

**Lesson 1 - Titus 1:1-4**  
**Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School**  
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Theme:

Titus, along with 1 and 2 Timothy, are called the “pastoral epistles” because they are written by Paul to young elders (pastors) detailing the organization, function, and ministry of the local church. Several themes are possible when studying Titus. Since Titus is one of the pastoral epistles, one possible theme is “The Responsibilities of an Elder”. Another possibility is “Zealous for Good Deeds” (2:14). Still another and the one which we will use in our study is “The Mature Believer”. Below is an outline based on our theme.

Outline

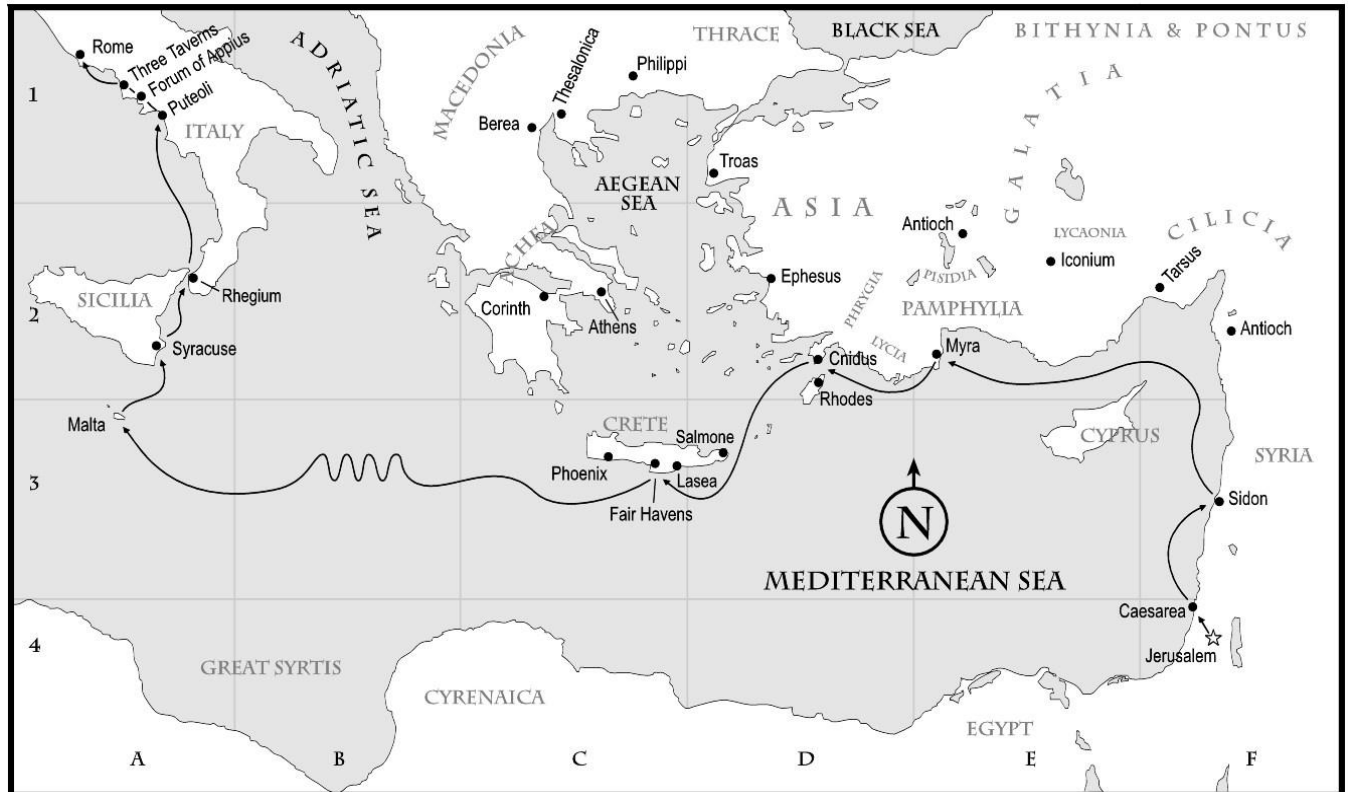
- I. Salutation Showing the Commitments of the Mature Believer (1:1-4)
  - A. The Writer (1:1-3)
  - B. The Reader (1:4a)
  - C. The Greeting (1:4b)
- II. Character of the Mature Believer (1:5-9)
  - A. Duties of Titus in Crete (1:5)
  - B. Public Reputation (1:6)
  - C. Sexual Morality (1:6)
  - D. Family (1:6)
  - E. General Negatives (1:7)
  - F. General Positives (1:8)
  - G. Devotion to the Word (1:9)
- III. Conflict of the Mature Believer (1:10-16)
  - A. Description of those who contradict (1:10-13a)
  - B. Response to those who contradict (1:13b-14)
  - C. Compared to those who contradict (1:15-16)
- IV. Relationships of the Mature Believer (2:1-10)
  - A. Fitting Things (2:1)
  - B. Older Men (2:2)
  - C. Older Women (2:3)
  - D. Young Women (2:4-5)
  - E. Young Men (2:6-8)
  - F. Bondslaves (2:9-10)
- V. Motivation for Godly Living of the Mature Believer (2:11-15)
  - A. Saved by Grace (2:11a)
  - B. Saved from Sin (2:11b)
  - C. Saved for Righteousness (2:12)
  - D. Saved Unto Good Works (2:13-14)
  - E. Preach it Brother (2:15)
- VI. Lifestyle Witness of the Mature Believer (3:1-8)
  - A. Lifestyle Witness Among Pagans (3:1-2)
  - B. Motivation for a Lifestyle Witness (3:3-8)
- VII. Repulsion of the Mature Believer (3:9-11)
- VIII. Conclusion Showing the Fruitfulness of the Mature Believer (3:12-15)

## Crete

Crete is one of the largest islands in the Mediterranean, 160 miles long by 35 miles wide and covered with mountains. Its location made it a prominent seaport and trade center and, even in ancient times, it boasted of highly developed civilization and large population. Cretans were great sailors who had a notorious reputation for immorality.

We have no definitive information on the founding of the church, but we do know that Cretans were present in Jerusalem at Pentecost (Acts 2:11) so it is logical to think that converts brought the gospel home. Paul first visited Crete on his voyage to Rome to appear before Caesar (Acts 27).

<sup>8</sup>"And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? ... <sup>11</sup>Cretans and Arabs--we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God." Acts 2:8, 11



From <http://classic.net.bible.org/map.php?full=jp4>

Paul visited Crete again (1:5), presumably upon his release from his first Roman imprisonment.

The churches on the island of Crete were unorganized, though there appear to have been Christians in many of its cities (1:5). Titus' task of setting the churches in order included appointing church leadership (1:5-9); dealing with false teachers (1:10-11), idle and corrupt Cretans (1:12), and internal factions (3:10-11); and the need for lifestyle evangelism (1:16; 3:1-8).

In contrast to several of Paul's other letters, including those to Rome and Galatia, Titus does not focus on explaining or defending doctrine. Paul seemed to have complete confidence in Titus' training, understanding, and convictions to meet the challenges of ministry in such a demanding place. Although it warns against false teachers, it gives no theological correction indicating that the young church had been well-taught and was firmly grounded. Its main thrust is equipping the saints for effective evangelism. Paul points out that the ideal church is one that is orderly in its organization, sound in its doctrine, pure in its living, and *"ready for every good work."*

## Salutation showing the commitments of the mature believer

Paul's one, long, truth-packed greeting to his spiritual son Titus gives us insight into what he was committed to as a bond-servant of God.

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, <sup>2</sup>in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, <sup>3</sup>but at the proper time manifested, *even* His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

### The Writer (1:1-3)

#### Paul's History

- Saul (Paul) was a perfect Hebrew (Phil 3:4-6)
- Saul (Paul) was a persecutor of the Church (Acts 7:54-8:3)
- Saul (Paul) was dramatically converted (Acts 9:1-6; Acts 9:19-22)
- Paul wholeheartedly served the Lord (see attached Life of Paul Summary)

#### 1. Committed to God's Mastery

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, ...

This is the only place that Paul refers to himself as the bond-servant of God. Elsewhere, he refers to himself as the bond-servant of Christ (Rom 1:1, Gal 1:10, Phil 1:1). The exact reason is unclear. Several places in this epistle Paul equates God and Christ (1:3-4; 2:10; 2:13; 3:4). He may also have been putting himself on par with Old Testament people [like Moses (Rev 15:3; Josh 1:2); Joshua (Josh 24:29); the prophets (Amos 3:7, Jer 7:25)] who were bond-servants of God to address the Jewish "empty talkers and deceivers" (cf. 1:10).

Bond-servant [doulos] means slave; the most servile person in the culture of Paul's day!

Paul was in complete, but willing, bondage to God. He had no life that he called his own, no will of his own, purpose of his own, or plan of his own. All was subject to his Lord. In every thought, every breath, and every effort he was under the mastery of God. MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Titus

Apostle of Jesus Christ – Apostle [apostolos] means a person who is sent from someone else with credentials on a mission. Paul specializes the term meaning someone who was chosen, trained, and commissioned by Jesus Himself to be His representative.

What about us?

<sup>23</sup>And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, **he must deny himself**, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. <sup>24</sup>For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. Luke 9:23-24

<sup>25</sup>Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup>"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. <sup>27</sup>Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. ... <sup>33</sup>So then, **none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.** Luke 14:25-27, 33

Q: What are some things that you have not (or have difficulty) surrendered to God's mastery?

## 2. Committed to God's Mission

...for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness,<sup>2</sup> in the hope of eternal life, ...

### a. Faith of those chosen of God

Election is God's unconditioned choice before the foundation of the world of those individuals whom He would save (Matt 22:1-14; Rom 3:10-13; 8:27-30; 9:6-24; 11:5-8; 11:29; 1 Cor 1:2; 1:18-19; 1:26-29; Eph 1:1-11; 2:8-9; Acts 13:48; 1 Thess 1:4; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 1:9; 2:10; 1 Pet 1:1-2; 2:9; 5:13; 2 Pet 1:10; 2:13; Rev 17:14). It is not based on a person's own initiative nor on God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is completely based on God's sovereign choice. All whom the Father appoints to eternal life (Acts 13:48) He will call to Himself (Rom 8:30) by sovereignly causing the gospel to be told to them (Acts 10; Rom 10:8-17). God's choice is required because all people are dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1) – dead people cannot choose to come alive.

The duty of evangelization can be summarized as preaching the gospel clearly, because of which the Holy Spirit will sovereignly and miraculously cause the elect to believe and be saved. This is the priority ministry for all who are servants of God and messengers of Christ Jesus. MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Titus

### b. Knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness

Knowledge [epignosis] means a full, precise, clear, deep truth and implies an intimate personal relationship with the truth.

According to [kata] has the meaning of goal or purpose

Godliness [eusebeia] literally means well-worship. It does not refer to a person's character as much as it refers to their attitude of reverence and awe toward God thus impacting all areas of life.

Godliness is a right attitude and response toward the true Creator God; a preoccupation from the heart with holy and sacred realities. It is respect for what is due to God, and is thus the highest of all virtues. MacArthur New Testament Commentary – 1 Timothy

Salvation has as its goal not me, but God. It is all about God. It is all about the worship due our Creator, Sustainer, Savior.

Wrapped up in this thought of the faith those chosen by God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness is the idea of sanctification. Salvation is not a one-time, fire-insurance act. God's purpose is that we become more like Jesus (Phil 1:6) – that more and more of Jesus' life is lived through us (Gal 2:20).

### c. In the hope of eternal life

The believer's hope is an anchor for the soul (Heb 6:19). Maturity brings about steadfastness (Eph 4:14).

<sup>19</sup>**This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast** and one which enters within the veil, Heb 6:19

<sup>14</sup>As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; Eph 4:14

Paul's mission embodied the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20).

Q: Does your life show that you are committed to God's mission?

### 3. Committed to God's Character

... which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, ...

Paul now moves to a mention of God's character, specifically here His faithfulness. God's faithfulness is explained as: God will always do what He has promised to do. He is steadfast, unchanging, perfectly reliable, and utterly dependable. He is 100% reliable, 100% of the time. Because God is faithful, He can be completely trusted.

Far above all finite comprehension is the unchanging faithfulness of God. Everything about God is great, vast, incomparable. He never forgets, never fails, never falters, never forfeits His word. To every declaration of promise or prophecy the Lord has exactly adhered, every engagement of covenant or threatening He will make good, for "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. 23:19). A. W. Pink

Long ages ago means literally means before eternal times

<sup>9</sup>who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to **His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity**, 2 Tim 1:9

<sup>4</sup>just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love Eph 1:4

<sup>34</sup>“Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, **inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world**.’ Matt 25:34

Before I was born, before any ancestor was born, before my ultimate grandparents and the universe were created, God loved me and planned to save me from my sin. Amazing!

Q: What of God's attributes do you know with knowledge, but not with your heart?

### 4. Committed to God's Word

... <sup>3</sup>but at the proper time manifested, *even* His word, ...

God made know His will to mankind through His word. Not the incarnate word, but His written word in which we find the proclamation (1:3b). It is the word that does its work in the believer to change us. Only Scripture is perfectly adequate for all matters of faith and conduct – for salvation and sanctification. Only Scripture is able to meet all the spiritual needs of God's people. Scripture is all-sufficient in regards to the soul of man, in our relationship to God, and in our relationship to others. It is the supreme and final authority in all matters on which it speaks.

<sup>3</sup>seeing that His divine power has **granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him** who called us by His own glory and excellence. 2 Pet 1:3

<sup>12</sup>For **the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword**, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Heb 4:12

<sup>16</sup>**All Scripture is inspired by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; <sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. 2 Tim 3:16-17

<sup>2</sup>like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 1 Pet 2:2

<sup>9</sup>**How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping *it* according to Your word.**

<sup>10</sup>With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments.

<sup>11</sup>**Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.** Psa 119:9-11

Q: Do you believe the resources God has given you are sufficient to solve all of life's issues?

#### 5. Committed to Biblical Ministry

... in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior,

Proclamation [kerugma] carries with it the bold and uncompromised presentation of God's Word, particularly the Gospel message.

Paul was not interested in PR campaigns or gimmicks to get people to respond to the Gospel.

<sup>4</sup>**and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,** <sup>5</sup>so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. 1 Cor 2:4-5

Human words of wisdom, no matter how impressive and persuasive, would have robbed the gospel of its power. He saw no place for calculated theatrics and techniques to manipulate response. Many have responded to an emotional appeal, without a true knowledge and conviction of God. Paul did not do that kind of preaching. He surely would have gotten a wider and more receptive hearing, but his hearers would have been left in their sins and without a Savior. Some have said that the great preacher Jonathan Edwards read his sermons so that he would not be guilty of using human persuasive techniques to gain a response. He wanted only the message to bring the results. MacArthur New Testament Commentary – 1 Corinthians

We too have been entrusted with the gospel (Matt 28:19-20).

<sup>18</sup>And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matt 28:18-20

Q: What do you do with this trust?

## The Reader (1:4a)

<sup>4</sup>To Titus, my true child in a common faith: ...

- Titus was a Greek Gentile convert (Gal 2:3) and probably heard the Gospel from Paul (Titus 1:4) during Paul's first missionary journey (some say Derbe). He is only mentioned in 12 passages from Paul's epistles (2 Cor 2:13; 7:6; 7:13, 14; 8:6, 16, 23, 12:18; Gal 2:1, 3; 2 Tim 4:10; Titus 1:4) and is never mentioned in Acts.
- Historically, the first time Titus is introduced is the account of the Jerusalem Council in Galatians 2:3 (cf Acts 15) ~AD 50.
- The next time Titus is mentioned is in 2 Corinthians which was written ~AD 56. Paul describes Titus as "my partner and fellow worker among you" (2 Cor 8:23)
- Titus carried the "severe letter" from Ephesus (2 Cor 12:18; cf. 2 Cor. 2:3-4; 7:8-12) and, returning to Ephesus through Macedonia, met Paul in Macedonia (2 Cor. 7:6-16). He was also the leader of the group of men Paul sent to the churches in Macedonia and Achaia to pick up the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:6, 16, 23).
- Paul is apparently released from his first Roman imprisonment (~AD 64-65) and visits several cities in which he had ministered including Ephesus, where he leaves Timothy, and travels through Macedonia and Crete where he leaves Titus (Titus 1:5).
- Titus mentioned in 2 Tim which was written during Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> Roman imprisonment. Paul sends for Timothy to "come before winter"; Titus joins Paul in Rome before being sent to Dalmatia.
- Church tradition records that he returned to Crete and ministered there until he died.

"Tradition has it that Titus, having become first bishop of Crete, died there in advanced years. His successor, Andreas Cretensis, eulogized him in the following terms: 'The first foundation-stone of the Cretan church; the pillar of the truth; the stay of the faith; the never silent trumpet of the evangelical message; the exalted echo of Paul's own voice.'" Philip E. Hughes, *Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 76.

These scanty references to Titus reveal that he was a trustworthy, efficient, and valued young co-worker. He possessed a forceful personality, was resourceful, energetic, tactful, skillful in dealing with difficult situations, and effective in conciliating people. The Expositor's Bible Commentary, "Titus" by Edmond Hiebert

- Paul shows that he is committed to Titus as his spiritual child (expresses endearment).

True – indicates that Titus was walking true to his parentage.

Common faith – indicates that in Crete, Titus was ministering with the authority of Paul.

Paul shows that he is committed to people. Just as we are committed to our physical children, Paul shows us that we need to be committed to people and to their spiritual well-being.

<sup>28</sup>We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. <sup>29</sup>For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me. Col 1:28-29

## The Greeting (1:4b)

...Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

- The common Pauline greeting stresses the unmerited favor of God and the accompanying peace that comes with salvation as well the source of that salvation being from the Godhead.
- As with 1 Timothy, Paul begins without a word of thanksgiving. He moves directly to business. This is not exactly a personal letter to Titus. No doubt the church would read this aloud

## The Life of Paul (with mentions of Timothy and Titus)

Date	Event
AD 0-10	Birth of Saul of Tarsus
30	Crucifixion of Jesus
32	Saul stoned Stephen and began the persecution of the church (Acts 7:59-8:3)
32	Saul encounters Jesus on the way to Damascus (Acts 9:1-21)
	Saul went away to Arabia to be with the Lord (Gal 1:17)
	Back in Damascus preaching Jesus (Acts 9:22-35)
35	Saul Goes to Jerusalem to become acquainted with the Apostles (Acts 9:26-29)
	Saul Goes to Caesarea, then to Tarsus (Acts 9:30)
	Barnabas and Saul minister in Antioch for one year (Acts 11:19-26)
	Barnabas and Saul take the contribution for the brethren in Judea (Acts 11:30)
	Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch with John Mark (Acts 12:24-25)
47-49	First Missionary Journey (Acts 13:1-14:28)
	– Barnabas and Saul set apart by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-3)
	– Ministry in Cyprus; Saul referred to as Paul (Acts 13:4-12)
	– Ministry in Galatia: Perga (John Mark leaves), Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lycaonia, Lystra (possible <i>Timothy</i> conversion), and Derbe (Perhaps <i>Titus</i> converted) (Acts 13:13-14:20)
	– Return to Antioch (Acts 14:21-28)
49-50	Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-29)
	– Took <i>Titus</i> to Jerusalem (Gal 2:3)
	– Return to Antioch (Acts 15:30-34)
	<i>Galatians written from Antioch about AD 49</i>
50-52	Second Missionary Journey (Acts 15:36-18:22)
	– Dispute between Barnabas and Paul over Mark; Paul chooses Silas (Acts 15:36-40); apparently takes <i>Titus</i> along
	– <i>Timothy</i> joins Paul and Silas at Lystra (Acts 16:1-3)
	– Macedonian call at Troas (Acts 16:6-10)
	– Ministry at Philippi (Acts 16:11-40), Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9), Berea (Acts 17:10-15), Athens (Acts 17:16-34), and Corinth (Acts 18:1-17)
	<i>1 Thessalonians written from Corinth about AD 51 (Timothy included in greeting)</i>
	<i>2 Thessalonians written from Corinth about AD 52 (Timothy included in greeting)</i>
	– Journey to Antioch; stop at Ephesus (Acts 18:18-22)
53-56	Third Missionary Journey (Acts 18:23-21:26)
	– Journey through Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:23-28)
	– Extended ministry at Ephesus [Churches at Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis “all who lived in Asia”, founded though not by Paul; 19:10] (Acts 19:1-41)
	<i>1 Corinthians written from Ephesus about AD 55 (perhaps carried by Timothy)</i>
	– Journey through Macedonia (Acts 20:1-2)
	<i>2 Corinthians written from Macedonia; late AD 55 or early 56 (Timothy included in greeting; Titus mentioned throughout letter as “My brother” and “My partner and fellow worker”)</i>
	– Three months in Greece (Acts 20:1-2)
	<i>Romans was written from Corinth about AD 56 (Timothy sends greetings)</i>
	– Return to Jerusalem through Macedonia and then by sea (Acts 20:3-26)
56-57	Arrest
57-59/60	Caesarean imprisonment
59/60	Journey to Rome
61-63	First imprisonment in Rome
	<i>Ephesians, Philippians (Timothy included in greeting), Colossians (Timothy included in greeting), and Philemon (Timothy included in greeting) from Rome</i>
64-65	Release from Roman imprisonment and “Fourth Missionary Journey”; Apparently Paul visited several cities in which he had ministered including Ephesus, where he left <i>Timothy</i> , and traveled through Macedonia (northern Greece) from where he wrote 1 Timothy (1 Tim 1:3) and Crete where he left <i>Titus</i> (Titus 1:5). He then traveled to Nicopolis in Achaia (southern Greece) from where he wrote Titus (Tit 3:12).
	<i>1 Timothy and Titus written after release from first Roman imprisonment</i>
66-67	Visits Troas (2 Tim 4:13) where he was suddenly arrested and taken to Rome (second imprisonment in Rome); Paul sent for <i>Timothy</i> to “come before winter”. <i>Titus</i> joins Paul in Rome before being sent to Dalmatia (2 Tim 4:10)
	<i>2 Timothy written from Rome</i>
68	Death (beheaded) in Rome