

Set it in Order Sermon Series – Sermon 5 – An Expose of Exposing False Teachers – Titus 1:10-16

Intro:

1) Word Picture – Debit Card

- a. A while back I needed to get a new one – someone took my info and began using my bank account
- b. Ever have that happen to you?
- c. Solution – call the fraud department of your bank, report it, and freeze the card

2) Identify theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in our country today

- a. 2024 report from Javelin Strategy and Research report – American lose approx. 27 Billion a year to identity fraud
- b. People lose thousands of dollars a year because someone is pretending to be who they are not

3) This same kind of deception has existed in the church for 2,000 years

- a. Spiritual identity theft
- b. False teachers pretend to speak for God
- c. People claim special authority without actually having it
- d. Teachers substitute God's Word with their own ideas and doctrines leaving churches and homes in a wreck

4) Paul addresses this issue here in Titus 1:10-16

- a. Context is helpful here
 - i. Just got done explaining the qualifications for Godly elders who will set the church in order and keep it that way
 - ii. The doctrine of elders ends with an exhortation to “white-knuckle” the Word of God (V9)
 - 1. The following section is about to tell us why that's so imperative
- b. Now Paul is pulling back the curtain and saying:
 - i. Here are what the ungodly leaders are like
 - ii. Here are what the deceivers are like
 - iii. This is how they operate
 - iv. Here's what you must do to guard your church

5) In this passage we get a glimpse of how a church that is “set in order” deals with false teachers and unsound doctrine

- a. Sermon: An Expose of exposing false teachers (part 1)
- b. Text: Titus 1:10-16
- c. Statement: this section teaches us that addressing false teachers is not about suspicion; it's about discernment

6) Confront the Conflicts – V10,11

- a. Paul had nothing good to say about those who were teaching false doctrine on Crete
- b. As V10,11 explain – he has some words against them and some insight on how to deal with them
- c. V10 marks Paul's exposure of these false teachers and their teachings
 - i. What we can glean from Paul's instruction to Titus here is a pattern of how we too should be handling false teachers and wrong doctrine
 - ii. We could say – Paul teaches us that when dealing with false teachers, good leaders confront the conflicts
- d. For clarity – the NT is full of warnings against false teachers
 - i. 2 Pet. 2:1-3
 - ii. I John
 - iii. Rom. 16:17,18
 - iv. Acts 20:29,30
 - v. Why?
 - 1. Because they were there and posed a real and problematic threat to the growth of believers and the church

Confront their method – V10

1) In V10 Paul gives Titus a list of adjectives which describe the reality of how these false teachers operate

- a. By the way – you’ll note, they are pretty straightforward
- b. The straightforward nature of how Paul describes these teachers indicates the seriousness of the situation

2) first thing to note – “many” – polys – not a few, but many

- a. “Wherever God sows the truth, Satan quickly shows up to sow lies.” – WWW
- b. Truth – the test of sound doctrine is not the test of popularity, it’s the test of Biblical accuracy
- c. This little word stresses the great need to guard who we listen to and who we allow to influence us through their teachings

3) Unruly – rebellious

- a. (a) no + (hupotasso) to subject/submit
- b. V6 uses the same word to describe the child who won’t submit to their parents
- c. These false teachers operate out of a disobedience to authority
 - i. They do not subject themselves to the leadership qualifications in V6-9
 - ii. They do not subject themselves to the ordained elder leadership of the church
 - 1. Worse – they do not submit to God’s authority
 - iii. “Beig a law unto themselves and representing the rebel Satan, they do not recognize the authority of God’s Word or of His Spirit, much less that of His divinely called preachers and teachers. Even when their erroneous doctrine and immoral living are exposed, they are inclined to defy correction and discipline by the true church.” – J. Mac

4) Vain talkers – (mataios) vain + (legos) to speak

- a. One who idly speaks what is useless
- b. What they say may be impressive, but there is no real substance or content to it
- c. Truth - Vain talkers excel in talking but not in doing
 - i. These types love to tell others what to do, but don’t do it themselves
- d. 1 Tim. 1:6 uses this word to denote speech which lacks reason, worth, and divine fruit
- e. You must be warned about these teachers because their speech can be captivating, even persuasive, but it’s erroneous
 - i. Its vain because its out from under God’s authority – (unruly)
- f. These people are those who preach speculation not Scripture
 - i. They use religious speech, bible phrases, and christianese – but are deficit of sound doctrine
 - ii. When you apply proper interpretive principles, context, and cross reference- their speech begins to unravel

5) Deceivers – mind + deceptive

- a. Although their speech may use Christian words, its not coming from a Christian dictionary
- b. Another word for a deceiver – liar
 - i. God hates lying
 - 1. Zech. 8:17
 - 2. Jerm. 14:14,15
 - ii. It's one thing to prophecy falsehoods in the name of false gods – but to give false preaching in the name of the God of Scripture is evil
 - 1. Jerm. 23:13,14

6) Notice how Paul steers Titus in the direction of who is doing this

- a. “They of the circumcision”
 - i. That is – the Jews in the church who may say they are Christian, but still hold to law as a means of righteousness
 - ii. Speaks of those who still sought to impose OT law, OT ceremony, even rabbinical tradition to what it means to be saved
 - iii. As we will find out – this group of teachers posed a major issue for Titus and the ministry on Crete
- b. Here's why their teachings are so dangerous: They have a Jesus “plus” theology which ultimately is a “minus” Jesus theology
 - i. Clear statement – Gal. 3:11
- c. The law may teach us, but it does not save us

7) Application question – What role should the Law have in the life of a NT believer?

- a. Christians apply the Law: Morally
 - i. 1 Pet. 1:16
 - 1. A command for holy living
 - 2. A quote of Lev. 11:44,45
 - ii. God's moral law flows from His holy nature, not just Israel's national covenant
 - iii. God doesn't change, neither does His holy morals
 - iv. God gave some laws which were moral standards which help us understand what it means to live holy
 - 1. Example – Ten Commandments, each Commandment is restated and applied in the NT
 - v. Christians apply God's moral standards not to earn salvation, but as an evidence of sanctification
 - 1. The moral law acts as a MIRROR revealing sin and a MAP guiding us to a holy life

b. Christians apply the law: Ceremonially

- i. No – we do not hold to practicing the ceremonies as a means of our faith
- ii. What this means – we have a right understanding of why the ceremonial laws were given
 - 1. Col. 2:17
 - 2. The priests, sacrifices, temple, feasts – were all shadows pointing us to Christ
- iii. Listen to the word of Jesus – John 5:39
- iv. Fascinating – Matt. 5:17,18
 - 1. Fulfil – (pleroo) means to fill up to the full measure
 - 2. In other words – Jesus was the ultimate goal of the law, He was the culmination and completion of what the Law pointed to
 - 3. Statement – Jesus complete the law's intended redemptive purpose
 - 4. In 1st century – rabbis often spoke of two distinct ways to handle scripture
 - a. To “destroy it” – meaning to misinterpret it
 - b. To “fulfil it” – meaning to rightly interpret it and bring it to it's intended end
 - c. No doubt Jesus' audience would have known this when He spoke this statement

c. Christians apply the Law: Principlistically

- i. Many laws were “case study” laws showing Israel what they should do if “this” happened
 - 1. Behind they situation mentioned was the principal which drove the obedient action that followed
 - 2. It is right for believers to study the OT, understand how God applied His principles to situations and strive to do likewise
- ii. Rom. 15:4 – written for our learning
- iii. 1 Corn. 10:6,11 – written for our examples
- iv. You and I can draw principles from OT laws even though the specific form is no longer binding
 - 1. We should ask – what value does this teach – or - what truth is being applied here

Confronts their Message – V11

- 1) In V11 Paul give Titus some practical instruction on how to handle the false teachers**
 - a. Essentially – Paul tells Titus to “muzzle” the false teachings

- 2) “Mouths must be stopped” – to bridle, to put something over the mouth, to restrain the mouth**
 - a. Imagery this word promotes is that of muzzling a dangerous animal to restrict their bite
 - b. No – Paul is not advocating for violence here, he is advocating for firm, authoritative correction spoken from the authority of God’s Word
 - i. This word speaks of bridling a horse – not to harm an animal, but to control it
 1. This is not a call to violence, it’s a call to confront

- 3) Point out – this was not optional for a good leader – this is a necessity**
 - a. Must be – a word which speaks of obligation, of a necessity, it must be done!
 - i. This word is a strong moral edification
 - b. Further – its stated in the present tense – continual and on-going task
 - i. Titus must be on continual guard ready to silence false teaching that creeps in
 - c. Good word – Paul’s command here shows us that false doctrine does not die by accident
 - i. It must be confronted with intentionality

- 4) Begs the question – why must this happen?**
 - a. V11b
 - b. These false teachings are creating confusion and chaos in the congregations
 - c. Notice their target – whole houses
 - i. This can refer to:
 1. Families
 2. Households
 3. House-churches
 - d. Notice the damage – subvert
 - i. Lit. to turn up or over
 - ii. To throw upside down, ruin, destabilize
 - iii. A word of violence –
 1. Overthrowing government
 - a. Same word used in Greek political text to refer to a hostile takeover
 2. Destroying a city
 3. The crumbling of a structure

- e. Evidently these false teachers would not seek to teach publicly at a worship service, but rather operate in private seeking to overthrow families in the faith
 - i. Why?
 - ii. An isolated small group such as a family unit would be an easier target than a church gathering with wise, godly leaders
 - 1. This is why I am leery of para-church organizations who like to operate outside of the confines of a church
 - iii. One of their tactics was to go to the homes when the husbands were out and seek to lead the women astray – 2 Tim. 3:6

5) Notice the message they teach – “things which they ought not”

- a. That which is opposite of V9 – the faithful word
- b. Unsound doctrine
- c. The verb used here indicates more than the sharing of casual opinion, it refers to authoritative teachings
 - i. In other words, they present error as if it truth
- d. Their content was not doctrinally sound
 - i. It wasn’t just that it was unhelpful, it was dangerous

6) Application

- a. Be careful and discerning about what you invite into your home to influence you and your family
 - i. Youtube preaching stars
 - ii. TikTok “theologians”
 - iii. Podcasters
 - iv. New Age spirituality
- b. Be equipped congregationally and personally with sound doctrine that you may discern truth from error
 - i. Know the Scripture so you are not easily fooled and overturned
- c. Church should confront error, not coddle it
 - i. The modern church often:
 - 1. Avoids doctrinal conflicts
 - 2. Tolerates doctrinal error
 - 3. Prioritizes niceness over faithfulness
 - 4. Allows unqualified teachers to have influence
 - ii. Paul’s word here tells us there are moments mouths must be stopped

Confront their Motives – V11c

- 1) Paul goes on to expose the motive of why these teachers spread their teachings**
 - a. Filthy lucre's sake – shameful + gain/profit
 - i. Refers primarily to ill-gotten financial profits
- 2) False teachers don't teach based on obedience to Christ and conviction from the Word**
 - a. They are hired hands seeking a big pay day
 - b. "They were not ministering to the church; they were using religion to fill their own pockets." – WWW
 - i. Reveals why Paul added this qualification to the elders list
- 3) Throughout the history of the church, false teachers have used their positions and slanted their messages to promote their own financial gain**
 - a. They promote that godliness = gain
 - i. 1 Tim. 6:6
- 4) The false teachers actions are considered "shameful" in the sense that their true motive is to gain a profit rather than to serve the Lord and lead the listeners**
 - a. Greed not Godliness is their motive – and Paul warns against it
- 5) How false teachers view the ministry:**
 - a. As a business
 - b. As a platform for gain
 - c. As a means to influence
 - d. As a tool to rob families
 - e. As a way to elevate themselves
- 6) Statement – where greed fuels ministry, truth will be sacrificed**
- 7) Dangers of a profit-driven ministry:**
 - a. Use of manipulating tactics
 - i. If you don't give...then something may happen
 - b. Prosperity preaching
 - i. You'll be blessed if you give
 - c. Reduces people to profits and overlooks spiritual growth
- 8) Good leadership confronts erroneous teaching**
 - a. Confront false teaching
 - b. Guard the pulpit
 - c. Hold to the word
 - d. Warn the flock

Closing application**1) Paul is not telling Titus to be quarrelsome – he is telling him to be courageous**

- a. Silencing false teaching is not unloving, it is pastoral protection

2) Don't let your guard down

- a. What Paul warns here was not a frontal assault on sound doctrinal truth – it was spiritual sabotage from subtle subversion
- b. False teaching rarely comes in the form of open hostility to truth
 - i. Rather, it infiltrates through:
 - 1. Appealing ideas that aren't really Scriptural
 - 2. Religious-sounding talk, but not sound doctrine
 - 3. Emotional manipulation
 - 4. Out of context scripture
- c. Today we have all sorts of:
 - i. Youtube preaching stars
 - ii. Podcasters
 - iii. Influencers
 - iv. Progressive theology
- d. You must stay on guard:
 - i. Stay active as a part of the congregation
 - ii. Bring your questions to the elders
 - iii. Have daily exposure to God's truth
 - iv. Listen with discerning ears

3) God's people must confront error, not tolerate it

- a. This is not done out of harshness, but out of sound doctrine and biblical responsibility
- b. Here's the reality
 - i. Truth matters
 - ii. Families are at risk
 - iii. The Gospel is at stake
 - iv. Error spreads quick when unchallenged
 - v. Undealt with falsehood destroys more than it divides

4) Prayer – God help us to grow in what is right, give us courage to defend truth and guard against lies, give us discerning minds