

## Titus 1:1-9

Titus' assignment in Crete

**Look:** The book of Titus was one of the last books Paul wrote. It is likely that Paul wrote this book, along with 1 and 2 Timothy, sometime between his first and second imprisonments. Timothy and Titus were fellow pastors who helped Paul serve various churches he had previously started. We have no record from Luke in the book of Acts about Paul starting a church on the island of Crete. That's one of the reasons this book is dated after Paul's first imprisonment. In any case, Paul wrote this letter to instruct and encourage Titus in his work on Crete.

**The Text:** Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ to further the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness—<sup>2</sup> in the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,<sup>3</sup> and which now at his appointed season he has brought to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior,

<sup>4</sup>To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

<sup>5</sup>The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. <sup>6</sup>An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. <sup>7</sup>Since an overseer manages God's household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. <sup>8</sup>Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. <sup>9</sup>He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

**Verse 1** “A servant of God”—Literally, a “slave” of Christ Jesus. Paul stressed that his will was completely subject to God's will. “An apostle of Jesus Christ”—Paul was also one who was sent out by Jesus himself. This was mentioned for the sake of the people of Crete, who had limited contact with Paul. He was presenting his credentials.

**Verse 6** “Blameless”—Paul obviously does not mean that these men were to be perfect and without sin. Rather, they were to be men whose conduct the people in the world could not criticize and whose conduct would reflect well on the gospel. Note that this quality is listed twice (verses 6 and 7).

### Discussion

1. Paul knew that God wanted all to be saved. Yet he was conscious of the fact that God had chosen some to come to faith and would without fail bring them to faith. What did Paul call these people (who had heard the Word and believed it)? (verse 1)
2. Paul describes his work in verses 1-3. What task had God given him? Focus on the following: “promised,” “Jesus Christ,” “his word,” “hope of eternal life,” “knowledge,” “faith,” and “godliness.”
3. What makes the final qualification in verse 9 so important?
4. Carefully read through each of the qualifications for elders. When are pastors today reviewed to see if they have these qualities?