

Set in Order – Sermon 8 – Titus 2:1 – “Dangers of a Deficient Diet”

Intro:

- 1) **HHS Sec. Robert Kennedy Jr. and team just released an updated version of the food pyramid which they boast as – data-driven and science backed**
 - a. Noted for prioritizing “high-quality protein and healthy fats”
 - b. Goal – put real food at the center of health
 - c. Focus – limit intake of ultra-processed foods, sugars, and artificial flavors and dyes
 - d. They believe this new emphasis is key to having healthy US and aid in fighting chronic disease while supporting good gut health

- 2) **Regardless of your opinion on the matter – the reality that has brought to the front of the conversation this week is – a deficient diet greatly impacts your health and overall well-being**
 - a. What you take in and what you avoid is critical for good health

- 3) **This is not just true when it comes to food and physical health – it’s vitally true for spiritual health as well**
 - a. A deficient spiritual diet will greatly impact your spiritual health and overall spiritual well-being

- 4) **Paul knew this – we can pick up on this truth as we read the opening command of Titus 2**
 - a. Previously Paul had instructed Titus to “set in order” a church that was in great need of spiritual health and growth – 1:5
 - i. Paul’s overall emphasis for this book is – get this church straightened out!
 1. They were lacking much
 - b. After that great emphasis, Paul begins to outline exactly how Titus was to accomplish this task
 - i. Ordain elders
 - ii. Shut the mouths of false teachers
 - c. Now – we are going to read another aspect of what it looks like for Titus to “set in order” these Cretan churches

- 5) **Chapter 2 marks a shift from church leadership to church membership**
 - a. Chapter 1 placed a heavy burden on the church leadership
 - i. Titus’ task
 - ii. Elder’s requirements and responsibilities
 - iii. Calling out false leaders
 - b. Chapter 2 transitions to the practical life instruction for those who make up the Cretan churches
 - c. What Paul begins to instruct here has to do with living life according to “sound doctrine”
 - i. IOW – here’s what spiritual health looks like in these churches

6) In this chapter we are able to note what a spiritually healthy walk with Jesus looks like in the context of the NT church

- a. Highlight V1 as it sets the stage for what follows
 - i. Paul gives instruction in V1 that helps us understand the importance of what follows
- b. Sermon: Dangers of a Deficient Diet
- c. Text: Titus 2:1
- d. Goal – shows us, from the text, some key elements needed for Godly growth and the dangers to your spiritual health if these are left out

The Danger of a spiritual diet absent of Distinct Living

1) Walking with Jesus is a walk aiming towards closeness with God and distance with the world

- a. The Scriptures are clear – worldliness is at odds with Godliness
 - i. 1 John 2:15 - Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
 - ii. James 4:4 - Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.
- b. A life that is “set in order” will be marked by distinct living
 - i. 1 Pet. 1:14-16
 - ii. Holy – sanctified, devoted, distinct
 - 1. Consecrated and dedicated to God

2) Notice – at the opening of chapter 2 we read a word of contrast – a word of distinction

- a. But
- b. This conjunction is given to display a contrast between what is being said versus what has just been said
- c. “This conjunction is adversative”
 - i. Expressing opposition or difference

3) Context tells us exactly what Paul is seeking to make a distinction from

- a. Paul is intentionally setting Titus 2:1 in contrast to Titus 1:10-16
- b. The “but” that Paul gives here is signally a transition through contrast
 - i. Here’s how they are – here’s how you are supposed to be
- c. Paul had just finished identifying the teachings and characteristics of those who are “gainsayers”
 - i. 1:16
 - ii. Abominable – a category of people who are not in heaven – Rev. 21:17
 - iii. Disobedient – a word denoting an unwillingness to be persuaded by truth
 - 1. They spurn sound doctrine
 - 2. Denotes a people who approach God’s truth with closed ears
 - iv. Reprobate – Lit. not + approved
 - 1. A word used to speak of testing metals – Isa. 1:22
 - a. They don’t pass the test
 - 2. A reprobate mind is one which has rejected God and therefore is rejected by God – Rom. 1:28-32

4) Given the negative influence of these false teachers Paul gives Titus a command to be different

- a. Paul is instructing Titus that there is a distinction to be had
- b. But...thou – But YOU Titus
 - i. “The words are sobering for a number of reasons. Paul begins with an emphatic “you”....directed as Titus, as if to say, “others are teaching what is wrong out of base motives, but you – by contrast – must teach what is sound.” -R. Kent Hughes

5) This little conjunction is a great reminder of the distinct life you and I are called to live as followers of Jesus

- a. The world may live in a way that dishonors God – But you
- b. The world may believe in a way that reject God – But you
- c. The world may speak things that are false – But you

6) This distinction here is not simply theological – its practical

- a. It affects the way we live and the nature of what we believe
- b. Paul says it this way to the Colossian believers – Col. 3:1,2

Takeaways

1) Spiritual growth is not a neutral issue

- a. Every person is either moving toward godliness or away from it

2) Spiritual regress often comes on the backdrop of a refusal to live distinct

- a. 1 Thess. 5:14-23
 - i. A list of distinct Godly practices that lead to God sanctifying you wholly

3) Growth is hindered when a believer desires Christ without contrast

- a. 2 Cor. 6:14-17

4) A church cannot mature when it mirrors the culture it's called to contrast

5) Diagnostic Question – Where has my life blended in where Scripture has called me to stand apart?

The Danger of a spiritual diet absent of Deposited Truth

1) Statement – You need Biblical input to grow in your walk with Jesus

- a. It's vital for sanctification
 - i. John 17:17
 - ii. Ps. 119:9,11
- b. It's necessary for growth
 - i. 1 Pet. 2:2
- c. It's essential for wisdom
 - i. Prov. 2:6
 - ii. Col. 3:16
- d. It informs your hope
 - i. Rom. 15:4

2) After Paul draws a distinction between Titus and that which is set in order verses the false teachers and ungodliness – He gives Titus a command to constantly inform God's people of sound doctrine and living

- a. Speak thou these things
- b. Speak – Laleo – word referring to ordinary speech/conversation
 - i. Translated – told, uttered, saith, preached, tell
- c. Note – stated as a present imperative
 - i. Meaning this is an authoritative command that is to be applied with persistence and continuity
 - ii. Stresses a continual action
 - iii. It could be said this way – this is not something that is optional or occasional
- d. Stated this way carries the idea that this is not referring to a casual conversation – rather Titus is to give intentional verbal instruction rooted in God's Word
- e. A reference to “regular and careful pastoral instruction.” – J Mac.

3) What's fascinating about this word – its often given in contrast to that which is mute/dumb

- a. Matt. 9:33 – Luke 11:14 – Mark 7:37
- b. The word carries the idea of a contrasting someone who is ABLE to speak with someone who is UNABLE to speak
 - i. IOW – Paul is commanding Titus not to remain voiceless on sound doctrine and it's application
 - ii. Titus cannot remain silent on these matters – sound doctrine and spiritual growth are at stake

4) Follow up question – why would Paul place such an imperative emphasis on Titus speaking “things which become sound doctrine”?

- a. Ans – because the believers were in desperate need of hearing God’s Word to keep them spiritually healthy and growing
 - i. They were Scripturally immature
 - ii. They were surrounded by false teachers/teaching
 - iii. Their society and culture was one of immorality
- b. Paul knew the Cretan believers needed to hear Biblical input if they were to be “set in order”

5) It’s interesting that Paul would give this command stated this way

- a. Notice what Titus was covey – become sound doctrine
- b. In the Greco-Roman culture – there was a heavy emphasis placed on moral instruction not doctrinal instruction
 - i. There was a heavy emphasis on civic duty and philosophical ideas
 - ii. Yet doctrinal instruction was not greatly promoted
 - iii. Reasons
 - 1. Prided themselves on their philosophical wisdom
 - 2. Polytheistic religions which lacked a singular, text-based dogma or systematic theology
- c. In contrast here – Paul is commanding Titus to give sound doctrinal teaching
 - i. IOW – the people need Scripture not a motivational speech, far-fetched ideas, or a moralistic conversation
 - 1. They don’t need a ted-talk, they need Bible

Takeaways

- 1) Many believers today lack spiritual health, not because they reject truth, but because they aren’t constantly exposed to it**
- 2) Spiritual growth requires ongoing intake, not occasional inspiration**
 - a. Starving with a full plate – Wyatt
 - b. Problem is not a lack of a meal, it’s a lack of consumption!
 - c. Access to truth does not equal nourishment, truth must be consumed and digested
- 3) Diagnostic Question – What voices shape you the most during the week – and how do they compare to Scripture?**

The Danger of a spiritual diet absent of Dedicated Follow-Through

1) Paul goes on to instruct Titus on what he is to be speaking – V1c

- a. Summarize – Titus is commanded to speak right doctrine and give sound application for living

2) Textual insight

- a. Become – prepo – fitting, appropriate, conspicuous, that which is properly aligned
 - i. Notice how Pal uses it in – Eph. 5:3
- b. The emphasis here is not so much on “sound doctrine” as is in 1:9, but rather on the practical instruction which flows from sound doctrine
 - i. We call it – application
 - ii.

3) Titus is commanded here to encourage the Cretan believers to live lives that properly reflect the salvation and transformation of faith in Jesus

- a. James would say – be ye doers of the word (1:22)
- b. Paul is telling Titus to equip the church with both sound doctrine as well as how to live out the ramifications of sound doctrine
 - i. There’s a relevance to sound doctrine

4) Dig Deeper

- a. This word is unique – used culturally in the Greek world to describe the proper attire that should “fit” the occasion
 - i. In ancient Greece, it was important to wear the proper garment fitting the occasion
 - 1. Greek garments – chiton, peplos, himatia
 - ii. The garments indicated – gender, activity, social standing
 - iii. Technical term for “dress code”
- b. IOW – Paul is telling Titus – tell them how to “wear” sound doctrine
 - i. “Doctrine is not merely believed – it is to be embodied”
 - ii. Illus. – black tie event
 - iii. Sound doctrine demands a life that reflects it

Takeaways

1) Truth that isn’t lived is like a suit that never leaves the closet

- a. It may be nice, but its not useful

2) Spiritual growth stalls when you become educated but unchanged

3) Application is not optional – it’s the proof of belief

4) Diagnostic Question – What Biblical truth do you affirm intellectually that you’ve yet to have shape your life?

The Danger of a spiritual diet absent of Doctrinal Soundness

- 1) In this verse, as he did previously, Paul uses a medical term to describe right, biblical teaching**
 - a. Sound – healthy, health, well-being, free from disease
 - i. Word translates a participle form of the verb “hugiaino”
 - ii. Translated:
 1. Whole – Luke 5:31
 2. Wholesome – 1 Tim. 6:3
 3. Health – 3 John 3
 - b. In agriculture – we use this term to describe a healthy animal – “sound”
 - c. Paul uses this term some 8x’s in the pastoral epistles
 - i. 5 of which are found in Titus
- 2) Q – what is to inform the practical application that Titus was to be instructing?**
 - a. Ans – sound doctrine
 - b. Healthy, biblical teaching is what the church needs in order to be “set in order”

Takeaways

- 1) Many believers today are spiritually sick due to the intake of unhealthy teaching**
 - a. Fact – wrong teaching doesn’t merely misinform – it malforms
- 2) This verse calls us to be discerning in what we listen to**
 - a. Sentence – discernment is not arrogance – its spiritual survival
 - i. 1 Thess. 5:21
- 3) Growth is hindered when truth is diluted or distorted**
 - a. Right doctrine produces righteous living
- 4) Diagnostic Question – Do you value doctrinal health as much as emotional comfort?**