Observation Assignment Example
Epistle to Titus

Formal Introduction

1. Author: Paul
   Internal Evidence:
   Paul mentions himself by name in Titus 1:1. This is similar to Paul’s typical greeting in his other letters (see Romans 1:1; I Cor 1:1; II Cor 1:1; Gal 1:1; Eph 1:1; Phil 1:1; Col 1:1; I Thess 1:1; II Thess 1:1; I Tim 1:1; II Tim 1:1; Philemon 1:1)

   External Evidence:
   There is ample evidence from the earliest Church Fathers that Paul was indeed the author of Titus. According to Jamieson-Fausset-Brown’s commentary on Titus, Clement of Rome quotes from it in his letter to the Corinthians in chapter 2. They also state that Irenaeus quoted it as being Paul’s letter in his work Against Heresies (Book 3 chapter 3 verse 4). They also point out that Theophilus of Antioch and Clement of Alexandria both recognized it as Paul’s letter.

   The book of Acts is filled with the background information on Paul including his persecution of the Church (Acts 8:1; 9:1-2), conversion (Acts 9:3-19), missionary journeys and imprisonment (Acts 13-28). Paul was chosen by Jesus to be the Apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15; Romans 16:7). Paul wrote many letters of instructions to the local churches that he planted (ex. Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, etc.) as well as to individual men that he built up in the faith (Timothy, Titus, Philemon).

2. Date Written: around 63 or 64 A.D. in autumn
   Evidence:
   The book of Acts points out that Paul only went to Crete on his way to Rome (Acts 27) and not in one of his missionary journeys. Luke does not mention anything about Paul being...
allowed to evangelize Crete, nor did Luke mention Titus being with them on this journey. Thus it is likely that Paul went there sometime after being released from his first Roman imprisonment. The book of Acts does not speak to anything about Paul’s life after his first imprisonment. Thus we must rely on context clues and external sources to verify the date of writing. Paul also mentions that he is planning on wintering in the city of Nicopolis soon, so it must be around autumn.

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown points out that Paul was martyred in 67 AD, so it had to be written before that date, but it must be after his first imprisonment (the book of Acts ends around 62 AD), thus somewhere around 63-64 AD is a reasonable date for the writing of Titus.

At this time the Mediterranean world was dominated by the control of the Roman Empire. Nero (37-68 AD) was the Roman Emperor (r. 54-68 AD). The great fire of Rome lasted from July 18 to July 23 in 64 AD. There was much controversy in Rome as to what caused the fire, and many blamed Nero for the fire. Nero shifted blame to the Christians, and thus the first great Christian persecution by the Romans began in late 64. There is no talk of this persecution at this time, so either it did not ramp up yet, or it had not happened yet. Thus 63-64 AD is reasonable.

3. Provenance (where it was written): Corinth
   Internal Evidence:
   In Titus 3:12 Paul states that he is headed to Nicopolis, but he had not reached there yet because he refers to it as being “there,” instead of “here.” If Paul were at Nicopolis then he would have said “here” instead of “there.”

   Titus 3:12 also states that Paul is sending Tychicus to him on Crete. Corinth would be a major city on his way to Nicopolis, and an easy way to get passage to Crete.

   External Evidence:
   J-F-B points out that he likely wrote it while in Corinth.

4. Audience/Destination (who it was written to): Titus on the island of Crete
   Internal Evidence:
   Titus 1:4 states that it was written to Titus, and Titus 1:5 states that Titus has been left on the island of Crete.

   Titus is called Paul’s true son in the faith (Titus 1:4). Paul clearly trusts Titus as a fellow believer to appoint elders in every town on Crete (Titus 1:5).

   External Evidence:
   While Titus is not mentioned in the book of Acts by name, Paul mentions in Galatians 2:1 that Titus came with him when Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem (Acts 15). Paul
mentions Titus many times in II Corinthians. II Cor 2:13 points out how much Paul depended on Titus for not being able to find him meant that his spirit could find no rest. Titus finally came to Paul from Corinth as we see in II Cor 7:6-7. Titus also had been ministering to the Corinthians. Paul mentions Titus’s work and character throughout the rest of his letter. Titus is Paul’s fellow worker (II Cor 8:23). Titus is also a Greek by birth (Gal 2:3). Since Paul built so much into Titus before, Paul now trusts Titus to appoint elders by himself.

5. Occasion/Purpose (why it was written):
Evidence:
   Titus 1:5-9 states clearly that the purpose of the letter is to get Titus to appoint qualified elders in every city on Crete. These qualified elders will be able to silence false teaching (Titus 1:10-16). In general Titus is to make certain that all of the local churches are well ordered and functioning correctly. The appointing of qualified elders is the key to this endeavor.

6. Genre of Literature:
Evidence:
The book of Titus is an epistle which is simply a letter. According to Easton’s Bible Dictionary, all of the books of the Bible written by Paul were epistles. According to Smith’s Bible Dictionary, epistles were a Greco-Roman genre. Smith’s also points out that this genre is very formulaic. It begins with the name of the author, and is written in the first person. Smith points out that the formula is as follows: salutation, the main body, individual messages, and conclusion.

7. Controversial Issues:
Evidence:
   Carson and Moo point out that there are over 300 different Greek words in I & II Timothy as well as Titus that do not appear in his other letters. This has caused certain scholars to question Paul’s authorship and to state that it was a composition of the early Church in the 2nd century. However many points work against this being a later writing. None of the Early Church Fathers stated anyone other than Paul wrote them. Paul only used 2,177 different Greek words, and thus we can’t know the true scope of his full vocabulary. Different issues call for different words. We also know that Paul wrote all of his letter through the use of amanuenses. It is also known that early heretics rejected the writings of Paul because he wrote them – they rejected Paul. Why would they reject one that didn’t write the letters? Rather it is the responsibility for these doubters to provide real historical facts casting doubt on Pauline authorship. There is too much evidence in favor of Pauline authorship to deny that he is indeed the author.
Outline
I. Greeting (1:1-4)
   A. Paul’s introduction (1:1-3)
   B. Greeting to Titus (1:4)
II. Instructions on Appointing Elders (1:5-2:1)
   A. Qualifications of an Elder (1:5-9)
   B. Difficulty of Finding Elders (1:10-2:1)
III. Instructions to Church Members (2:2-2:15)
   A. Instructions to the people (2:2-10)
   B. Reasoning behind instructions (2:11-15)
IV. The Proper Relationship Approach of Believers (3:1-11)
   A. The believer relating to the world (3:1-2)
   B. The believer’s motivation comes from salvation (3:3-8)
   C. Believer’s relations in conflict and heresies (3:9-11)
V. Conclusion (3:12-15)
   A. Requests for fellow workers (3:12-14)
   B. Final Greeting (3:15)

Observations
Verse 1: 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,
1. Paul refers to himself as a bond-servant of God
2. Paul is an Apostle of Jesus Christ
3. Paul is a bond-servant and an Apostle for faith of those chosen of God
4. There are those that are chosen of God
5. God chooses
6. Paul is a bond-servant and Apostle for the knowledge of truth
7. The knowledge of truth is according to godliness
8. Paul is imparting knowledge of truth
9. What is meant by bond-servant?
10. What is an Apostle of Jesus Christ?
Verse 2: in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,
1. The knowledge of truth which is according to godliness is in the hope of eternal life
2. God cannot lie
3. Eternal life causes hope
4. God promised eternal life
5. God promised eternal life long ages ago
6. Where did God promise eternal life long ages ago?

Verse 3: 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,
1. God promised eternal life long ages ago, but manifested it at the proper time
2. God’s word was manifested
3. God’s word was manifested at the proper time
4. God’s word was manifested and proclaimed
5. The proclamation of God’s word was entrusted to Paul
6. The proclamation of God’s word entrusted to Paul came about as a commandment of God
7. God is our savior
8. God gives commands
9. God gave a command to Paul specifically
10. Paul was entrusted by God
11. Paul is trustworthy with the things of God
12. God deems Paul trustworthy
13. What is meant by His word? Is that a reference to Jesus or to Scripture or something else?
14. When was Paul entrusted with the proclamation of His word?

Verse 4: To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.
1. This letter is written to Titus
2. Titus is Paul’s true child in a common faith
3. Titus and Paul have a common faith
4. Paul wishes grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior upon Titus
5. God is the Father
6. Christ Jesus is our savior
7. Grace and peace come from God the Father and Christ Jesus
8. Verse 3 stated that God was savior, and this verse states that Christ Jesus is our savior
9. What is meant by “child” in describing Titus?
Verse 5: For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,
1. Paul left Titus on Crete
2. Paul was on Crete at some point since he left Titus on Crete
3. Paul left Titus for a reason
4. Paul wants Titus to set in order what remains
5. There were things that still needed to be done on Crete
6. Things must be set in order on Crete
7. Setting in order is accomplished through the appointment of elders in every city
8. Elders bring order
9. Paul directed Titus
10. Paul gives orders to Titus
11. Part of Paul’s knowledge of truth is in the command to appoint elders
12. Elders must be appointed in every city
13. There are multiple elders in every city
14. Elders is plural
15. “City” is singular, but modified with the word “every” making the appointment of “elders” as an action that must occur in every city on Crete
16. When did Paul leave Titus on Crete?
17. What is meant by elder?

Verse 6: namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.
1. Elders must be a man
2. Elders must be above reproach
3. Elders must be a husband
4. Elders must have only one wife
5. Elders must have children
6. Elders must have children that are believers
7. Elders must not be accused of dissipation (overindulgence in a sinful sense)
8. Elders must not be accused of rebellion
9. The last 2 qualifications were a description of what they were not supposed to be, while the first 3 were qualifications of what they were supposed to be like
10. Is it literally a man only, or can a woman also be an elder?
11. Can a divorced man be an elder if he remarries?

Verse 7: For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,
1. Paul uses the word overseer in this verse, but he was just talking about elders
2. Why did Paul switch to the word overseer from elder?
3. The overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward
4. The overseer is God’s steward
5. The overseer must not be self-willed
6. The overseer must not be quick tempered
7. The overseer must not be addicted to wine
8. The overseer must not be pugnacious (confrontational)
9. The overseer must not be fond of sordid gain (money through cheating or lying)
10. Are elder and overseer synonymous?
11. Can an overseer have any wine?
12. Is an overseer supposed to get paid?

**Verse 8:** but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,
1. The tone shifts from what the overseer is not supposed to be like to what the overseer is supposed to be like
2. The overseer must be hospitable
3. The overseer must love what is good
4. The overseer must be sensible
5. The overseer must be just
6. The overseer must be devout
7. The overseer must be self-controlled

**Verse 9:** holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.
1. The overseer must hold fast the faithful word
2. Holding fast the faithful word is in accordance with the teaching
3. Holding fast the faithful word allows the overseer to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict
4. There is sound doctrine
5. There is doctrine that contradicts sound doctrine
6. The overseer must exhort sound doctrine
7. The overseer must refute those that contradict
8. There are people that contradict
9. Is the faithful word Scripture?
Bibliography


