

Paul's Epistle to Titus

A New Rendition

(prepublication version)

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About the Brigham Young University New Testament Commentary Series

Welcome to the BYU New Testament Commentary, a project by a group of Latter-day Saint specialists offering to readers a careful, new look at the biblical records that witness the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and the first generation of his church. The commentary series seeks to make the New Testament more accessible to Latter-day Saint general readers and scholars by employing much of current biblical scholarship while reflecting important LDS insights. At the same time, this effort may also be helpful to interested readers of other faiths who want to learn how a group of Latter-day Saint scholars understands the Bible. A fundamental article of faith for Latter-day Saints (Mormons) affirms the Bible “to be the word of God” while adding, understandably, that it needs to be “translated correctly” in order for it to be accurately comprehensible to modern language speakers.

These objectives have helped shape the purposes and parameters of this commentary series. Serious LDS readers of the Bible search the scriptures, looking for depth and breadth in passages whose meanings and mandates may ultimately be plain but not shallow. Such readers and interpreters are served by treatments that unite faith and research, reason and revelation, in prayerfully confronting profound and difficult issues that arise in the texts and affect one’s path of progression. The New Testament has served as an influential guide to western civilization for centuries. As such, its records have long been studied by lay people and scholars alike, resulting in a rich reservoir of information that illuminates the New Testament era culturally, historically, and linguistically. Selectively, the BYUNTC builds upon this vast body of knowledge, resting on the Greek texts of the New Testament and connecting helpful elements of linguistic, literary, historical, and cultural research and traditional scholarship together with LDS scriptures and doctrinal perspectives. The combination of all these features

distinguishes the BYUNTC from other commentaries, which are readily available elsewhere and which readers may also want to consult for more encyclopedic or specialized discussions.

The tone of the BYUNTC aims to be informative rather than hortatory, and suggestive rather than definitive in its interpretation. The opinions expressed in this series are the views of its contributors and should not necessarily be attributed to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Brigham Young University, where many of those involved here are headquartered; or anyone else, though these works have benefitted from input and guidance from a number of colleagues, advisors, editors, and peer reviewers.

Each volume in this series contains a new working translation of the New Testament. Calling this a new “rendition” clarifies that it does not seek to replace the authorized KJV adopted by the LDS Church as its official English text. Rather, it aims to enhance readers’ understanding conceptually and spiritually by rendering the Greek texts into modern English with LDS sensitivities in mind. Comparing and explaining the New Rendition in light of the KJV then serves as one important purpose for each volume’s notes, comments, analyses, and summaries. This effort responds in modest ways to the desire President J. Reuben Clark Jr. expressed in his diary in 1956 that someday “qualified scholars [would provide] . . . a translation of the New Testament that will give us an accurate translation that shall be pregnant with the great principles of the Restored Gospel.”

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Paul's Epistle to Titus

Greeting (1:1–4)

1 Paul, a slave of God, an envoy of Jesus the Anointed, according to the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of truth, which concerns the reverence of God 2 in the hope of eternal life, which the God who cannot lie promised before time began. 3 He made known his word in his own time in the proclaimed message with which I was entrusted by the commandment of God, our Savior. 4 To Titus, a true son in our common faith: grace and peace from God the Father and the Anointed Jesus, our Savior.

Appointing Church Leaders (1:5–9)

5 I left you behind in Crete for this reason—so you could set the remaining affairs in order and could appoint older men over each city, just as I directed you: 6 if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, has faithful children, not accused of depravity or of being unruly. 7 For the overseer should be blameless as God's steward, not arrogant, not quick-tempered, not given to excessive drinking, not quarrelsome, not greedy for money, 8 but hospitable, a lover of goodness, wise, righteous, holy, self-controlled, 9 firmly holding to the trustworthy word according to the doctrine, so that he may be able to encourage with sound teaching and disprove his opponents.

Dealing with False Teachers (1:10–16)

10 For there are many unruly empty talkers and deceivers of the soul, especially those of the circumcision, 11 whom it is necessary to bridle because they overturn whole households by teaching that which they should not for the purpose of shameful gain. 12 For one of them, one of their own prophets, said, "The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons." 13 This witness is true. For this reason, admonish

them sharply, so that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and commandments of people who have turned away from the truth. 15 Everything is clean to the clean, but everything is unclean to the corrupt and faithless; certainly, their mind and conscience are both defiled. 16 They assert that they know God but disown him by their deed, since they are detestable and unruly and unfit for every good work.

To Older Members (2:1–5)

1 But as for you, speak that which is in keeping with sound instruction. 2 Older men are to be sober, dignified, sensible, and sound in faith, charity, and endurance. 3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior—not slanderers nor enslaving themselves to too much wine—but teachers of goodness 4 so that they may admonish younger women to be loving to their husbands and children 5 as well as to be wise, holy, watchful keepers of their homes, capable, and subject to their husbands, so that the word of God should not be slandered.

To Younger Members (2:6–8)

6 Encourage the younger men to be wise also. 7 In everything, present yourself as a model of good deeds. In teaching, show freedom from corruption, dignity, 8 and sound speech without reproach so that anyone who opposes us might be ashamed because none can say evil concerning us.

To Slaves (2:9–10)

9 Slaves are to be subject to their masters in all things, well pleasing, not defiant, 10 not embezzling but completely faithful and showing their moral goodness, so that in every way they may make beautiful the precepts of God, our Savior.

Teach God's Grace (2:11–15)

11 For the grace of God has appeared, saving all humanity, 12 rearing us up so that by denying ungodliness and worldly desires we might live wisely, righteously, and devotedly in the present age 13 while waiting for the blessed hope and the appearance of the glory of our great God and our Savior, the Anointed Jesus, 14 who offered himself on our

behalf so that he could redeem us from all lawlessness and purify for himself a specially chosen people, zealous for good deeds. 15 Speak of these things and encourage and chasten with all divine authority. Let no one despise you.

The Power of the Holy Spirit (3:1–8a)

1 Remind those you teach to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be prepared for every good work, 2 to slander no one, to be peaceable, and to be kind, demonstrating nothing but humility toward all people. 3 For we too once lacked understanding, were disobedient, led astray, enslaved by various desires and pleasures, living in vice and envy, detestable, and hating one another. 4 However,

“when the kindness and benevolence of God, our Savior, appeared, 5 he saved us, not according to the deeds done in righteousness that we performed, but through his compassion. This he did through the water of rebirth and the renewal of the Holy Ghost, 6 which he abundantly poured out upon us through Jesus the Anointed, our Savior. 7 This he did so that after we were declared righteous by his grace, we should be reborn heirs through the hope of eternal life.”

8 Trustworthy is the saying.

Engage in Good Works (3:8b–11)

I want you to confidently affirm these things so that those who have put their faith in God might aim to concern themselves with good deeds. These things are good and beneficial to all people. 9 However, avoid foolish debates and genealogies as well as discord and battles about the law of Moses, for they are harmful and useless. 10 Reject a person causing division after a first and second warning, 11 since you know that such a person has turned away and sinned, thereby condemning himself.

Instructions (3:12–14)

12 As soon as I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, do your best to come to me in Nicopolis, for I have decided to winter there. 13 Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollo on their journey, so that they lack nothing. 14 Also, let our people learn to perform good deeds to satisfy urgent needs so that they should not be unfruitful.

Final Greeting (3:15)

15 All those who are with me send their greeting. Remember me to those who love us in the faith.

Grace be with all of you.