

Scriptures are able to make you wise. And that wisdom leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is given by God. And all Scripture is useful for teaching and for showing people what is wrong in their lives. It is useful for correcting faults and teaching the right way to live. ¹⁷Using the Scriptures, those who serve God will be prepared and will have everything they need to do every good work.

4¹Before God and Jesus Christ I give you a command. Christ Jesus is the one who will judge all people—those who are living and those who have died. He is coming again to rule in his kingdom.* So I give you this command: ²Tell everyone God's message.* Be ready at all times to do whatever is needed. Tell people what they need to do, tell them when they are doing wrong, and encourage them. Do this with great patience and careful teaching.

³The time will come when people will not listen to the true teaching. But people will find more and more teachers who please them. They will find teachers who say what they want to hear. ⁴People will stop listening to the truth. They will begin to follow the teaching in false stories. ⁵But you should control yourself at all times. When troubles come, accept them. Do the work of telling the Good News.* Do all the duties of a servant of God.

⁶My life is being given as an offering for God. The time has come for me to leave this life here. ⁷I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have served the Lord faithfully. ⁸Now, a prize is waiting for me—the crown* that will show I am right with God. The Lord, the judge who judges rightly, will give it to me on that Day.* Yes, he will give it to me and to everyone else who is eagerly looking forward to his coming.

Personal Notes

⁹Do your best to come to me as soon as you can. ¹⁰Demas loved this world too much. That is why he left me. He went to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia. And Titus went to Dalmatia. ¹¹Luke is the only one still with me. Get Mark and bring him with you when you come. He can help me in my work here. ¹²I sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

¹³When I was in Troas, I left my coat there with Carpus. So when you come, bring it to me. Also, bring my books. The books written on parchment* are the ones I need.

¹⁴Alexander the metalworker caused me so much harm. The Lord will punish him for what he did. ¹⁵He fought against everything we teach. You should be careful that he doesn't hurt you too.

¹⁶The first time I defended myself, no one helped me. Everyone left me. I pray that God will forgive them. ¹⁷But the Lord stayed with me. The Lord gave me strength so that I could tell the Good News* everywhere. He wanted all those who are not Jews to hear that Good News. So I was saved from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸The Lord will save me when anyone tries to hurt me. He will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. Glory* forever and ever be the Lord's. Amen.*

Final Greetings

¹⁹Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila and to the family of Onesiphorus. ²⁰Erastus stayed in Corinth. And I left Trophimus in Miletus—he was sick. ²¹Try as hard as you can to come to me before winter.

Greetings to you from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers and sisters here.

²²The Lord be with your spirit. Grace* be with you.

Titus

1¹Greetings from Paul, a servant of God and an apostle* of Jesus Christ. I was sent to help God's chosen people have faith and understand the truth that produces a life of devotion to God. ²This faith and knowledge make us sure that we have eternal life. God promised that life to us before time began—and God does not lie. ³At the right time, God let the world know about that life. He 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, a true son to me in the faith we share together.

Grace* 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 what still needed to be done. And I also left you there so that you could choose men to be elders* in every town. ⁶To be an elder, a man must not be guilty of living in a wrong

way. He must be faithful to his wife,^a and his children must be faithful to God.^b They must not be known as children who are wild or don't obey. ⁷An elder^c 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 someone who is proud and selfish or who gets angry quickly. He must not drink too much, and he must not be someone who likes to fight. He must not be a man who will do almost anything for money. ⁸An elder must be ready to help people by welcoming them into his home. He must love what is good. He must be wise. He must live right. He must be devoted to God and pleasing to him. And he must be able to control himself. ⁹An elder must be faithful to the same true message we teach. Then he will be able to encourage others with teaching that is true and right. And he will be able to show those who are against this teaching that they are wrong.

¹⁰This is important, because there are many people who refuse to obey—people who talk about worthless things and mislead others. I am talking especially about those who say that men who are not Jews must be circumcised* to please God. ¹¹These people must be stopped, because they are destroying whole families by teaching what they should not teach. They teach only to cheat people and make money. ¹²Even one of their own prophets said, "Cre-tans are always liars. They are evil animals and lazy people who do nothing but eat." ¹³The 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, ¹⁴and they will stop paying attention to the stories told by those Jews. They will stop following the commands of those who have turned away from the truth.

¹⁵To people who are pure, everything is pure. But to those who are full of sin and don't believe, nothing is pure. Really, their thinking has become evil and their consciences have been ruined. ¹⁶They say they know God, but the evil things they do show that they don't accept him. They are disgusting. They refuse to obey God and are not capable of doing anything good.

Following the True Teaching

2 ¹You, however, must tell everyone how to live in a way that agrees with the true teaching. ²Teach the older men to have self-control, to be serious, and to be wise. They must be strong in faith, in love, and in patience.

³Also, teach the older women to live the

^a**1:6 faithful to his wife** Literally, "a man of one woman."

^b**1:6 faithful to God** This word can mean "trustworthy" or "believers." Here, both meanings may be included. Compare this verse with 1 Tim. 3:4.

^c**1:7 elder** Here, literally, "overseer." See "elders" in the Word List.

way those who serve the Lord should live. They should not go around saying bad things about others or be in the habit of drinking too much. They should teach what is good. ⁴By doing this they will teach the younger women to love their husbands and children. ⁵They will teach them to be wise and pure, to take care of their homes, to be kind, and to be willing to serve their husbands. Then no one will be able to criticize the teaching God gave us.

⁶In the same way, tell the young men to be wise. ⁷You should be an example for them in every way by the good things you do. When you teach, be honest and serious. ⁸And your teaching should be clearly right so that you cannot be criticized. Then anyone who is against you will be ashamed. There will not be anything bad they can say about us.

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

¹¹That is the way we should live, because God's grace* has come. That grace can save everyone. ¹²It teaches us not to live against God and not to do the bad things the world wants to do. It teaches us to live on earth now in a wise and right way—a way that shows true devotion to 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 who belong only to him and who always want to do good.

¹⁵These are the things you should tell people. Encourage them, and when they are wrong, correct them. You have full authority to do this, so don't let anyone think they can ignore you.

The Right Way to Live

3 ¹Remind your people that they should always be under the authority of rulers and government leaders. They should obey these leaders and be ready to do good. ²Tell them not to speak evil of anyone but to live in peace with others. They should be gentle and polite to everyone.

³In the past we were foolish 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, 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 to

us that Holy Spirit fully through Jesus Christ our Savior. ⁷We were made right with God by his grace.* God saved us so that we could be his children and look forward to receiving life that never ends. ⁸This is a true statement.

And I want you to be sure that the people understand these things. Then those who believe in God will be careful to use their lives for doing good. These things are good and will help everyone.

⁹Stay away from those who have foolish arguments, who talk about useless family histories, or who make trouble and fight about what the Law of Moses teaches. These things are useless and will not help anyone. ¹⁰Give a warning to all those who cause arguments. If they continue to cause trouble after a second warning, then don't associate with them.

¹¹You know that people like that are evil and sinful. Their sins prove they are 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 prepare for their trip. Be sure that they have everything they need. ¹⁴Our people must learn to use their lives for doing good and helping anyone who has a need. Then they will not have empty lives.

¹⁵All the people with me here send you their greetings. Give my greetings to those who love us in the faith.

Grace* be with you all.

Philemon

¹Greetings from Paul, a prisoner for Jesus Christ, and from Timothy, our brother.

To Philemon, our dear friend and worker with us. ²Also to our sister Apphia, to Archippus, who serves with us in the Lord's army, and to the church* that meets in your home.

³Grace* and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philemon's Love and Faith

⁴I remember you in my prayers. And I always thank my God for you. ⁵I thank God because I hear about the love you have for all of God's holy people* and the faith you have in the Lord Jesus. ⁶I pray that the faith you share will make you understand every blessing we have in Christ. ⁷My brother, you have shown love to God's people, and your help has greatly encouraged them. What a great joy and encouragement that has been to me.

Accept Onesimus as a Brother

⁸There is something that you should do. And because of the authority I have in Christ, I feel free to command you to do it. ⁹But I am not commanding you; I am asking you to do it out of love. I, Paul, am an old man now, and I am a prisoner for Christ Jesus. ¹⁰I am asking you for my son Onesimus. He became my son while I was in prison. ¹¹In the past he was useless to you. But now he has become useful^a for both you and me.

¹²I am sending him back to you, but it's as

hard as losing part of myself. ¹³I would like to keep him here to help me while I am still in prison for telling the Good News.* By helping me here, he would be representing you. ¹⁴But I did not want to do anything without asking you first. Then whatever you do for me will be what you want to do, not what I forced you to do.

¹⁵Onesimus was separated from you for a short time. Maybe that happened so that you could have him back forever, ¹⁶not to be just a slave, but better than a slave, to be a dear brother. That's what he is to me. And I know he will mean even more to you, both as your slave and as one who shares your faith in the Lord.

¹⁷If you accept me as your friend, then accept Onesimus back. Welcome him like you would welcome me. ¹⁸If he has done any wrong to you or owes you anything, charge that to me. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing this in my own handwriting: I will pay back anything Onesimus owes. And I will say nothing about what you owe me for your own life. ²⁰So, my brother, as a follower of the Lord please do this favor^b for me. It would be such a great encouragement to me as your brother in Christ. ²¹I write this letter knowing that you will do what I ask, and even more than I ask.

²²Also, please prepare a room for me. I hope that God will answer your prayers and that I will be able to come and see you.

^b*20 please do this favor* Paul here makes another wordplay on the name Onesimus, using a verb related to it.

^a*11 useless... useful* Paul here makes a play on words with the name Onesimus, which means "useful."

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