

September 6th, 2026

Being different from everyone around you can be both good and bad, and it can be very difficult.

God's people are to be different from those around them:

- Israel was to be different both to keep Israel holy, and to show other nations who God was. **Lev. 18:3-4; Deut. 7:6; Deut. 12:30-31; Isa. 2:2-3; Isa. 49:6.**
- Do not love this world. It is only temporary. **1 John 2:15-17.**
- Be holy just as God Himself is holy. **1 Peter 1:14-16.**
- Don't be conformed to this world but be a living sacrifice to God! **Romans 12:1-2.**

Titus – Paul's companion; Possibly trained by Paul; Left on Crete by Paul to finish what Paul needed done.

Crete – Large Mediterranean Island; Formerly a strong empire, but now under the control of Rome;

Inhabitants were "Liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons" (**Titus 1:12**).; *Kretizo* (to Cretize) became Greek slang for lying.

Counter-Cultural Leaders Guard the Church.

Titus 1:5-9

- Qualifications for Elders.

Titus 1:10-16

- Elders were to guard against false teachers.
 - o Judaizers (**Acts 15**).
 - o Empty talkers and deceivers, when mixed with the "liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons" of the Cretans, were causing a **lot** of problems.
- Cretan Christians needed to be rebuked so they would not fall into the teaching of the Judaizers.

Counter-Cultural Christians Grow the Church.

Titus 2:1-10.

- Older Men (**Titus 2:1-2**).
 - o Sober-minded; Dignified; Self-Controlled; etc.
 - o This is not what a stereotypical Cretan man would be like. It would be far different.
- Older Women (**Titus 2:3-5**).
 - o Reverent; Not Slanderers; Not addicted to wine; Teach what is good; train younger women.
 - Older women in Crete struggled with slander and drinking.
 - Older women's lives weren't any less valuable because they were old.
- Younger Women (**Titus 2:4-5**).
 - o They again needed to be different. **Proverbs 31** is a good picture of what different looks like.
 - o They were to agree to the order that God designed and live within that order. They were not inferior to men.
- Younger Men (**Titus 2:6-8**).
 - o Self-controlled – Seems to be pointing toward them agreeing to the order God designed and fulfilling their role in that order too.
 - o Instructions for Titus to be a model in everything he does.

- Bondservants (**Titus 2:9-10**).
 - o No longer serve because they had to.
 - o The slaves' behavior would attract their masters to the Gospel or push them away from it. And it would do the same for outside pagans as well.

Counter-Cultural Lives Look Forward To the Church.

Titus 2:11-15.

Why do we need to be different? Because of God's grace.

What are we waiting for?

Do we do good works to be worthy of God's grace?

Revelation 21-22.

SO WHAT?!?

- Elders are not the only Christians with qualifications.
- The church has the responsibility to be different and teach others to be different.
- Our motivation for everything is God's grace and waiting for Jesus' return.

For Small Group Discussion:

Opening Question: What is one cultural "trend" (i.e., skinny jeans) you have zero issues ignoring? Why?

Main Point: Christians being different from culture impacts both the church and the world around the church!

Head Questions:

- Which of the "qualifications for elders" would you struggle with the most? Why?
- Which of the "qualifications for elders" would you find easiest? Why?
- What are some false teachers today that the church needs to guard against?
- What category in Titus 2 (Older Men, Older Women, Younger Women, Younger Men) do you fall into? How do you need to be different from the culture around you?
- Find two other verses in the Bible that talk about being different from the world around you. How does that help you as you think about being different?

Heart Questions:

- What is one area of your life where you do not want to be counter-cultural? Why?
- Where are you currently living life according to the world? How is it affecting your life?
- What is your motivation for doing good? Why is that? Do you feel you gain worth from it? Read Titus 2:11-15 again. How might your motivation for doing good need to change?

Hands Questions:

- Who is someone in your life that you need to model being counter-cultural to, and what are you going to do about it?
- What is one way you can let God's grace that brings salvation be the motivation for what you do this week?
- Which of the "qualifications for elders" do you need to work on this week? How will you do it?
- What false teaching might be present in your life, and how will you fight it this week?

Additional Scripture: **Matthew 5-7 (Sermon on the Mount); Romans 1, 12:1-2; 1 Timothy 3, 4:11-16; James 1:19-20, 4:4; Acts 15; 1 Peter 1:15-16.**