

Titus

1

Summary: *Paul opens his letter to Titus with a dense theological greeting that grounds apostolic authority in God's promise of eternal life 'before the ages began.' He then addresses the reason Titus was left in Crete: to appoint elders in every town. Paul provides qualifications for these leaders — blameless character, faithful family, and sound doctrine — before turning to the specific problem on Crete: insubordinate people, especially from the circumcision party, who are disrupting whole households for dishonest gain. Paul quotes a Cretan prophet (Epimenides) — 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons' — and affirms the assessment, urging Titus to rebuke them sharply so they may be sound in the faith.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The opening sentence (vv. 1-4) is one of the longest and most theologically compressed in the Pauline corpus, containing Paul's self-designation, God's pre-temporal promise, the revelation of the word through preaching, and the address to Titus — all in a single Greek sentence. The quotation of Epimenides (v. 12) is extraordinary: Paul cites a pagan poet-prophet and calls him a 'prophet of their own' (idios autōn prophētēs), granting a measure of truthful authority to a non-Israelite voice. This creates the famous 'liar paradox' — if a Cretan says all Cretans are liars, is the statement itself a lie?*

Translation Friction: *The elder/overseer terminology (presbyteros/episkopos) appears interchangeable in this passage, which has implications for church governance debates. Paul begins with 'elder' (v. 5) and shifts to 'overseer' (v. 7) without distinction. The Epimenides quotation raises questions about Paul's use of pagan literature and cultural stereotyping — he applies a broad ethnic generalization to a specific theological problem. We render the text as given without softening or qualifying Paul's argument.*

Connections: *The elder qualifications parallel 1 Timothy 3:1-7 closely but are adapted for the Cretan context. The 'circumcision party' (v. 10) connects to the controversy in Galatians 2:12 and Acts 15. The pre-temporal promise (v. 2) echoes Romans 16:25-26 and Ephesians 1:4. The Epimenides quotation is one of three pagan citations in Paul (cf. Acts 17:28, 1 Cor 15:33).*

¹Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that accords with godliness, ²In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the present age began;. ³However, has in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed to me in keeping with to the commandment of God our Saviour;. ⁴Indeed, to Titus, mine own son following the common faith — Grace, mercy, and peace,

from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. ⁵This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you — ⁶An elder must be above reproach, faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who are not wild or disobedient. ⁷For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸However, a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate. ⁹He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able both to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it. ¹⁰For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. ¹¹They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole households by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. ¹²One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." ¹³This witness is true. For this reason rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; ¹⁴Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of people, that redirect from the what is genuine. ¹⁵To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; both their minds and their consciences are defiled. ¹⁶They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. Paul identifies himself as both 'servant of God' (*doulos theou*) — a designation shared with Moses, David, and the prophets — and 'apostle of Jesus Christ.' The dual title grounds his authority in both the Old Testament heritage and the new apostolic commission. The phrase *kat' eusebeian* ('according to godliness') links knowledge of truth inseparably to reverent living.
2. The Greek *apseudēs* ('without falsehood, who never lies') is a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, applied to God as the one whose character makes deception impossible. The phrase *pro chronōn aiōniōn* ('before eternal times') places God's promise in eternity past — before creation, before history, the plan of salvation was already determined.
3. The shift from eternal promise (v. 2) to historical manifestation (v. 3) spans the entire sweep of redemptive history: what God purposed before time, he revealed in time. The title 'God our Savior' (*toū sōtēros hēmōn theou*) is distinctive to the Pastoral Epistles and applies 'Savior' directly to God the Father, not only to Christ — a pattern that alternates throughout Titus.
4. The Greek *gnēsio teknō* ('true, legitimate child') indicates that Paul was instrumental in Titus's conversion. The phrase *kata koinēn pistin* ('according to a shared faith') emphasizes that their bond is not ethnic or biological but rooted in the same gospel. The SBLGNT reads 'grace and peace' without 'mercy' (*eleos*), which appears in some manuscripts. Now 'Savior' (*sōtēros*) is applied to Christ Jesus — the alternation with 'God our Savior' (v. 3) is deliberate throughout Titus.
5. Paul's departure from Crete is not recorded in Acts, suggesting this letter was written during a period of ministry not covered by Acts (possibly after a release from the first Roman imprisonment). The verb *epidiorthōsē* ('set right, put in order') implies that the church organization on Crete was incomplete. The instruction to appoint elders (*presbyterous*) 'in every town' (*kata polin*) indicates multiple congregations across the island.
6. The qualification 'above reproach' (*anengklētos*, 'not able to be called to account') sets the baseline. 'Husband of one wife' (*mias gynaikos anēr*) is debated — it may prohibit polygamy, remarriage after divorce, or remarriage after a spouse's death, or it may more broadly require marital faithfulness. The children must be *pista* ('faithful, believing') — the expectation is that an elder's household reflects his leadership capacity.
7. The shift from 'elder' (*presbyteros*, v. 5) to 'overseer' (*episkopos*, v. 7) without distinction indicates that these are the same office described from different angles — *presbyteros* emphasizing seniority and *episkopos* emphasizing function. The five negatives (not arrogant, not quick-tempered, not a drunkard, not violent, not greedy) describe the vices an overseer must not have, paralleling the positive qualities that follow.
8. Six positive virtues replace the five negatives: hospitable (*philoxenon*, 'loving strangers'), lover of good (*philagathon*), self-controlled (*sōphrona*), upright (*dikaion*), holy (*hosion*), and disciplined (*enkratē*). The pairing of *phil-* compounds (*philoxenon*, *philagathon*) echoes the vice catalogue in 2 Timothy 3:2-4 where disordered *phil-* words describe the wicked.
9. The capstone qualification is doctrinal: the elder must hold firm (*antechomenon*, 'cling to') the faithful word. This has a dual purpose: positive instruction (*parakalein*, 'exhort, encourage') and negative correction (*elegchein*, 'rebuke, convict'). The phrase *didaskalia hygiainousa* ('sound/healthy doctrine') is the medical metaphor characteristic of the Pastoral Epistles.
10. The 'circumcision party' (*hoi ek tēs peritomēs*) refers to Jewish Christians who insisted on Torah observance (including circumcision) as necessary for Gentile believers — the same faction opposed in Galatians and Acts 15. The three descriptors — insubordinate (*anypotaktoi*), empty talkers (*mataiologoi*), and deceivers (*phrenapitai*, 'mind-deceivers') — escalate from disobedience to delusion.
11. The Greek *epistomizein* ('to stop the mouth, to muzzle, to silence') is vivid — these teachers must be gagged. The damage is domestic: 'whole households' (*holous oikous*) are being overturned (*anatrepousin*). The motive is financial — *aischrou kerdous charin* ('for the sake of shameful gain'). The combination of theological error and financial exploitation characterizes the false teachers throughout the Pastoral Epistles.

12. The quotation is attributed to Epimenides of Knossos (c. 6th century BC), a semi-legendary Cretan poet-prophet. Paul calls him 'a prophet of their own' (idios autōn prophētēs), granting a degree of prophetic authority to a pagan voice — similar to his citation of Aratus in Acts 17:28. The three charges — liars (pseustai), evil beasts (kaka thēria), and lazy gluttons (gasteres argai, literally 'idle bellies') — are harsh by modern standards but serve Paul's rhetorical purpose.
13. Paul's endorsement — 'this testimony is true' (hē martyria hautē estin alēthēs) — has troubled commentators. Paul is not making a universal ethnic claim but using the Cretan poet's words to describe the specific false teachers at work in the Cretan churches. The adverb apotomōs ('sharply, severely') is from a root meaning 'to cut' — the rebuke must be surgical, aimed at restoring health (hygiainōsin, 'may be healthy/sound').
14. The 'Jewish myths' (Ioudaikois mythois) likely refer to speculative elaborations on Old Testament genealogies and narratives (cf. 1 Tim 1:4, 4:7). The 'commands of people' (entolais anthrōpōn) echoes Isaiah 29:13 (cited by Jesus in Mark 7:7) — human religious regulations that replace divine truth.
14. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 29:13. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
15. This proverbial statement (panta kathara tois katharais) addresses the food laws and purity regulations the circumcision party was imposing. It echoes Jesus' teaching in Mark 7:15-19 and Paul's argument in Romans 14:14, 20. The principle is that purity is a matter of internal disposition, not external regulation. For the defiled (memiammenois), the corruption is total — both mind (nous) and conscience (syneidēsis) are contaminated.
16. The chapter ends with a devastating verdict: verbal profession of God (homologousin eidenai) is contradicted by behavioral denial (tois ergois amountai). The three final adjectives — detestable (bdelyktoi, a term for ritual abomination), disobedient (apeitheis), and disqualified (adokimoi, 'failing the test') — are especially ironic for people who claim special knowledge of God's requirements. The term adokimoi echoes 2 Timothy 3:8 and directly opposes the 'approved' (dokimos) worker of 2 Timothy 2:15.

2

Summary: *Paul instructs Titus to teach what accords with sound doctrine, then specifies age- and gender-appropriate exhortations: older men are to be temperate and sound in faith; older women are to be reverent and train the younger women in domestic virtues; younger men are to be self-controlled, with Titus himself as a model. The chapter then soars into one of the New Testament's most concentrated theological passages: 'The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good works.'*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Verses 11-14 constitute one of the densest christological and soteriological passages in the Pastoral Epistles. The phrase 'our great God and Savior Jesus Christ' (v. 13) is one of the clearest New Testament affirmations of Christ's deity, applying both 'God' and 'Savior' to Jesus in a single construction (the Granville Sharp rule in Greek grammar). Grace is personified as a teacher (paideuousa, v. 12) — the same grace that saves also trains. The tension between 'has appeared' (v. 11, first coming) and 'the appearing' (v. 13, second coming) structures Christian existence as life between two epiphanies.*

Translation Friction: *The household instructions in verses 2-10 reflect first-century social structures, particularly regarding women's roles. We render the Greek accurately without either modernizing or amplifying the cultural specifics. The phrase 'our great God and Savior Jesus Christ' (v. 13) is grammatically ambiguous — it could refer to one person (Jesus Christ who is both God and Savior) or two persons (God the Father and Jesus Christ the Savior). The Granville Sharp construction strongly favors the single-referent reading, which we adopt. The instruction for slaves (vv. 9-10) is rendered faithfully; Paul addresses the social reality without endorsing slavery as an institution.*

Connections: *The grace epiphany (vv. 11-14) parallels Titus 3:4-7 in structure and theology. The 'blessed hope' connects to Romans 8:23-25 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-52. Christ's self-giving 'to redeem us from all lawlessness' (v. 14) echoes Psalm 130:8 and Ezekiel 37:23. The phrase 'a people of his own' (laon periousion) quotes the Septuagint of Exodus 19:5 and Deuteronomy 14:2, applying Israel's covenant identity to the church.*

¹But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. ²Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in endurance. ³Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, ⁴That they may instruct the youthful women to be sober, to devotion their

husbands, to devotion their children,. ⁵to be self-controlled, pure, attentive to their homes, kind, and respectful toward their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be discredited. ⁶Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. ⁷Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, ⁸Use wholesome speech that cannot be criticized, so that any opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us. ⁹Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, ¹⁰Not purloining, but shewing all upright fidelity. That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all matters. ¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹²It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age. ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴Who offered himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar those present, zealous of good deeds. ¹⁵Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The contrast with the false teachers of chapter 1 is marked by the emphatic 'you' (sy de). The verb lalei ('speak, teach') combined with prepei ('is fitting, accords with') demands that teaching content match doctrinal health. The medical metaphor *hygiainousē didaskalia* ('sound/healthy doctrine') continues from 1:9.
2. The Greek *presbytas* ('older men') refers to age, not the office of elder (*presbyteros*). The three character traits (sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled) are followed by three spheres of health: faith (*pistei*), love (*agapē*), and endurance (*hypomonē*). The medical metaphor appears again: *hygiainontas* ('being healthy/sound') in these three areas.
3. The Greek *hieroprepes* ('reverent, befitting a sacred person') literally means 'fitting for a temple' — older women are to carry themselves with priestly dignity. The prohibition against being diabolous ('slandorous') uses the same word as 'devil' — gossip makes one an agent of the accuser. The positive role *kalodidaskalous* ('teachers of good things') establishes older women as authorized teachers within the community.
4. The verb *sōphronizōsin* ('train, bring to their senses, encourage') implies practical mentoring, not merely theoretical instruction. The two *phil-* compounds — *philandrous* ('husband-loving') and *philoteknous* ('children-loving') — place domestic relationships at the center of the younger women's formation. This is mentorship by example, not classroom instruction.
5. The purpose clause — 'that the word of God may not be reviled' (*hina mē ho logos tou theou blasphēmētai*) — reveals the missional logic behind the instruction. In a Roman context where Christianity was already suspect, household disorder would bring public disgrace on the gospel. The Greek *oikourgous* ('working at home, managing the household') describes domestic productivity and management, not mere confinement.
6. The brevity is striking — younger men receive a single instruction: *sōphronein* ('to be self-controlled'). Self-control (*sōphrosynē*) is the virtue most frequently mentioned in this chapter, appearing in some form in verses 2, 4, 5, 6, and 12. It is the master virtue for the Cretan context.
7. Titus himself must be the *typon* ('pattern, model, example') — teaching is authenticated by the teacher's life. The qualities listed — *aphthorian* ('integrity, incorruptibility') and *semnotēta* ('dignity, gravity') — apply to both the content and the manner of his teaching.
8. The goal is apologetic: sound speech (*logon hygiē*) that is beyond condemnation (*akatagnōston*) removes ammunition from opponents. The Greek *entrapē* ('may be put to shame') describes the silencing of critics who can find no legitimate charge — a missional strategy through irreproachable conduct and teaching.
9. The Greek *doulous* ('slaves, bondservants') addresses the large enslaved population in the Roman world. Paul's instructions operate within the existing social structure while transforming the slave's motivation — as the next verse shows, the purpose is 'to adorn the doctrine of God.' Paul does not explicitly endorse or condemn the institution here; the Pastoral Epistles focus on conduct within existing circumstances.
10. The verb *kosmōsin* ('may adorn, may decorate') gives the passage its striking theological image: faithful living beautifies doctrine. The Christian slave's trustworthiness is not mere compliance but a form of witness — making the gospel attractive (*kosmos*, from which 'cosmetic' derives). 'God our Savior' (*tou sōtēros hēmōn theou*) applies the Savior title to God the Father, continuing the alternation noted throughout the letter.
11. The verb *epephanē* ('has appeared, has been manifested') is the root of 'epiphany' — grace arrived in history as a visible event, primarily in the incarnation and work of Christ. The adjective *sōtērios* ('saving, bringing salvation') modifies grace — grace itself is the saving agent. 'All people' (*pasin anthrōpois*) declares the universal scope of God's saving purpose, though the Pastoral Epistles do not thereby teach automatic universalism.
12. Grace is personified as a trainer (*paideuousa*, from *paideuō* — 'to train, educate, discipline a child'). The same grace that saves also forms character. The training has two dimensions: negative (renouncing ungodliness and worldly passions) and positive (living with self-control, justice, and piety). The three adverbs — *sōphronōs* (self-controlled), *dikaiōs* (uprightly), *eusebōs* (godly) — correspond to one's relationship to self, neighbor, and God respectively.
13. The phrase *tou megalou theou kai sōtēros hēmōn Iēsou Christou* ('of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ') applies both titles — 'great God' and 'Savior' — to Jesus Christ. The Granville Sharp rule in Greek grammar (a single article governing two nouns joined by *kai* where the first noun is not

a proper name) indicates a single referent. This is among the most explicit New Testament affirmations of Christ's deity. The 'blessed hope' (makarian elpida) is the second epiphany — Christ's return in glory — which creates the frame: life between two appearances.

14. Christ's self-giving (edōken heauton) has a double purpose: redemption from lawlessness (lytrosētai, 'to ransom, to liberate by payment') and purification of a people. The phrase laon periousion ('a people for his own possession') directly quotes the Septuagint of Exodus 19:5 and Deuteronomy 14:2 — Israel's covenant identity is now applied to the church. 'Zealous for good works' (zēlōtēn kalōn ergōn) connects the doctrinal heights of verses 11-14 back to the practical ethics of the entire chapter.
14. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Exodus 19:5. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
14. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 14:2. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
15. Three imperatives — speak (lalei), exhort (parakalei), rebuke (elegche) — cover the full range of pastoral communication. The phrase meta pasēs epitagēs ('with all authority') underscores that Titus acts with apostolic delegation. The final command — mēdeis sou periphronēitō ('let no one think around you, let no one disregard you') — parallels 1 Timothy 4:12 and indicates that Titus, like Timothy, may have faced challenges to his authority.

3

Summary: *Paul instructs Titus to remind the Cretan believers to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be ready for every good work, and to speak evil of no one. He grounds this ethical instruction in a stunning theological statement: God saved us not because of works done in righteousness but according to his own mercy, through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior — so that, being justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Paul identifies this as a 'trustworthy saying' and urges Titus to insist on it. He warns against foolish controversies and genealogies, instructs Titus on handling divisive persons, shares travel plans, and closes with greetings.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *Verses 4-7 form the second great soteriological passage in Titus (paired with 2:11-14). Together they constitute a comprehensive summary of salvation: its source (God's mercy and kindness), its means (the washing of regeneration and the Holy Spirit), its agent (Jesus Christ our Savior), its legal basis (justification by grace), and its goal (becoming heirs of eternal life). The phrase 'washing of regeneration' (loutron palingenesias) is unique in the New Testament and has been central to baptismal theology since the earliest centuries. The word palingenesia ('regeneration, new birth, new creation') appears only here and in Matthew 19:28.*

Translation Friction: *The relationship between 'washing of regeneration' and water baptism is debated. The language strongly evokes baptism but may describe spiritual regeneration symbolized by baptism rather than baptismal regeneration per se. We render the Greek without resolving the theological debate. The 'trustworthy saying' formula (pistos ho logos, v. 8) is the fifth and final occurrence in the Pastoral Epistles — whether it introduces or concludes the theological statement is debated. The instruction to reject a 'divisive person' after two warnings (v. 10) has shaped church discipline practices throughout history.*

Connections: *The salvation summary (vv. 4-7) parallels Titus 2:11-14, Ephesians 2:4-10, and Romans 3:21-26 in structure. The 'washing of regeneration' connects to John 3:5, Ezekiel 36:25-27, and the baptismal imagery of Romans 6:3-4. The 'pouring out' of the Spirit echoes Joel 2:28 (Acts 2:17) and Pentecost. The 'trustworthy saying' formula links to 1 Timothy 1:15, 3:1, 4:9, and 2 Timothy 2:11. The rejection of a factious person connects to Matthew 18:15-17.*

1Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, 2To talk wicked of no person, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness to all people. 3For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. 4But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but in keeping with to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; 6God poured out the Spirit on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7That while justified by his grace, we should be fashioned heirs according to the confident expectation of eternal life. 8The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. 9But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies,

dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. ¹⁰As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, ¹¹Being aware that he that is these people is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself. ¹²When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. ¹³Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. ¹⁴And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful. ¹⁵All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The Greek archais exousiais ('rulers and authorities') refers to civil government, not spiritual powers (as in Eph 6:12). The Cretan churches needed this instruction because the false teachers' insubordination (1:10) may have extended to civic life. The phrase 'every good work' (pan ergon agathon) recurs throughout the Pastoral Epistles as a summary of the Christian life's practical aim.
2. The scope is universal: 'no one' (mēdena) and 'all people' (pantas anthrōpous) — Christian conduct is not reserved for fellow believers but extends to everyone. The Greek epieikeis ('gentle, yielding, gracious') describes a quality that does not insist on its strict rights — the opposite of the combative false teachers.
3. Paul includes himself ('we ourselves,' hēmeis) in the pre-conversion portrait — this is not self-righteous judgment but shared confession. The catalogue of seven vices describes the human condition apart from grace: intellectual darkness (anoētoi), rebellion (apeitheis), deception (planōmenoi), slavery to desire (douleuontes), malice (kakia), envy (phthonos), and mutual hatred (misountes allēlous). This dark backdrop makes the light of verses 4-7 all the more brilliant.
4. The 'but' (de) marks the decisive turn from human depravity to divine initiative. Two divine attributes — chrēstotēs ('goodness, kindness') and philanthrōpia ('love for humanity, benevolence') — are the source of salvation. The word philanthrōpia (literally 'love of human beings') is the root of English 'philanthropy.' Once again, epephanē ('appeared') describes God's saving act as a visible, historical manifestation — paralleling 2:11.
5. The denial is categorical: 'not from works in righteousness which we did' (ouk ex ergōn tōn en dikaiosynē ha epoiēsamen hēmeis). Salvation is kata to autou eleos ('according to his mercy') — entirely God's initiative. The phrase loutrou palingenesias ('washing of regeneration') combines baptismal imagery with the concept of new birth/new creation. The word palingenesia (palin + genesis, 'again + origin') occurs only here and in Matthew 19:28 (where it refers to cosmic renewal). 'Renewal of the Holy Spirit' (anakainōseōs pneumatōs hagiou) describes the Spirit's work of making all things new — echoing Ezekiel 36:25-27.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Ezekiel 36:25-27 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
6. The verb execheen ('poured out') echoes Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17-18 — Pentecost language applied to every believer's experience of the Spirit. The adverb plousiōs ('richly, abundantly') emphasizes the lavish generosity of God's gift. 'Through Jesus Christ our Savior' (dia Iēsou Christou tou sōtēros hēmōn) places Christ as the mediator of the Spirit's outpouring — the Savior title now returns to Christ (cf. v. 4 where it applied to God the Father).
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Joel 2:28. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
7. The sequence is complete: saved by mercy (v. 5), renewed by the Spirit (vv. 5-6), justified by grace (v. 7), and constituted as heirs (klēronomoi) of eternal life. Justification (dikaiōthentes, 'having been declared righteous') is by grace (tē ekeinou chariti), not by works (v. 5). The inheritance language connects to the Old Testament land promise now transformed into 'the hope of eternal life' (kat' elpida zōēs aiōniou) — the same phrase that opened the letter (1:2).
8. The fifth and final 'trustworthy saying' (pistos ho logos) in the Pastoral Epistles likely refers back to verses 4-7. Paul's instruction to 'insist' (diabebaiousthai, 'affirm confidently, speak with certainty') shows that doctrine must be taught with conviction. The purpose is practical: believers are to 'devote themselves to good works' (kalōn ergōn proistasthai). Sound theology produces good works — the connection is causal, not coincidental.
9. The contrast with the 'profitable' things of verse 8 is explicit: these controversies are anōpheleis ('unprofitable, useless') and mataioi ('worthless, futile'). The 'genealogies' (genealogias) likely refer to speculative expansions of Old Testament genealogies — a feature of early Jewish and proto-gnostic speculation. 'Quarrels about the law' (machas nomikas) specify that the circumcision party (1:10) is still in view.
10. The Greek hairētikon ('divisive, factious, heretical') is the source of English 'heretic,' but its primary sense here is 'one who creates factions' rather than the later technical meaning of doctrinal heresy. The two-warning process before rejection shows that the goal is correction, not punishment — only persistent divisiveness warrants exclusion. This parallels the two-or-three-witness principle in Matthew 18:15-17 and Deuteronomy 19:15.
10. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Deuteronomy 19:15 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
11. The Greek exēstraptai ('has been turned inside out, has been perverted') is a perfect passive — the person's distortion is established and ongoing. The striking word autokatakrites ('self-condemned') appears only here in the New Testament. The divisive person's continued factious behavior after two warnings constitutes his own verdict — no external judgment is needed because his actions condemn him.

12. Artemas is mentioned only here in the New Testament. Tychicus appears in Acts 20:4, Ephesians 6:21, Colossians 4:7, and 2 Timothy 4:12. One of them will replace Titus on Crete so Titus can join Paul. Nicopolis ('victory city') — most likely the city in Epirus, on the western coast of Greece — was a common winter destination. Paul's travel plans indicate this letter was written before the final Roman imprisonment.
13. Zenas is called 'the lawyer' (ton nomikon) — possibly an expert in Jewish law or Roman law. He appears only here. Apollos is the well-known Alexandrian teacher of Acts 18:24-28 and 1 Corinthians 1:12. 'Speed on their way' (propempson) is a technical term for providing travelers with supplies and assistance for their journey — an early form of missionary support.
14. The phrase 'our people' (hoi hēmeteroi) refers to the Cretan believers. The instruction to 'devote themselves to good works' (kalōn ergōn proistasthai) repeats the language of verse 8 — the letter ends where it has been pointing throughout. The fruit metaphor (mē ōsin akarpoi, 'not be unfruitful') connects to Jesus' vine imagery (John 15:2, 4, 8) and the broader New Testament expectation that faith produces visible results.
15. The closing follows standard Pauline form: greetings from companions, greetings to the community, and a grace benediction. 'Those who love us in the faith' (tous philountas hēmas en pistei) specifies that the love is grounded in shared faith — this is not generic well-wishing but community solidarity. The final word is charis ('grace') — the same grace that appeared in 2:11 and saved in 3:5 now accompanies the community as Paul's parting gift. The SBLGNT does not include 'Amen,' which appears in some later manuscripts.