

# The Call to Order in a Chaotic Culture

Anthony Kim

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Well, it's a joy to stand before you this morning to dive into the rich, timeless truth of God's word this morning. If you have your Bibles, go ahead and turn with me to Titus chapter 1. I'm going to be continuing our series in this book in verse five and going all the way to verse 9.

What we're going to see here in these verses is a development of God's leaders. God's leaders. Paul is going to outline for us a pattern designed by God himself what true leadership looks like. God designed biblical worship to begin first. Look with me in verse one. First by an inner working of a man's heart. And you see that with the words God's elect first there must be a transformation in the life of the leader who is called to be a pastor must be saved sound in trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as his savior and lord. That's the first thing must be a saved man.

Next, we see in verses 7-8, we're going to see what is known to be consistent with every church leader. These are qualities that are not one and done. These are to be displayed consistently over a period of time in a person, a believer's life. And then we move and it culminates to the verse nine of what a true pastor does is he's able to communicate the teachings of God's word as well as preaching God's word namely the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The thing that has transformed the leader is now to be keys to be used to transform the lives of those who are to hear in the church.

So Paul understood that the only hope for transforming an immoral and selfcentered culture which we're going to dive in this morning of this island of Crete. We're going to see that leadership despite of the culture around us must display consistent principled and respected men. Godly men who served as committed stewards of both God's house and God's word, meaning taking seriously the people of God whom the pastor is to steward well. And not only that, but his study of God's word to steward his time to read deeply from this fountain, which is the word of God. And not only a fountain that is ever flowing, but the deepest treasures found in God's word that cannot be found anywhere in this world. That is what the man of God must do with this time as stewarding it well.

Now let me just set before you the scene that we're going to see in this island of Crete. And so before we read our text, let's understand the setting. This is important. Paul had traveled to the island of Crete, one of the largest islands of the Mediterranean Sea to do missionary work. During his fourth missionary journey, Paul found himself in Crete by design. It was no accident that he landed on this island. But through divine providence. God orchestrated him to land on this island of Crete by his divine hand.

He was moved. He was supposed to be moved into the sea all the way to Rome as a prisoner to present his appeal to Caesar. He was on that journey on this ship going to where he was ultimately to land. But providentially God brought about intense winds. So intense that he had to land anchor at a place called Fair Havens. This unexpected delay lasted roughly around two to three weeks before his travel could continue. If you will keep your place in Titus and flip to Acts 27. This is where we're going to see briefly of Paul's journey on this ship on his way as a prisoner to Rome. You'll see that in Acts 27 verse 1 all the way to Acts 28:16 that this is what's known as Paul's fourth journey.

And if you'll just look down with me to Acts 27:8, this is where I want us to look. So Acts 27:8, it reads, "And hardly passing it came unto a place which is called the fair havens, nigh, where unto was the city of Lasa." Lasa was situated on the southern shore of the island of Crete. Here it is said that he stayed for approximately two to three weeks.

And let me just share with you Paul was not concerned about the intense winds primarily. Remember he was preaching the gospel. He was planting churches all around his first, second, third, and now his fourth journey here in his missionary journeys. And we're at the tail end of book of Acts and we see that significant time has been lost but Paul doesn't see it as a loss. He knows he has to go to Rome but maybe God is intervening in his life to go and share the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in this little island. Well rather a large island a large island known as Crete.

You are going to see all the way in this book of Acts. I'm not going to read all of it, but Paul was cautioned at this by the ship centurion and the crew to remain at fair havens for the winter. He cautioned that if you will continue on the voyage, the result would be extensive damage to the ship's vessel and its freight. There was approximately 270 prisoners on this ship and it would endanger everyone including the centurion and the captain.

Despite this, we see that the centurion didn't listen to Paul's counsel, but placed confidence in the pilot and the ship's captain. A decision that would eventually culminate in the well-known shipwreck of the ship off the coast of Malta.

But I want to kind of reflect a little bit on this violent wind that was to abruptly stop Paul and his trip. Perhaps there could have been many people on this island locked up in their

homes due to the severe violent tormenting winds. And Paul took it as an opportunity because as you know in the book of Acts they would go from house to house. And so Paul goes on and lands and immediately goes to many homes locked up. They didn't have a way to go out possibly. So they had to listen to the Apostle Paul by design. And Paul ministered to them.

Winds were not just violent here in Crete. Let me just share with you. Crete was also violent in their culture. They were a chaotic place just like violent winds are chaotic internally as the culture found in Crete. They were chaotic people. Let me explain. The culture was steeped in mythology. They claimed that their island was the birthplace of Zeus. So they had a lot of pride. Lot of pride. Then we look at the society. It was considered the wild west of the Mediterranean Sea. Why did they use this word? Because they had no respect for law. None whatsoever. So therefore there was plagued with violence and greed to the highest measure.

And then with that they were a completely pagan culture full of traditions. And so their pride was this that they elevated their human desires over truth over moral truth. And so they elevated lies above truth. They lived in a life of lying and deceit. In fact, the Cretans had such a notorious reputation for deception that the Greeks coined the verb to speak like a Cretan meaning to be a liar. So if you're called a Cretan you will be called a liar. And Paul knowing the philosophy of the Greek philosophy he actually quoted from a sixth century poet and one of their own poets even wrote that the Cretans was a place deeply given to lying. So even the poets recognized this and they wrote it in their poetry.

Yet, yet in the midst of this dishonest and wild self-indulgent culture, here's the takeaway. The gospel of Jesus Christ took root. It took root in a profound way. You see, when God takes control, all things are possible. Amen. Even in the most darkest place. So, we must never, here's the takeaway. Here's the thing. We must never say, "Oh, it's too bad over there or it's too dark over there." No, we must trust in our God and our savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. What he can do when he takes root. You see, they were all over the place and they knew it. For some, they knew it. And God took a hold of their soul and they knew they didn't have any anchor, true anchor to hold on to. They could care less about the lies. They don't want to live in the lies anymore. Are there people like that in this room that have not trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ? Or people out in this community that are actually just okay with being deceived?

You see, there are people that didn't want to live a life of lies and deceit. And that's why Jesus Christ took root because he is the truth. Amen. He is the truth. And they recognized he is the truth and they found it and they saw in the life of Paul. And so people were saved and house churches began popping up all over the island. God is a God of miracles. Amen.

And but there was a problem. These new believers lacked organization. After all, they were a chaotic bunch and were highly vulnerable to false teachers. After all, they live in a culture of lies. So they had a lot of false teachers and saturated this island. But because Paul had to leave on his continual journey to Rome, he left his trusted son in the faith, Titus on this island to complete the work they had started together. So now go ahead and turn back to Titus chapter 1 beginning with verse 5. And if you will, out of respect for the reading of God's word, read silent with me as I read from verse 5-9.

God's word says this, "For this cause left I thee in it that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee. If any be blameless, the husband of one wife having faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly. Or a bishop must be blameless. Notice the repetition there. As the steward of God. Not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre, but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate, holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

This is God's word. May be seated.

We're going to see in verse five is the mandate for order, a call to order. This was the responsibility of Titus where he says for this cause left I thee in Crete would set in order the things that are wanting. So Paul leaves no room for ambiguity about why Titus was left behind. He was there to bring spiritual order to a chaotic environment. The phrase set in order means to arrange or correct what is defective. What was wanting or lacking was what? Qualified stable spiritual leaders that were to be appointed.

Churches grew tremendously, but there was not enough time to appoint elders in each of the cities that Paul went on his journey. So Paul commands Titus to ordain elders using the plural word presbyteros. Literally means a plurality of elders, not just one elder, but a number of elders. And this tells us that God's design for the church relies on plurality of elders. We think of Proverbs and the multitude of counsel there is safety not in just one person but in a multitude. So we see this pattern throughout also in the New Testament that assemblies of believers will consistently have a multitude of elders that they can counsel with.

Now, let me just kind of draw your attention here is that each of these house homes had approximately 30 to 40 people that can fit in a home. There was unusual cases like Lydia's home you find in Philippians who can fit double that because she was a wealthy business woman and she can own a bigger property and it will be double that size. So here the average size house church was approximately 30 to 40 people. And so in many ways that is consistent with an elder. One elder can manage approximately that amount.

Of course we have technology to help with that and assistance and whatnot. But primarily the elder's role was to preach and teach the God's word and also to pray as well as to counsel people. And to my insufficiency I cannot remember hundreds of people.

And so Paul understood this little detail which is important detail that he needed to assign appoint elders through the use of Titus to further this want that was needed there in Crete. We also see that James mentioned the elders of the church. If you look at book of James it's plural elders of the church coming to pray over the sick. And then for consistency sake we can go into book of Peter where he addresses the elders who shepherd the flock among them. But interestingly unlike 1 Timothy 3 chapter 3 Paul does not prohibit new converts. And I think because here again because a rapid people believing in the Lord Jesus Christ in these house churches there were a lot of new converts, a lot of new believers here in this island of Crete. So you see the difference there in first Timothy 3. But the church was young. It was and Titus had to look for men who are spiritually mature relative to this rough culture. I mean even a slight difference makes a big difference considering how chaotic this culture was.

And so if you remember the church of Corinth what was their main issue? They were chaotic as well disorderly. In fact, the elders, if there were any, didn't take their responsibility seriously and they were just kind of in the background, not really shepherding the flock as they ought to. Of course, we don't see that so much here, but it was a similar context. After all, the island of Crete was roughly around 250 miles from the city of Corinth. So, there was a similar kind of culture here. Again, rough and chaotic.

And so they didn't have people that were saved for decades. So we don't see that nuance here in Titus chapter 1. Paul understood that it takes time for a person's quality to show meaning these leadership qualities. These qualities that are to be not only internalized but also externally shown. And he didn't say here that they were to lack any a deep understanding of what God's leaders are. God supernaturally worked possibly in this part of the island where there was a deep work in their lives faster than what we can seem in 1 Timothy 3 which could have been a more gradual approach where they can give more time with the believers there to see that they were qualified to be elders. So I just want to share that nuance here. You see, we cannot just say 1 Timothy 3 fits in the context of this island of Crete. What Timothy was dealing with is not the same as what Titus was dealing with. We had to see that nuance. But yet God used Titus to build up elders to appoint elders.

So Paul is telling to us, we cannot have churches running by itself without church leaders. An elder cannot simply be a man who goes through this ritual of inheriting a title of eldership but that it must be a genuine desire a change in person's life and also a gifting that God has given to an elder to have oversight and supervision of these house churches.

So God cares about structure. God cares about order. God cares about authority in his church. Authority flows from the top down ultimately from God himself down to the elders to the church. And by that we must actively pray. I shared that with you last week. Pray for me. Pray that I would lead in a way that is delegated authority. That I don't lord over anyone, but I do it with joy and not with grief. And that I reflect a life of mature Christlikeness so that you can model me as Paul says, as I follow after Christ, follow after me.

See, God recognizes that church without biblical orders, a church exposed to the enemy's chaos. You see, without church leaders, false teachers can just swallow people up and deceive so much. So he knew this is a spiritual warfare. This is a battle and we must have elders in order to avoid the enemy taking territory.

So this we see in verse six, go to verse six with me. Paul explains it first starts with the elder's home. It starts with the standard which is revealed in the home. So look with me. It says, "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly." Paul starts the qualifications not with the candidate's experiences, giftings, or even his public speaking skills. No, primarily it's his personal life. His personal life. The overarching requirement is to be blameless or another way of saying above reproach. This does not mean sinless perfection because only Jesus Christ is sinless. Rather, it means that the leader's life is free from legitimate scandalous accusations.

That man is married to one woman and he is married to that woman and loves that woman and does not find anyone else except in that one woman. Can't accuse him of that. He also teaches his children faithfully modeling it out first in his personal life what is caught more than that is taught and then he is also to teach them faithfully. So we see that here in the text and Paul applies this across two critical areas. First his marriage as I shared he must be a one woman man, one wife.

By the way, in this culture it was upper class and they reveled in having multiple partners. They were full of sexual immorality. And so to find this quality was a small dim light amongst darkness. They could notice right away. Wait, that's different. That man loves only one woman and he only lives with one woman. You see? So he puts it right there at the very beginning. Do you see that's the key here we find is a complete internal right we saw that in verse one but also an external change and that is primarily fidelity to his wife. And next we see the family dynamics, children. Well, not all elders have children. We know that the Apostle Paul never married, but Apostle Peter did. He had a wife and possibly children. But we see here that he must have faithful or believing children who are not accused of riot or being unruly.

Here's a key is someone who is not out to be rebellious. That there's no rebellion when the gospel is shared. That there is a sharing of what the husband and the wife believe in, which is the gospel. And that the gospel is shared and that when the gospel is shared, it's not rebelled against. That should be clear. And that's what should be the center of the children's dynamics. Think of it as someone who is leading a sports team where we live in a culture of sport. So I use this illustration.

If you look at a coach, what is he primarily supposed to teach? Well, one, he must have good instructions to teach his players. Number two, he must teach the players discipline. If you don't have discipline, you're not going to make it right. A good coach will find, are you disciplined? Can you hear instruction? And then follow through with it consistently. That's what discipline is. Instructions consistent. And then it's teamwork. If you have a lot of children in this case, can you work together and can you work as a team? No favoritism here. No favorite player. No, all of you have certain duties and certain roles and responsibilities.

And then finally, you put all that together. Execution. Execute on instructions, the discipline, the teamwork. Well, you put those ingredients, you're going to have players that follow through. Now, there's also giftings in that, but I'm not going to go into that. But these are the primary ingredients of a good coach. You see, if you have any of these missing, you have a group of players that are in complete chaos. That's the result of not having these ingredients. And so if the players ignore the instructions, ignore the discipline, and ignores the teamwork, you are filled with players that are just fighting each other on the field and not working together.

So the coach's credibility is instantly destroyed. There's any chaos in the field, it goes back to the coach, not to the player. That's the coach's responsibility. Nobody can blame the players. It is the coach primarily. And so here in the same context, you judge a leader by the ability to direct first and foremost the family unit. Is there order in the marriage? Is there order with the kids, with the children? And I'm going to tell you, there's instructions that the father must give to the children. There must be discipline. Are you following through, child? If you're not, I have to discipline you. Are you going to work with the other siblings? And then are you going to execute that over and over and over again? And that consistency must be seen in the home of the church leader.

And so that's the idea starts with a small picture first before even get into the church context. It must start in the home. So then the application, the home is the ultimate testing ground for our faith. But man cannot lead his own children to salvation and spiritual stability. He shouldn't be managing the household of God. We see that in 1 Timothy 3. As parents and leaders, we bear a heavy responsibility to such authentic Christian lives that our family naturally desires to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

I can tell you even at my daughter's age at three when we pray she wants to pray because she sees in the father and the mother we love to pray. We love to pray to our heavenly father. And she would often say, "Can I pray? Can I pray?" She said, "Sure, but I got to continue it all." She could only say a few words. But you see that what's caught is more than taught. And the leader's home, that's what it should see in a small picture. And so, obviously, we don't have the results of salvation, but are we displaying a life of prayer in the home? Are we displaying that the instructions are coming from God's word? Are we sharing that? Or is it some other template that we're using? Is there other some other counsel that we receive? Or is it from this word and in prayer?

That is what is to be displayed in the home. And by the way, this right here is a responsibility of every husband, every father in their home. You have your own family, however large it is. You have that responsibility as well instructing in the word of God and in prayer. You have that responsibility. And God will bless you for that because that is the way God designed fatherhood and being a husband in the home.

So then let's continue in verse seven. We go from the standard of the home into the character of what's called a steward. A steward. We go into verse 7. It says, "For a bishop must be blameless as a steward of God, not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre." So I want you to see the again repeated blameless. Being blameless in the area of stewardship. Stewardship is first and foremost what you're not supposed to do. A steward should know what you're not supposed to do first and foremost so that you can know what to do. Think of it like boundaries. You got to know what boundaries you're going so you know you can go straight and you're not going off to the left, not going off to the right, but those boundaries keep you doing the right thing. And that's the idea here is Paul lays out here. This is what a steward of God is supposed to display.

And so in verse 7, Paul uses this word interchangeably, the word of elder with bishop. And simply it's exact office. It's the same office but has different responsibilities. So an elder is a mature believer, an elder. And then a pastor or a bishop is someone who oversees his home, oversees the church. And so we see same office filled with various responsibilities. So we see this word the steward of God. Steward is someone who simply managed the house and here we see as of God of God. It is God's house. This is God's house his rules his design. And when as a bishop or a pastor is to manage the master's properties or rather the property and by the way the master is the one that gives the accountable things for that person and the overseer is supposed to understand what all are the things that he is accountable to. So he's accountable to those in his family and he's accountable to God's household. That's what we see here.

And so Paul lists five vices that a church leader must completely avoid. Let's start with the first one. Not self-willed. Self-will simply just means not to be arrogant and not to be full of pride and selfcenteredness demanding my way or the highway. A way of putting it. You see that word self-willed is characterized by an individual who if is in self-willed will follow corruption and will follow their fleshly impulses and ultimately rejects the authority of God self-willed person ultimately rejects God's authority God's word and plain instructions for the overseer to share with his church. So that must not be seen in the elder.

Second, not soon angry. Another way of saying it, someone that's not quick-tempered, just constantly reacting and saying something immediately without taking much thought and actually listening. A church leader should be not perfectly but a good listener. Most of the time when here it is in counseling I am listening. I don't want to react. I want to prayerfully consider what I'm going to say because I have an authority to say something from God's word and I have prayerfully considered it and I want to make sure what I say follows the stream of authority from God's word and reflecting it to that person's situation.

And so if you notice someone who is quick-tempered, they don't listen. They just want to say what they have to say and just want to be quick-tempered has no control over that part of their temper because it's not an easy job. There are difficulties. There are people going through storms. There are people that are going through deep trials, going through deep suffering. And the weight of that, I don't want to bear it on myself. I want to shift that over to look at what God can do in this situation. Look at how God can help you through this situation. Look at what he says in his word. I want to anchor that person through whatever they're going through into God's word. And I want to reflect that in my tone. I want to reflect that in the peace that I have with God so that I can share that with those who I'm speaking with. So listening to others is synonymous with hearing from God. You see by me listening to you, you should see I think he listens to God more than he speaks to God. Right? I want to listen to God's authority. I want to take it for what it is. I want to take it seriously and I want to bring that weight to the time when I talk with somebody. And that takes prayer. God, I need your help. I don't understand this part. God, I don't understand this person's dynamic fully. Help me to understand. Help me to say something that is spirit led. And then Lord, bless the results. I leave it up to you. That's what this part is so important in an elder.

And so here, James 1:19-21 says this. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear or quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. See, I want to listen, as I said, the engrafted word, God's instructions. That's where

I want to anchor someone to either save their souls or continue to help them to walk the path that God is leading them. See how important that is.

Next, we see not given to wine. Literally mean not given. You see this repeated is not addicted not addicted to alcohol or any other abusive substances for that matter because why it ultimately clouds judgment that's the key those things cloud judgment ability to speak clearly to clarify to speak under control not to be angry because what does substance usually cause out of control conversation, a lot of idle talk, abusive words, violent, angry, right? Someone who's not under control. And that's the idea. And then we see no striker. This is again someone who is not just violent physically but also in words. Oh yeah, there's can be a lot of damage in words, right? A lot of violence can happen just with mere words. And even James talks about that it can be like a little spark that starts a fire in a forest. It just takes a little spark. So no striker. He also doesn't bully. A striker is someone who bullies. Just loves to cause people to irritate it. Not in a good way, not in a loving way, but in a way that just I just don't want to speak to this person. And no one who dominates. Another way of saying in the conversation I don't want to dominate in anyone's conversation. I want God to speak to that person.

Next, not given to filthy lucre. Again, not addicted to deceptive financial gain. Okay, remember I talked about in the culture they were upper class. You know how they made a lot of money? They lied to people and they were very good at it that they can deceive people and get a lot of money for it. And Paul's being explicit here. I don't want you to bring that into the church context. You are not here for financial gain whatsoever, let alone a little and a lot. This is the key here. And we see the same consistency in 1 Timothy 3 because at the heart of this is that there's dishonesty when there's lying. There's dishonesty and reflection of God who is all truth. He is honest with us in our dealings. And so this is important command laid out for Titus.

So, think of a property manager to take care of a home. Let me just use the analogy of Airbnb. I think a lot of us know what that is. When you're traveling into an Airbnb and someone is hosting, you trust them with the keys. The property manager has the keys. He understands how much it's going to cost, how long the people is going to stay, what's inside the house. Make sure that no one's messing with anything, taking things away. Now, what if the property manager was just mismanaging all those things and you the one that owns the property, you returned to find that the manager treated the house as a playground, as his own playground. And he had a violent party. There was bottles everywhere. Just everything a mess. And not only that, but the guests, they just caused a lot of damage to the property. What would you do? What would you do as a person owning the property? Well, first thing you're going to go, okay, they're going to have to pay for this, right? They're going to have to pay for this. That's the immediate thing that you're going to do. Why? Because they forgot that they were primarily to manage the

property. Well, that's what stewardship is. That we're not as God's leaders, we have been entrusted with something that God has given to us, whether that be finances, whether that be assets that we have in our possession for the moment, that we return it back to God in an orderly, in a clean way. And that's in many ways what God is doing with our lives, isn't he? That we're not running a mess with our finances. We're not treating God's properties as if it was our own and we can just do it whatever you want with it. No, it's rather Lord, what do you want me to do with your money? Lord, what do you want me to do with your assets? How can I use all these things for your ministry where it's not mine. I am just giving a temporary time to take possession of it and to use these things well.

So, that's the application here as a pastor that we are called to manage our tempers. We are called to manage our habits, whether it's finances or whether it's the household of God, because we'll one day have this sobering reality that we're going to stand one day before the chief shepherd and he's going to hold us accountable to everything he gave us. Okay? And that's not just for the pastor. Again, if you are in a home setting, a father, a husband, you will be accountable to what he's given to you. Everything that he has given to you is from him. So it's very sobering, isn't it?

But we go on verse eight. Verse eight, but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just holy temperate. All right, now we're going away from the boundaries and now we're saying this is what you're supposed to pursue. Keep doing these things. So he starts off with love. I love that because love is the primary thing, isn't it? That's what we see in the fruit of the spirit. Love is the first thing. We see that in 1 Corinthians 13 that without love, you know, the expression that Paul uses is like Paul's annoyed, irritated, doesn't want to hear us. That's the idea. And so he starts off with as a church leader must be defined by love. By love and a lover of hospitality at that. You see these are active present positives. These are virtues that are given by God. These are given by God. Paul contrasts by the five negatives with these six virtues, lover of hospitality. It literally means a lover of strangers or lover of guests. So think of it, I think of it as my own house. Do I love having people over my house? Not my family primarily, but I'm just talking about just guests. Do I welcome them? Because that will clarify for me and for you how I'm going to treat people that are guests here coming in. Do I love seeing guests come in from that are outside of our church community? Because the small picture is am I doing that in my house? Me and my wife, we team up. We want to open our house anytime, anytime to anyone. And that's how we should do as husbands and fathers who have the ability to do that. And I know many of you have done that. And we thank you for taking that responsibility seriously because opening up your home can be opportunities for sharing the gospel with someone who might be an unbeliever or sharing what it looks like to have a godly house. I often pray for myself, Lord, help my home to be saturated with the gospel. Help me to show what forgiveness looks like. Help me to show what it looks like to experience the love of Christ. Help me to show these things. So important.

And so, as you know, a lot of this is found in during this time of house churches. Many of these pastors opened up their homes. The church grew miraculously by God's grace and mercy. Then we see a lover of good men. It literally means what is good? Do you look for those things that are good? Because again that was unnatural to this part of this world. They just wanted bad. And so again, to see something good in someone, not only just opening up his house, but also being good to them and not taking advantage of them because that was done in the situation that we are reading. Someone who's what is good. Someone who wants that which is pure. Who loves that which is pure. I'm not here loving all these women. No, I love this one woman. Do you see? I hope I show that in my house and I show that love that I have for my wife. Do you see it? Right? Is someone that's pure, who wants to benefit others, not take advantage of anyone, but wants more interest over them than what is in themselves.

And then we see the word sober. Someone here is that is serious minded to the things of God. If I'm going to instruct the things of God, I have to be serious. You should see that in me. Yes, there's a time when I'm having a good time, when we're going out for activities. Absolutely. That's there's a time and place for that as it says in Ecclesiastes. But when it comes to the word of God, I want to display a seriousness because there's seriousness when there's truth in God's word shared with us. And I want you to be clear minded when you're hearing the word of God that it's clear. You don't need to ask, "What does that mean?" I try my best to explain in such a way that you understand what I'm saying. You understand God's word. And then you can prioritize your life according to God's word. You go, "This is good. I love this in my life, and I want to continue display more and more what God's word says here in my life and in your life." Then we see the word just. Someone who's upright and deals with things fairly. Again, just positioned with those who didn't do fair dealings, that were lying. Someone who's just is always dealing with their things the right way in an honest way because God's standard is righteousness. Amen. Righteousness is simply a right living with God and right living with others.

And then we look at the word holy. Holy is the word set apart for God's service. I'm going to take my time and spend it in God's service. And so that's what they did in their home. They took care of their family and they took care of the flock of God. And that's the quality of someone who is set apart for the work of God and who's deeply focused and pleased in the work of God. And then lastly, we see the word tempered. Someone who is able to master his own impulses and desires and behaviors. And by the way, we see this as a attribute of the fruit of the spirit. The last one is self-control. Same word here, same Greek word, someone who is self-controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Now, moving on, last verse, verse nine. Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the

gainsayers. Here's the final qualification of the characteristic of a pastor, an overseer, is someone that is able to communicate soundly. Soundly a godly leader that is unshakably committed to the scriptures. Commitment to this word. And this phrase holding fast implies continuous lifelong grasp of God's word and not only grasped by God's word in the inner man but also displayed and lived out in the external. So it's twofold. We see exhort in sound doctrine meaning to encourage to build up the saints. Another way of putting it to comfort believers with the healthy unadulterated truth of scripture. And then secondly is also to refute the gainsayers or those who are heretical false teachers. So it's not enough to just preach that which is true but is also to speak to those that are not true. And so to confront and to answer and to silence the false teachers who try to twist the word of God for their own gain. Yes, there were not in just in Philippians as we read in our last series, but also in the church in Crete.

And so true spiritual authority does not come primarily. You'll see I didn't share anything about a great speaker who can speak eloquently or someone who is charismatic and can just get you into your emotions. None of that is here. Nor is there any clever strategies. No. When God works, he will work it out. The Holy Spirit is the counselor. He will show you what is right. He will convince you what is right. That is his role. And it comes by me just simply sharing the authority of God's word to you that you need to hear God's word. Whether you're a believer here this morning or an unbeliever, it is for everyone here in this room.

And so the Apostle Paul was, by the way, constantly criticized by his lack of flashy words, oratory skills, trying to line up with the Greek philosophers. No, Paul didn't care about winning any sort of popularity contest. That was not his intention. That was not God's intention. No, he told the church in Corinth that the ministry is not for entertainment. No, it's supposed to change and transform your life. I'm not here to share information. I'm sharing you the transformative work of the gospel. What Jesus Christ can do in your life.

So he says, "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses, taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." When I look out here, I see fortresses. We all put up our walls. How are you putting up your wall today? And the idea is that those walls have to be brought down by the obedience of Christ. That's it. The obedience of Christ. Are you obeying Christ and his words? That's the only way the fortresses are going to be fallen down. That's how spiritual fortresses are brought down. Not by smooth talk. No, by the hard reality of truth hitting squarely in your eyes as it were. And then ultimately deep within your inner man that it breaks as a sledgehammer. That's what the word of God is explained in the Old Testament. That breaketh a rock. That breaketh a rock. We are prone to being hard. I used the analogy one time with the young people. I put a rock. I just put a stone right here. So

if they can see it, that's how our hearts are unresponsive. You knock on it. Can't even as you hear you hear there's an echo in a rock. There's no echo. So the word of God cannot enter penetrate a stone. But we see in Ezekiel when God changes their heart, now the word can be heard. Now you can obey the word of God. Our hearts need to be constantly broken. Isaiah says it's with a broken heart, a contrite heart, a guilty heart, and who trembles at my word, trembling, a breaking of the ground and being put on the firm ground. Christ he will not despise. This is the way God works in our lives.

So I want to end here. Said a lot. God's standard is to be the high standard that is meant to be. It is a standard that can affect any culture. Here in this context, a really wicked place. But isn't every place a wicked place where there's sin? So it doesn't matter namely about how wicked a place is, but how much do we trust in God's standard, which is his word? His word should be the same everywhere we go. Even here in our setting, every single virtue that was listed here in Titus 1 targets your life. Your life. Have you reflected on your life as I was speaking to you this morning? Are you examining your home with the word of God? Are you examining your heart and your temper and your intentions with the word of God? Are you getting into the word of God during the week and not just here on Sunday? This is what every true believer in Christ does week in and week out, week in and week out. Not by your strength, but by God's strength. And may God continue to work in your life in this way. For is the very thing that's going to keep you anchored from now until the day that you see the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let's pray. Father, I thank you for your word. God, it just brings so much clarity to the way we're supposed to live that we don't base our lives in any other standard besides the word of God, which is the truth that we need to keep into our hearts. We thank you for the Holy Spirit continually counseling us with the word of God, starting with the church leaders and down all the way to the families and the homes of the husbands and fathers leading. Father, I just pray that you would help and grow our leadership to the extent we see in scripture. That you would give us the strength, that you would give us the wisdom, that you would give us temperance, so we can look truly different from this world, look different in our homes, look different in this place that we call the household of God, and that you will carry us through as you do, as we trust you, that you will now and forever more. And we thank you in Jesus name. Amen.