which shows some churches baptized babies. A church order linked to Hippolytus, about AD 215, says to baptize the little ones first and let parents answer for them. Origen, about AD 245, said baptizing babies came from the apostles. Augustine, about AD 400, taught that babies need

baptism to wash away the sin they are born with, and infant baptism became normal for over a thousand years.

THE REFORMATION

Martin Luther kept infant baptism. In his Small Catechism, 1529, he asks how water can do such great things and answers: not the water, but God's word with the water, and faith that trusts it, quoting Titus 3:5 to 8. Ulrich Zwingli in Zurich taught that baptism is a sign, not a cause, of grace. John Calvin called it a sign and seal of God's promise, like circumcision.

THE BELIEVERS ONLY MOVEMENT

On January 21, 1525, in Zurich, Conrad Grebel baptized George Blaurock as a believer, and the Anabaptists were born. They were called rebaptizers and hunted down; Felix Manz was drowned in 1527. In 1609 John Smyth led the first English Baptist church, in Amsterdam.

LATER MOVEMENTS

In the early 1800s the Restoration Movement of Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell, which grew into the Churches of Christ and the Christian Church, taught baptism by immersion for the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2:38. In 1913, a sermon at a camp meeting near Los Angeles started the Oneness Pentecostal movement, which baptizes in Jesus' name only. Churches also differ on how: dunking all the way under, pouring, or sprinkling.

The Case Each Side Makes

TITUS 3:5 · ROMANS 6:3 TO 4 · EPHESIANS 2:8 TO 9 · LUKE 23:39 TO 43

BAPTISM SAVES, CATHOLIC AND ORTHODOX

Baptism really washes away sin and gives new birth, for babies and adults. Key verses: John 3:5, Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16, Romans 6:3 to 4, 1 Peter 3:21, and Titus 3:5. Best case: the Bible says baptism now saves you, 1 Peter 3:21, and the early church read it that way. The Catholic Catechism adds that God tied salvation to baptism but is not Himself tied by it, so a person who dies wanting baptism, or as a martyr, can be saved.

GOD'S WORD IN THE WATER, LUTHERAN

Baptism is God's work, not ours. His

■ TIT 3:5 [FULFILLS] I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will put My Spirit within you ← EZK 36:26-27 p.-

■ TIT 3:5 [NOTE] WASHING OF NEW BIRTH. The KJV says washing of regeneration. Christians disagree about whether this means baptism. See The Big Question pages, Does Baptism Save?

■ TIT 3:6 [FULFILLS] I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy ← JOEL 2:28-29 p.-

ARCHAEOLOGY NOTABLE

promise joined to the water gives new birth and creates faith, even in a baby. Key verses: Titus 3:5, Mark 16:16 in the longer ending, Galatians 3:27. Best case: it keeps salvation all grace, a gift you receive, never a work you do.

REQUIRED FOR BELIEVERS

Churches of Christ teach that a believer is saved when he is immersed for the forgiveness of sins. Oneness Pentecostals add that it must be in the name of Jesus. Key verses: Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16, Mark 16:16, and Acts 10:48 and 19:5. Best case: every conversion in Acts ends in the water, quickly, and nobody in the New Testament is called saved and then left unbaptized.

A COVENANT SIGN, REFORMED

Presbyterian and Reformed churches say baptism is a sign and seal of God's promise, the way circumcision was for Israel. It is given to believers and their children, but the water does not save by itself. Key verses: Colossians 2:11 to 12, Acts 2:39, and whole households baptized, Acts 16:15 and 16:33.

A SYMBOL OF A CHANGE ALREADY MADE

Baptists and most evangelical and Pentecostal churches say we are saved by grace through faith, Ephesians 2:8 to 9, and baptism is the first step of obedience that shows it. The washing in 3:5 is the Spirit's inner work. Key verses: Acts 10:44 to 48, where the Spirit came before the water, and 1 Corinthians 1:17, Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach. **THE THIEF ON THE CROSS:** he was never baptized as far as the Bible tells, yet Jesus said, today you will be with Me in paradise, Luke 23:43. Other sides answer that he died before Jesus commanded baptism, Matthew 28:19, that no one knows if John baptized him, or, for Catholics, that he had a baptism of desire.

WHAT WE ALL AGREE ON

Jesus commanded baptism, Matthew 28:19, so every believer should be baptized. The power to save is God's mercy, 3:5, not plain water. And the same Spirit He poured out on us, 3:6, makes us new.

AVOID DIVISIONS // ROMANS 16:17–20

⁹ But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, arguments, and quarrels about the law, because these things are pointless and worthless.

¹⁰ Reject a divisive man after a first and second admonition, ¹¹ knowing that such a man is corrupt and sinful; he is self-condemned.

FINAL REMARKS AND GREETINGS

¹² As soon as I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, because I have decided to winter there. ¹³ Do your best to equip Zenas the lawyer and Apollos, so that they will have everything they need. ¹⁴ And our people must also learn to devote themselves to good works in order to meet the pressing needs of others, so that they will not be unfruitful.

¹⁵ All who are with me send you greetings. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with all of you.

■ **TIT 3:9 [NOTE]** GENEALOGIES. Fights over family lines and the law, like 1 Timothy 1:4. Paul calls them pointless. Titus himself was a Greek who was never circumcised, Galatians 2:3.

■ **TIT 3:12 [ARCHAEOLOGY]** Augustus' victory monument above Nicopolis, with sockets for the bronze rams of captured warships from the battle of Actium, 31 BC → FIELD NOTES p.10

■ **TIT 3:13 [NOTE]** ZENAS AND APOLLOS. Zenas the lawyer is named only here; he may have been an expert in Roman law or the Law of Moses. Apollos is the gifted preacher from Alexandria, Acts 18:24 and 1 Corinthians 3:6.

■ **TIT 3:14 [NOTABLE]** Good works are not vague. They meet real needs of real people, so believers are not unfruitful.

DEBATED FIELD NOTES · ARCHAEOLOGY · CONFIDENCE: HIGH FOR THE CITY · WHICH NICOPOLIS IS DEBATED

NICOPOLIS, VICTORY CITY

TITUS 3:12 · 2 TIMOTHY 4:10 TO 12



Part of the wall of Augustus' victory monument above Nicopolis, Greece, with sockets for bronze ship rams. Photo Mark Landon, CC BY 4.0.

WHAT IT IS

Huge stone blocks from the victory monument Augustus built on the hill above Nicopolis, in western Greece. The oddly shaped holes held bronze rams, the pointed beaks of enemy warships he captured.

HOW OLD IT IS

Built about 29 to 27 BC, right after Augustus beat Mark Antony and Cleopatra in the sea battle of Actium, 31 BC. At least 36 rams hung on this wall. A Latin inscription says he gave his old army camp to Mars and Neptune, the gods of war and sea.

VICTORY CITY

Nicopolis means victory city. Augustus founded it in 29 BC near the spot where his army had camped, and started big games there every four years.

PAUL'S WINTER PLAN

Ships stopped sailing in winter. Paul writes, I have decided to winter there, 3:12, and asks Titus to come once Artemas or Tychicus arrives to take his place. We do not know how the meeting went. 2 Timothy 4:10 says Titus later went to Dalmatia, farther up the same coast.

A FAMOUS TEACHER

About AD 94, the emperor Domitian banished the Stoic teacher Epictetus, and he opened a school at Nicopolis. Students came from all over the empire.

WHICH NICOPOLIS?

At least three cities had this name. Most think Paul meant this one, the biggest, on the route between Greece and Italy. A note at the end of Titus in the KJV says it was written from Nicopolis, but that note was added by later copyists.

WHAT IT DOES NOT PROVE

Nothing here names Paul. The ruins show that the city he picked for the winter was real and important.