

TITUS (PERSON) [VI, 581–82] [Gk *Titos* Τίτος]. Titus was a gentile Christian (Gal 2:3) and one of Paul's chosen travel companions (Gal 2:1) and fellow workers (2 Cor 8:23). He was also Paul's trusted emissary for the Corinthian community (2 Cor 12:18) and one who assisted with the collection for the church in Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:6). In addition, Titus is the intended recipient of the NT pastoral letter bearing his name (Titus 1:4). See TIMOTHY AND TITUS, EPISTLES TO.

In the autobiographical section of Galatians, Paul identifies Titus and Barnabas as his chosen companions for his journey, originating presumably from Antioch and ending at Jerusalem (this journey has been variously identified with either the famine visit narrated in Acts 11:27–30 or the visit regarding the circumcision question related in Acts 15:2). Occurring 14 years after his first visit there with Cephas (Gal 1:18), the second visit (2:1–2) had as its purpose to present to the Jerusalem leaders the gospel that Paul was preaching to the gentiles. The choice of Titus, identified as a Greek (Gal 2:3), that is, a gentile according to the Pauline usage, reflects the wisdom of Paul's strategy.

As a gentile, Titus becomes a prototype for the Galatians and a test case for the entire gentile mission of Paul. For though he was a Greek, Titus “was not compelled to be circumcised” (2:3). The ambiguity of this phrase lends itself to two conflicting interpretations: (1) the circumcision of Titus did take place, although there was no compulsion, either at his own initiative or by the suggestion of Paul, as a conciliatory gesture to the more conservative Jewish Christians. (In support of this alternative there is the reading in some mss [one Western text and Marcion] that Paul “did yield for a moment” [2:5] to the pressure, and allowed the circumcision to take place.) (2) False brethren (2:4–5) put strong pressure upon Titus (and Paul) for the circumcision, but they did not submit, as Paul emphatically affirms: “To them we did not yield submission even for a moment” (2:5). The first option is highly unlikely, since the circumcision of Titus, if it did in fact take place, would surely have become known publicly, particularly to the Galatian Judaizers who opposed Paul's gospel. To permit this would have compromised Paul's mission. It is more likely that Titus left Jerusalem as an uncircumcised gentile, and as such, served as a powerful witness that a gentile could participate in God's salvation without accepting this prescription of the Torah.

This takes us to the Corinthian situation. Titus figures prominently as Paul's strong right arm in his relationship with the Corinthian community after his founding visit there, as is attested by 2 Corinthians. That there is no mention of Titus in 1 Corinthians, either in the prescript or the rest of the letter, suggests that he became involved with them just after that letter was written, although by this time he had already been one of Paul's co-workers for a number of years. It is also possible that Titus was assigned (by Paul?) to manage the collection from the [Vol. 6, p. 582] beginning, and that is why he figures so prominently in 2 Corinthians.

After Paul's initial visit to Corinth and his first letter (cf. 1 Cor 7:1), word came to Paul while he was in Ephesus that at least some Corinthians had turned against him. Rather than go himself (perhaps because of the demands of the pastoral situation in Ephesus, and not because Paul wanted to avoid conflict or could not subdue the revolt), Paul looked to Titus, a co-worker with proven pastoral skill, to travel to Corinth and mediate the difficult situation. Part of his task was to remind the Corinthians of their obedience to the founding apostle (2 Cor 7:15). Surely Titus was no less anxious than Paul about this mission, both of them wondering how Titus might be received and what the outcome might be.

Before Titus was sent, Paul had evidently prearranged to meet him on his return trip in the district around Troas (2 Cor 2:12), probably at the port of Troas, where Titus would arrive by sea. For some reason (Titus' longer than expected stay in Corinth or difficult travel experiences?) Titus did not make this rendezvous. This caused no

small disturbance to Paul, who reflects: “My mind could not rest because I did not find my brother Titus there” (2:13). Rather than continue to wait longer, Paul, perhaps thinking that Titus had missed the last sailing of the summer season, headed north by land to the Hellespont, hoping to encounter Titus en route overland. If the shipping lanes were closed by this time for the winter season, Titus would have had to travel this route.

There was no little concern in Paul’s mind about meeting Titus, for Paul describes himself as “afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within” (7:5). In Macedonia the reunion with Titus finally occurred. Besides the joy brought by seeing his trusted fellow worker again, Paul was further comforted by the news Titus brought. The Corinthians had evidently received Titus as well as his mediating efforts without hostility. The conflict they were experiencing gave rise to grief and their grief produced “a repentance that leads to salvation” (7:10). The Corinthians not only were a comfort to Titus, they also expressed their zeal to see Paul once again (7:7). Paul’s so-called severe letter (written between 1 and 2 Corinthians), indeed in the mission of Titus had its desired effect.

No sooner had Paul met Titus than he promptly decided to send Titus back for the specific purpose of assisting in the collection for the saints in Jerusalem (8:6). Since Titus was “very earnest” to go of his own accord (8:17), Paul did not have to use much persuasion. The collection had been announced earlier (1 Cor 16:1–4) and was already under way (2 Cor 8:6, 10–11) as something willingly accepted by the community. Titus was to complete this work.

Sent with Titus were two other companions about whom we know something of their character, if not their names. One is a brother who was “famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel” (8:18). He was recognized not by Paul alone, but had been “appointed by the churches” to travel with Paul in the work of the gospel (8:19). The other brother is one whom Paul and his fellow missionaries had “often tested and found earnest in many matters” (8:22). Both of these emissaries are called “apostles” of the churches (8:23); Titus alone is designated as Paul’s partner and fellow worker. In light of the strong recommendation Paul has given to this trio, the question has been raised whether Paul had some misgivings about the Corinthian collection effort. Was Paul’s strategy for completing the collection by sending others, one a noncircumcised gentile (Titus), a sign of the craftiness of which Paul was accused (12:12–16)? Paul even asks rhetorically whether he or Titus or the brother (now only one is mentioned) took advantage of them (12:17–18). Beyond this nothing further is known regarding Titus’ efforts for the collection, although it appears that Paul eventually brought the collection to its intended recipients, the church in Jerusalem (see Acts 24:26).

Two later references to Titus are found in the NT. The author of 2 Timothy reports that Titus had gone to Dalmatia (4:10), and there is a letter addressed to Titus, who is referred to by the reputed author, Paul, as “my true child in a common faith” (1:4). Some commentators interpret this verse to mean that Titus was one of Paul’s converts. According to this same letter, Titus has been left at Crete to correct a deteriorating pastoral situation and to appoint elders. The final instructions urge Titus to join Paul at Nicopolis (3:13), where he has decided to spend the winter. Soon after the letter is received, Titus is to be replaced by either Artemas or Tychicus (3:12).

Somewhat surprisingly, there is no mention of Titus in Acts, although some attempts have been made to identify him with Titius Justus (Acts 18:7). And there is a 9th-century Latin ms that refers to Titus in Acts 13:1. Various possible explanations have been offered for Acts’ silence about Titus: he was not well enough known to be included; he may have been a relative or very close friend of Luke, and hence omitted as was the author’s name; he may have been Luke’s eyewitness for sections of the book. Also it has been argued that any mention of Titus was omitted by the author of Acts because he was involved in the more controversial events of Paul’s life, including the

circumcision question, the stormy situation with the Corinthian community, and the collection for Jerusalem (Walker 1981: 232–33).

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JOHN GILLMAN