

THE BOOK OF TITUS - (Section 2 - Titus 1:10-16)

GODLY LEADERSHIP IS ESSENTIAL TO THE CHURCH

Important Information

The Antidote to False Teachers is True Teachers (v. 10)

Paul's instructions to Titus to appoint elders within the church is, first and foremost, to combat the false doctrines being taught by false teachers. The best way to protect the church from heresy is to train and equip solid leaders and teachers within the body of the church. Paul understood that it would be impossible to keep the false teachers out of the church. Satan would bring attacks in the form of false teaching against the church at Crete, but a strong core of committed, biblically trained elders and teachers would be capable of defending the church from these predatory teachers the same way a shepherd protects his flock from hungry wolves.

False Teachers Sound Good (v. 10)

Most often, false teachers bring a message that sounds good. It is rare for false teachers to try to upend all truth since this approach would be easy to identify as false teaching. It is often the way of the false teacher to bring a message that is mostly true, but that has been twisted, altered, and skewed at certain specific points. The false teachers plaguing the church at Crete were not advocating for a departure from God but rather that believers needed to add their own righteousness in the form of works to be right with God. This false teaching sounded reasonable and plausible; however, it was utterly opposed to the teaching of Jesus and the apostles.

Attributes of False Teachers (v 10.)

Scripture is clear! False teachers have identifiable attributes that mark them as such. These are disobedience (insubordination), empty speech (meaningless and wordy speech without truth or

substance), and deceitfulness (willful actions designed to lead others astray). The people of God must be on the lookout for those who display these attributes and must carefully evaluate what they say to ensure that the church is not being led astray by false teaching.

Leaders Must Use a Head-On Approach (v. 11)

Paul instructs Titus to take a head-on, offensive approach to false teachers by silencing them. Paul's very aggressive language indicates the seriousness of allowing false teachers to go unchecked within the church. Such an approach by church leadership requires courage and an unwavering commitment to the Scriptures. It also requires a deep knowledge of God's Word since it is only through unwavering truth that false teachers can be silenced.

False Teachers Profit from Chaos (v. 11)

The goal of a false teacher is simple: to enrich themselves by creating chaos and uncertainty. This simple fact has been true of usurpers and troublemakers throughout all of history. When the church is under proper teaching, it is at peace, effective in ministry, filled with joy, and content. For a false teacher to gain hold in an environment such as this, it is necessary to create chaos. As a result, the false teacher's message is a carefully warped and twisted version of truth for the purpose of "upsetting" the body. The questioning that follows from such false teaching must be met with truth, or else the false teacher will have an occasion to placate the unsettled congregation with heretical lies.

What was True of Crete is True of Us (v. 12-13a)

To illustrate his point about the false teachers infiltrating the church at Crete, Paul quoted the words of an ancient "prophet" or wise man from Crete, possibly Epimenides (approximately 600 BC). This ancient figure claimed that people from Crete were liars, lazy, and evil people. His words contained an alarming truth to them. The Cretans were well known for perpetrating the lie

that the tomb of Zeus was on the island of Crete while at the same time worshiping Zeus and claiming that he was immortal. However, for modern-day believers, the point of Paul's words is not for us to judge the Cretans but to look internally and realize that we are the same: lazy and evil liars who are full of selfishness and deceit.

The Purpose of Rebuke is Repentance (v. 14)

Paul's instructions to Titus were not for the purpose of throwing the false teachers out of the congregation but to restore them to proper faith in Jesus for salvation. The purpose of rebuke within the body of the church is for the rebuked party to see the error of their ways and to humble themselves in repentance before God so that they can be restored to full fellowship. We should not think of the church as a group of good people from which we cast out those who can't make the grade. Instead, we should think about the church as a group of fallen sinners who, though having been saved, are still capable of sin and who must constantly strive to be obedient to God. The primary attitude of the church towards those who fall away must be restoration and not expulsion.

Purity of Heart Yields Purity of Mind (v. 15a)

Those who are pure in heart approach their lives with purity of mind. This means that, in everything, they seek its purest form. In fellowship, they seek both to spread the message of the gospel and to build up one another. In food and drink, they seek to strengthen themselves for the work of the Kingdom. In sex, they seek God-glorifying marriages that produce godly offspring as God has ordained through the Scriptures. In work, they seek an opportunity to glorify God and to bring a witness of who Jesus is and what He has done to their co-workers and their customers. In every way, the pure in heart and mind seek to honor and obey God and bear witness of His goodness and love for mankind.

Defilement of Heart Yields Defilement of Mind (v. 15b-16)

Those who are defiled in their heart through unrepentant sin are also defiled in their thinking. This means that everything they do, think, and say bears the mark of defilement. In everything, they seek that which is impure. In fellowship, they seek entertainment for themselves. In food and drink, they seek self-satisfaction and temporary relief from the world's troubles. In sex, they seek the fulfillment of their selfish lusts. In work, they seek enrichment to feed their ever-growing desire for riches. As a result, they are detestable to God because they seek self-satisfaction in every area of life, making them disobedient and all of their works defiled before God.

Profession Without Faith and Obedience is Worthless (16a)

Verbal profession of God is worthless. Cerebral knowledge of God is worthless. Cerebral acknowledgment of God is worthless. All claims to know God, understand God, follow God, or obey God are worthless unless they are accompanied by the pureness of heart and mind that can only result from true faith-driven repentance, surrender, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This truth mirrors the words of James that "faith without works is dead."

Key Verses

False Teachers are Disobedient to God

Titus 1:10 - The key identifying factor of false teachers is that they are disobedient to God. Without faith it is impossible to please God ([Hebrews 11:6](#)), and the result of true faith in God is obedience to His Word. One of the easiest ways to identify false teachers is that they are resistant to obedience.

False Teachers are Outside of the Kingdom

Titus 1:16 - Without faith and obedience, the profession of the knowledge of God is meaningless. The disobedience of false teachers bears witness to the fact that they lack faith in

God. Their disobedience shows their heart's denial of God. This denial places them outside the Kingdom of God as unrepentant sinners who are not part of God's family. As a result, everything they do and everything they say is detestable to God.

Key Words

Insubordinate/disobedient (*anypotaktos*) Titus 1:10

This word literally means unruly or resistant to rule. Even if these false teachers seem to live exemplary lives in every way, they will be identifiable because they will resist the rule of the elders and pastors whom God has placed over the church to shepherd it. They will continually stir up dissension around them and seek to undermine established church leadership and the Scriptures.

Deceivers (*phrenapatēs*) Titus 1:10

This word is most often translated "to seduce." The idea is to intentionally and inappropriately lead one away from that which is true, right, and good.

Upsetting (*anatrepō*) Titus 1:11

To overthrow. This word gives the idea that the words and actions of false teachers carry a violence with them. Where the true gospel brings conviction, repentance, salvation, and peace, false teaching attempts to overthrow the gospel. True teaching leads to peace and security. False teaching leads to upheaval and fear.

Rebuke (*elegchō*) Titus 1:13

To “convict,” or even more appropriately, “to put to shame.” Paul is conveying the idea here that godly leaders must publicly expose those who are teaching falsehood by stripping away the mask of their falsehood in full view of the church so that their lies are laid bare before the church, publicly shaming them.

Cross-References

Acts 11:1-11 (v. 10)

“Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.” But Peter began and explained it to them in order: “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ But I said, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ But the voice answered a second time from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, do not call common.’ This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven. And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea. And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter; he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’ As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I

could stand in God's way?" When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

1 Timothy 1:6-7 (v. 10)

"Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion, desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions."

1 Timothy 6:3-5 (v. 11)

"If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain."

2 Timothy 3:1-9 (v. 11)

"But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in

mind and disqualified regarding the faith. But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.”

2 Peter 2:1-10 (v. 11)

“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority.”

2 Corinthians 13:9b-10 (v. 13)

“Your restoration is what we pray for. For this reason I write these things while I am away from you, that when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down.”

1 Timothy 5:20-22 (v. 13)

“As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality. Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.”

Colossians 2:20-23 (v. 14)

“If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.”

1 Timothy 1:3-4 (v. 14)

“As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith.”

1 Timothy 6:20-21 (v. 14)

“O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.”

Luke 11:39-42 (v. 15)

“And the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You fools! Did not he who made the outside

make the inside also? But give as alms those things that are within, and behold, everything is clean for you. “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.”

Acts 10:9-15 (v. 15)

“The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. And there came a voice to him: “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.” And the voice came to him again a second time, “What God has made clean, do not call common.” This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.”

Romans 14:13-23 (v. 15)

“Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.”

1 Timothy 4:1-5 (v. 15)

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.”

1 Timothy 6:3-5 (v. 15)

“If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.”

1 John 2:3-6 (v. 16)

“And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but

whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.”

Application

False Teachers are Disobedient

The most notable mark of false teachers is their resistance to authority. As believers, we must be continually aware of those who are resistant to submitting to authority and the Scriptures. In addition, we must ensure that we ourselves are submitting to church authorities and the Scriptures. When teachers resist the authority and/or the Scriptures, we must scrutinize their teaching, and if need be, those in authority must rebuke them and try to bring them back to obedience.

Leaders Must Take Action

Godly leaders must be committed to the Scriptures, obedient to God’s leading, and courageous in leadership. Leaders are called to stand up boldly in the face of those who would twist and pervert God’s Word. They must not be afraid of personal attacks. They must not shrink back from confronting those who would lead the church astray. Like a good shepherd, they must be willing to sacrifice anything, even their life, to guard the sheep.

Discussion Questions

Think about the “Christian teaching voices” that you listen to in your daily life.

Do any of them exhibit the attributes of a false teacher?

Are they resistant to leadership, empty talkers, or deceitful?

Do they teach things that try to overthrow the teaching of Scripture?

Does their teaching sound good but lack biblical foundation?

Do their actions deny the faith they claim to have?

What kind of impact does their teaching have on your life?

Do they promote God's Word or their own thinking?

Are there "godly leaders" within the Church who are calling them out as false teachers?

Does the world, those who do not identify as Christians, approve of their teaching?