

## *Walking Out the Word:* **The Epistle to Titus**

### **Important Background to Titus:**

- Titus was a young apostolic leader who was a “true son” to Paul (Titus 1:4). Although he is not mentioned in the book of Acts, Galatians 2:1-4 clarifies that Titus was a non-Jewish convert who traveled to Jerusalem with Paul. It would have been easier for Titus who was a Greek to be circumcised to please the leaders of the Jerusalem church. Paul refused to have Titus compromise on this issue and yield to the bondage of the Law.
- Later, when there was a crisis in Corinth, Titus was sent by Paul to address the issues. Titus’ strength of character was seen in his ability to handle this difficult situation and bring an encouraging report to Paul (2 Cor. 2:12,13; 7:6-16).
- After Paul’s first imprisonment, Paul, Titus and Timothy evidently went to the island of Crete to share the gospel. There were likely Jews who had heard Peter on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11) who returned to Crete with the Christian message. Cretans were known as such chronic liars (Titus 1:12) that the Greeks used a verb for lying that meant “to Cretanize”. Paul’s letter to Titus reveals that the Christians in Crete were disorderly and needed divine order to be established in the church.
- The letter to Titus is similar to I Timothy. Both epistles address young apostolic leaders to lead and teach the churches. The main themes of Titus include church organization, correct doctrine, and the work of the Holy Spirit. Titus was charged to establish elders in every city where a beginning congregation existed. He detailed the moral character of these leaders and the need to rebuke those who resist apostolic doctrine.
- Throughout the letter Paul emphasizes that the Cretans are unable to transform themselves (1:12,13) and that it is the Holy Spirit’s work of regeneration in their lives (3:5). Part of the joy of our salvation is knowing that when we were born again, we received the Holy Spirit who enables us to live a life of rich fulfillment and daily triumph in Christ.

### **Things to talk about in Walking Out the Word:**

- *Opening Discussion:* As you discuss the background of Titus, notice that one of the characteristics of the Cretans is their tendency to lie. In the area that you live, what are the worldly strongholds that characterize the people who live and work around you?
- *Titus 1, 2 and 3:* Examine the list of qualities of an overseer or an elder in 1:6-9. How does this list compare to I Timothy 3:2-7? How does chapter 2 of Titus help us understand the importance of “DMC” (Discipleship, Mentoring & Coaching)? In 3:3-7 what are the two motives for proper conduct toward the outside world?
- *Closing:* What do you appreciate most about the book of Titus?