



# Bite Size Books of the NT: Titus and Jude

## Super Wednesday Bible Study: 11/14/18

### 1. Brain Starter: Images of Jesus

*The Madonna of Loreto* by Caravaggio

### 2. The Basics of Titus

Who: Paul is named as sender, but it references a journey to Crete for which we have no Biblical evidence. The subject matter appears to be post-Pauline, and the style and vocabulary differ from the undisputed Pauline letters. Authorship is similar to 1 Timothy.

What: It is a letter of instruction to Titus, a missionary leader.

Where: Sender's location unknown; recipient presumably in Crete.

When: Early 60's if Paul is the author; around 100 if not.

Why: The author is advising Titus on combatting false doctrine.

### 3. Titus: Salutation (1:1-4)

- How does the salutation describe the sender's mission?
- In using terms like *servant of God* (2 Sam. 7:5 & Jer. 7:25) and *God's elect* (Isa. 65:9), note how the author appropriates OT terminology for Christian purposes.
- "Christian fictive kinship" is evidenced when Titus is referred to as a "loyal child."

### 4. Titus: Body (1:5-16) Life in Crete

- Vv. 5-9: Which of these qualifications remain important for leaders in the Church? Are there any you would emphasize, soften, or completely eliminate?
- Vv. 10-16: The trouble makers seem to be doing two harmful things:
  - Overemphasis on OT law for Gentiles (theological error); and
  - Insulting speech about the people (pastoral error).

### 5. Titus: Body (Ch. 2) Teach Sound Doctrine

- Throughout this chapter, consider what might be *timeless* doctrine and what might be *time-bound* first century social norms. Notice how the people are grouped by age and gender until it comes to slaves, who are grouped by social status. Luther called sections like this *Haustafeln* ("Household duties"). Such "tables" also appear in Romans, Colossians, Ephesians, 1 Peter, and 1 Timothy.
- Consider verses 11-14. Is this a "because" or a "so that" in relation to the preceding verses? Why might Lutherans interpret these verses as if they precede the instructions to the people?

### 6. Titus: Body (3:1-11) Good Deeds

- V. 1: Is submission/subjection to worldly rulers absolute and unconditional? See also Romans 13:1-7 and 1 Peter 2:13-17.
- Vv. 2-11: Are these good works aimed at securing salvation, living the Christian life to its fullness, and/or setting a good example for evangelization?

### 7. Titus: Conclusion (3:12-15)

- The specificity of names and circumstances heightens the letter's historicity.
- V. 14 is a call for good works for practical rather than theological reasons.

### 8. Titus: Assessment of Importance

- Appears in the Christmas Eve liturgy (2:11-14 for Prop. I and 3:4-7 for Prop. II).
- Urges us to consider the tension of being in but not of the world. "On one hand, all members are to live in such a way that persons outside the church cannot accuse these early Christian communities of being a subversive movement within the Roman Empire. On the other hand, Cretan Christians are to live in such a way that

pagan Cretans are won to the Lord by the Church's evangelistic witness." Zehr, *1&2 Timothy, Titus* (Herald Press 2010).

- Usually overshadowed by 1 Timothy, which addresses similar subject matter.

## **9. The Basics of Jude**

Who: Jude (Judas in Greek), is identified as the "brother of James," who may have been (step) brothers of Jesus. No recipient listed by name. Many believe this letter was a source for 2 Peter.

What: It is a letter of instruction from a Christian to a Christian community.

Where: Unknown, but Jude's use of OT stories suggests a Jewish background.

When: Speculation of approximately the year 100.

Why: Jude is writing in opposition to the false teaching of a movement claiming to be subject to no authority and to be authorized to live without moral restraint.

## **10. Jude: Salutation (1-2)**

- Jude identifies himself as James's brother rather than Jesus's brother. Why?
- Greeting in verse 2 is different than we have seen in the other "bite size books" we have studied.

## **11. Jude: Body (3-4) Reason for the Letter**

- Jude is "fighting for the faith." What does that mean to you?
- Jude characterizes the issues as theological and moral. What's the difference?

## **12. Jude: Body (5-16) Judgment on False Teachers**

- This section is rich with OT references that Jude uses to condemn the "dreamers."
- In vv. 6, 14, and 15 Jude makes reference to 1 Enoch 6-19, a book that is not generally recognized as canonical.
- The story about Moses in v. 9 is also not canonical.
- The issue is not only the conduct of the "dreamers," but also their denial of Jesus.

## **13. Jude: Body (17-23) Warnings and Exhortations**

- Jude warns the believers, but also frames the situation as expected by the apostles.
- The faithful Christians are not destined to be mere victims, but in Christ have the ability to overcome the present division and discord.
- How should those in error be treated? With mercy. See vv. 22-23.

## **14. Jude: Conclusion (24-25)**

- This beautiful closing is very Christocentric and pastoral.
- There is hope because of Jesus! What a timeless message!

## **15. Jude: Assessment of Importance**

- This letter does not appear in the Revised Common Lectionary.
- Likely preserved because of the assumed relationship of Jude to James and Jesus.
- The circumstances of the letter are highly contextual, but the notion of placing hope in Jesus is timeless.
- Jude is noteworthy in his reliance on ancient Jewish texts outside the Biblical canon.

## **16. Next Week (11/21): No class! In two weeks (11/28) we'll study 2 Peter.**