

Titus 1:10-2:10

Good evening and thank you so much for joining us! Would you please turn in your bibles to Titus chapter 1?

Remember, Paul wrote this letter between his first and second imprisonments in Rome (before he wrote 2 Timothy). He wrote this to guide Titus as he worked with the churches on the island of Crete. We learned last week in v 5 that Paul had visited Crete with Titus and had left Titus there to minister on this very tough mission field.

Evidently the gospel had only recently been preached on the island of Crete. As a result, the believers there were susceptible to a number of strong influences. So Titus needed to be on guard.

Also the church in Crete needed strong Christian leaders; Titus was responsible to choose and prepare them. You'll recall that's we left off last week in v9 as we saw the requirements for those in leadership of the church.

Tonight we're gonna pick up our study in v10, and go through v 10 of chapter 2. We're gonna see guidelines for all of us, and the title of tonight's message is Godly Living
LET'S PRAY

Titus may not have been under attack by false teachers within the church as Timothy was in Ephesus, but Titus for sure was ministering in a hostile environment.

I mentioned last week that those living on the island of Crete had a rough reputation. So to change that reputation, even for the Christians, their conduct would be in the spotlight. After all, we can profess our allegiance to Jesus all day long with our lips, but if our conduct as Christians doesn't line up with what we say, then we're hindering the gospel aren't we?

Christians from Crete would be under a lot of scrutiny. Their spiritual lives needed to be pure.

So in this section we're studying tonight, Paul contrasts those who hinder the gospel, with the conduct of those who are truly Christ followers.

The rest of chapter 1 describes those who hinder the gospel...

10 For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, There was no shortage of false teachers on the island of Crete. Remember not only was it an area steeped in Greek mythology and paganism, we learn here from v10 Paul and Titus faced those of the circumcision, the Judaizers.

Who were Judaizers? They were Jews who taught that the Gentiles had to obey all the Jewish laws, rules, and rituals before they could become Christians. These Judaizers confused countless new Christians and caused problems in many churches where Paul had preached the simplicity of the gospel.

You Bible students recall that Paul wrote letters to several churches to help them understand that Gentile believers did not have to become Jews first in order to be Christians. This is much of what the entire letter to the Galatians is all about.

God accepts anyone who comes to him in faith

Galatians 3:2 2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

This issue of Judaizers telling gentiles they needed to become Jews before becoming Christians was a widespread problem. You'll remember that back in Acts 15, the Jerusalem council had dealt with this very issue Acts 15 6 Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. 7 And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. 8 So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, 9 and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ[fn] we shall be saved in the same manner as they."

But here Paul is, more than a decade later, dealing with devout Jews who still refused to believe in Jesus' work on the cross. And

on top of that, these Judaizers were actively trying to cause problems in the Christian churches.

And look at the 3 descriptions Paul uses for the judaizers in v10:

Insubordinate Denying the authority of Paul and Titus.

Idle talkers, they spoke lots of words and said nothing.

Having been deceived themselves, they had become deceivers of others.

So there's a big problem there in Crete right? So how should Titus handle these false teachers?

11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. These false teachers must be stopped, they need to be silenced. In fact the Greek word means literally, "to muzzle."

To be clear this isn't an issue of disagreeing over a minor matter. No, these Judaizers were ruining people's faith! V11 tells us whole households had been affected!

And these false teachers had wicked motives, just like most false teachers do. Look at the end of v11-for the sake of dishonest gain. Their goal was not to glorify the Lord and build His church but to make money.

Of course when encountering a Judaizer at first, it would be hoped that they would respond to the truth and be united with the true body of believers. But clearly they weren't, so Paul warned

Titus to be on the lookout for people who teach wrong doctrines and lead others into error and muzzle 'em-stop em.

To be clear, some false teachers are simply confused—they speak their misguided opinions without checking them against the Bible.

But others have evil motives—they pretend to be Christians only because they can get money, additional business, or a feeling of power from being a leader in the church. The Bible warns us several times of this very scenario. **Acts 20:29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.**

Again this isn't simple ignorance, it's not disagreeing over a minor matter. Their teachings attack the foundations of truth and integrity upon which the Christian faith is built.

SHOW SLIDE So how can you recognize false teachers?

- They will focus more attention on themselves than on Christ;
- Ask you to do something that will compromise or dilute your faith;
- De-emphasize the divine nature of Christ or the inspiration of the Bible;
- Divide believers with quarrelsome and contentious teaching;
- Urge believers to make decisions based more on human judgment than on prayer and biblical guidelines. **CLOSE SLIDE**

12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." **SHOW PIC** Paul quoted a line

from a poem by Epimenides, a poet and philosopher who had lived in Crete 600 years earlier. **CLOSE PIC**

Now Paul wasn't saying that Epimeneides was a prophet in the biblical sense. Paul called him a prophet because other ancient writers did-notably Aristotle and Cicero.

And notice the quotation reveals the basic character flaws in the Cretans, giving them a bad reputation for lying, violence, and laziness

They were liars, why? Because their false teaching made them liars.

Evil beasts describe their unrestrained brutality; their lives were out of control.

Lazy gluttons identifies the false teachers as lovers of dishonest gain. Rather than make an honest living, they preferred to prosper from their false teaching.

The reputation of the Cretans was so bad that the verb form of their name (kretizo) was used by the Greeks to indicate lying. Paul applied this familiar phrase to the false teachers.

13 This testimony is true. Pause here. The Cretans could hardly argue with one of their own honored prophets, so neither did Paul. Having been in Crete himself, Paul knew from firsthand experience the type of people with whom Titus was dealing. \Talk about a tough mission field!

..13 Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, v11 says muzzle them-how-v 13 by rebuking them sharply.

We see confrontation and discipline in the church mentioned several times in the NT. And we know that church discipline has two purposes: to purge the church of danger, and to bring the perpetrators to repentance.

The goal of church discipline is always rebuke, then, if possible, to restore. And Paul reminds Titus he needs to sharply rebuke the false teachers, hoping to awaken them to sound doctrine and true faith.

14 not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. The Jewish fables here were probably some useless speculations on the Old Testament. What's interesting is this is the same exhortation Paul gave to Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:4 nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.

But it wasn't just these fables that were a problem. V14 tells us there were human commands-a bunch of rules about what they could and couldn't do to be acceptable to God.

Titus was facing an incredible challenge-it was a mixture of religion and falsehood. This is usually how it works. Go all the

way back to the garden of Eden, and we see Satan deliberately mixed a discussion about God's requirement with an outright lie.

Verse 15 looks at the attitudes of the false teachers, whereas verse 16 views their actions

15 To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.

Those who believe sound doctrine and live out their faith don't need to worry about rules and rituals regarding what is clean or unclean. Romans 14:17 17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit

Colossians 2:20-23 20 Therefore,[fn] if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations— 21 “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,” 22 which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

To be clear, the bible doesn't teach moral relativism (“As long as I can call myself pure, whatever I choose to do is then pure”). That's not what it's saying. Rather it's forbidding superficial, external legalism, trying to earn God's approval.

16 They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.

The corrupt and unbelieving false teachers claimed to know and follow God. ("After all, look at all the rules we follow!"), but their actions revealed their true nature.

See these guys professed knowledge of God and, with their Jewish background, were probably experts in the Old Testament. But they based their faith on works, not on the Lord Jesus Christ, denying the God they claimed to know.

And look what Paul calls them in v16 **abominable**, which means detestable, because of their sin and hypocrisy.

They were **disobedient**, because they acted against the God they claimed to know.

Finally they were **disqualified for any good work**, because people who live in rebellion against God cannot do any works that please Him.

So notice in chapter 1 Paul detailed the type of men that are qualified to lead the church, while also pointing out the deficiencies of false teachers who might give the impression they are Godly.

So as chapter 2 begins Paul turns his attention to discuss the conduct of individual Christians in the churches. He dealt with these instructions by dividing them up among various groups in

the church, and then reemphasizing what proper behavior for all the saints looks like.

Chapter 2

1 But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: This sets Titus apart from the people described at the end of chapter 1. They may teach legalism and fables, but Titus was to teach the things which are proper for sound doctrine.

The things which are proper for sound doctrine isn't only about the right thinking, but also right living.

This is why we can't just read the bible as if it were some intellectual exercise. The Bible is a book that tells us how to live.

And so what we're about to read are instructions for everyone in the church, young, old, women, men, etc.

Before we begin I want to address our older, more seasoned adults. In our society many have bought into the notion that older people have had their day of usefulness and ought to make way for the young.

But what we're about to see in these words is really quite the opposite. With age and experience come wisdom, and the younger people need to be taught from the older folks on the secrets of godly living. We'll be doing quick definitions of all of these.

2 that the older men

be sober, Be watchful, be diligent

reverent, dignified, literally not acting like a clown

temperate, meaning that their lives should show moderation, not a bunch of extravagance

sound in faith, describes a solid trust in God

in love, committed to the welfare of others-genuinely concerned about other people

in patience; is the ancient Greek word hupomone. It means a steadfast and active endurance, not a passive waiting. Older men are not to just patiently wait around until they move to heaven. They are to actively endure the challenges of life; even the challenges of old age.

The command to speak/teach these things means that they do not come automatically with age.

3 the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, The "older women" in the churches were also to give evidence of their reverence for God in their behavior

not slanderers,
not given to much wine,
teachers of good things— All self explanatory right?

And now Paul lists 7 descriptions of what young women are to do

4 that they admonish the young women The training of the younger women is the duty, not of Titus, but the older women,

And you'll notice the first 2 instructions for the young women begin with the home. God has given women a strategic position of influence and assistance to their husbands and their children.

Admonishment or instruction #1

to love their husbands, to put their husband's welfare before their own self-interests.

to love their children, Notice the order here. It's loving their husbands first, not their kids. Look kids are gonna grow up and move out and move on. You're still married, you wanna make sure that marriage thrives when the kids are gone. You don't wanna look at each other after the kids leave and be like-well what do we talk about now?

5 to be discreet, careful in one's speech or actions

chaste, being faithful to the husband

homemakers, taking good care of the house

good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy. Think of proverbs and the challenges of living with a contentious wife.

obedient to their own husbands, submission in the marriage relationship

...5 that the word of God may not be blasphemed. This shows how important it is for the older women to teach these things, and for

the younger women to learn them. When Christians don't live in a Biblical, godly way it means that the word of God may be blasphemed among the ungodly.

6 Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, Urge the young men to behave carefully, taking life seriously. This is the only command Titus is told to emphasize to young men, but sometimes a very difficult one for younger men.

7 in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works;pause here. Titus had to be more than a teacher, he also had to be an example. His guidance to others couldn't be taken seriously if he wasn't walking after the Lord.

...7 in doctrine showing integrity, he's not twisting the scripture **reverence,** taking it seriously, not mocking it.
incorruptibility,^[fn] pure

8 sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.^[fn]
He saying your words should be so true and accurate that your accusers will be embarrassed b/c there's nothing to hold against you.

9 Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, In the ancient world, Christians shocked the culture by mixing slaves and masters in the social setting of the church service. This meant that a slave might go to church and be an elder over his own master.

Not answering back-not argumentative when given instructions.
V10 our final verse

10 not pilfering, The slave wasn't to steal, take a little off the top. We could almost justify that behavior right? Lots of people do this today in the workplace. But the Bible forbids it.

but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Wonderfully, those who (in this context) have the ability to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior are bondservants — slaves under a master.

Even if a person is in the lowest and most disadvantaged social position, how they live their life has the potential to beautify God's truth by the way they live.