

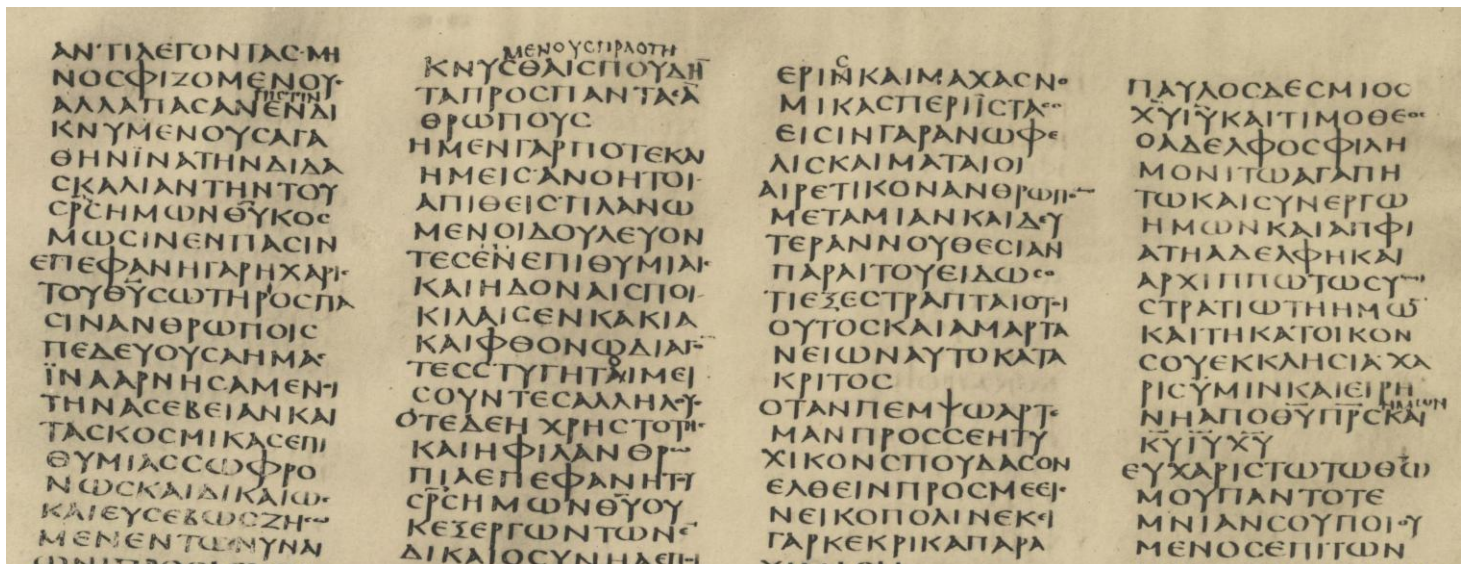


# TITUS

# MANUSCRIPT

# DISCOVERY

TERM 3, 2014



Let's be honest - sometimes when we read the Bible we don't really read it. We read the words on the page, but our minds are in the "off" position. We've read these words before, we assume we know what they mean, we remind ourselves of our standard application ("I must be a better dad/mum/worker/man/woman/child/acrobat, I should pray and read my Bible more, etc.), and then we move on. We haven't really engaged with what our God is saying to us and discovered, or rediscovered, the wonders of God's word.

The same thing can happen in a Bible study – we read the question, we find a one word or sentence answer to the question, we move on. By the end we figure that we must have studied the Bible because we've answered all the questions!

(I'm painting a very bleak picture here. I know it's not always like this, but sometimes it is, isn't it?)

A manuscript discovery is an opportunity to knock us out of our comfort zones. There are no questions with one word answers. In fact, there are hardly any questions at all. Instead, what you have is the text of Titus. Just the text. There are no chapter numbers, verse numbers, headings or paragraphs. These are all helpful tools that have been added to the text over the years, but sometimes they can be distracting as well. Imagine you are the first person to discover this manuscript and now you have to delve into its secrets. (There are line numbers on the side just to give you some reference point.)

Over the next few weeks you'll have certain tasks to complete. You'll read the whole book each week. You'll ask your own questions about the text. You'll come up with your own paragraphs. Most importantly, you'll have to think through what you think Titus is all about. The aim is to really come to grips with what God is saying in Titus

You may find this process a bit frustrating. Be patient! You won't discover all the answers in the first week. Each week won't bring you to a comfortable solution or end point. Over the six weeks though you should end up with a much clearer picture of Titus. Technically, only the task in the last week gets you to officially explore "application". If you're engaging with the book the rest of the time though, the implications for our lives will be jumping out at you left, right and centre.

Have fun, ask lots of questions, and most importantly, enjoy rediscovering God's word.

Paul, a slave of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of  
God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness, in  
the hope of eternal life that God, who cannot lie, promised before time  
began, and has in His own time revealed His message in the  
5 proclamation that I was entrusted with by the command of God our  
Savior: To Titus, my true child in our common faith. Grace and peace  
from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. The reason I left  
you in Crete was to set right what was left undone and, as I directed  
you, to appoint elders in every town: someone who is blameless, the  
10 husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of wildness  
or rebellion. For an overseer, as God's manager, must be blameless,  
not arrogant, not quick tempered, not addicted to wine, not a bully, not  
greedy for money, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible,  
righteous, holy, self-controlled, holding to the faithful message as  
15 taught, so that he will be able both to encourage with sound teaching  
and to refute those who contradict it. For there are also many  
rebellious people, idle talkers and deceivers, especially those from *the*  
*circumcision group*<sup>1</sup>. It is necessary to silence them; they overthrow  
whole households by teaching for dishonest gain what they should  
20 not. One of their very own prophets said, Cretans are always liars,  
evil beasts, lazy gluttons. This testimony is true. So, rebuke them

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<sup>1</sup> NIV says *from the circumcision group*. HCSB says *from Judaism*. The NIV is more helpful here.

sharply, that they may be sound in the faith and may not pay attention to Jewish myths and the commandments of men who reject the truth. To the pure, everything is pure, but to those who are defiled and  
25 unbelieving nothing is pure; in fact, both their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but they deny Him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, and disqualified for any good work. But you must speak what is consistent with sound teaching. Older men are to be self-controlled, worthy of respect, sensible, and  
30 sound in faith, love, and endurance. In the same way, older women are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not addicted to much wine. They are to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands and children, to be sensible, pure, good homemakers, and submissive to their husbands, so that  
35 God's message will not be slandered. Likewise, encourage the young men to be sensible about everything. Set an example of good works yourself, with integrity and dignity in your teaching. Your message is to be sound beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be ashamed, having nothing bad to say about us. Slaves are to be submissive to  
40 their masters in everything, and to be well-pleasing, not talking back or stealing, but demonstrating utter faithfulness, so that they may adorn the teaching of God our Savior in everything. For the grace of God has appeared, with salvation for all people, instructing us to deny

godlessness and worldly lusts and to live in a sensible, righteous, and  
45 godly way in the present age, while we wait for the blessed hope and  
the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.  
He gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to  
cleanse for Himself a special people, eager to do good works. Say  
these things, and encourage and rebuke with all authority. Let no one  
50 disregard you. Remind them to be submissive to rulers and  
authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to slander no  
one, to avoid fighting, and to be kind, always showing gentleness to  
all people. For we too were once foolish, disobedient, deceived,  
captives of various passions and pleasures, living in malice and envy,  
55 hateful, detesting one another. But when the goodness and love for  
man appeared from God our Savior, He saved us-- not by works of  
righteousness that we had done, but according to His mercy, through  
the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This  
Spirit He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our  
60 Savior, so that having been justified by His grace, we may become  
heirs with the hope of eternal life. This saying is trustworthy. I want  
you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed God  
might be careful to devote themselves to good works. These are good  
and profitable for everyone. But avoid foolish debates, genealogies,  
65 quarrels, and disputes about the law, for they are unprofitable and

worthless. Reject a divisive person after a first and second warning, knowing that such a person is perverted and sins, being self-condemned. When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, make every effort to come to me in Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the  
70 winter there. Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey, so that they will lack nothing. And our people must also learn to devote themselves to good works for cases of urgent need, so that they will not be unfruitful. All those who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with all of you.

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# Week 1

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As a group, read the letter all the way through.

Read it through again by yourself and write down all the questions you have.

Come back together and share your questions. Feel free to share ideas but don't get bogged down in trying to find the answers just yet.

# Week 2

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As a group, read the letter all the way through.

What can we learn about the author and recipient and their situations?

Author

His situation

Recipient

His situation



# Week 3

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As a group, read the letter all the way through.

In the text, mark the repeated words and related ideas.

In pairs or threes, mark in where you think the paragraph breaks should be throughout the book.

As a group, discuss why you put the breaks in where you did.

# Week 4

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As a group, read the letter all the way through.

What is a key idea/summary phrase or sentence for each paragraph?

How do these paragraphs link together? What is the logic flow?

# Week 5

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As a group, read the letter all the way through.

What is the main point of the letter? What is a purpose statement for why it is written?

Write a one sentence summary of the letter.

# Week 6

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As a group, read the letter all the way through.

Given all that we've learned, how then shall we live/think/pray?