

## Damaged Doctrine

- I. **Slide1 Intro:** [from Leaders in the church, to Legalists in the church]
- A. **Slide2** Did you know **the female Cuckoo Bird** lays her eggs in the nests of smaller birds of different species, *which raise the young cuckoos*, usually at the expense of their own young (brood parasitism, *being larger, they get most of the food*)
1. **Satan is the mother cuckoo**, laying his young cuckoos (**false teachers**) in different church nests. **And** often, if **undetected** by **the church leadership**, it will be at the expense of **many of the churches young**.
- B. **Slide3a Crete** - The 5th largest islands in the Med, 160m long, 37m wide (TJ/Malibu)
1. It was **at 1 time** a very **prosperous & populous** island **having about 100 cities**
  2. **Jews from Crete** were in Jerusalem on the day of **Pentecost**. Acts 2:11
  3. They were **visited by Paul** on his voyage to Rome. Acts 27
- C. The Cretans gained a notorious reputation for **their lack of moral integrity**.
1. Ancient writers popularized the verb **to Cretanize**, as slang for **lying and cheating**. (i.e. **Corinthianize**, to practice immorality).
  2. Here Paul applies this well known saying to **the false teachers** (not necessarily because he agrees with it being applied to all Cretans).<sup>1</sup>
- D. **Max Sherman**, a scientist who studies **energy efficiency** in buildings, examined the effectiveness of various sealants for heating and air conditioning **ducts**. He came up with a startling conclusion, most of the duct sealants on the market work well, with one notable exception - **duct tape**. Duct tape, *failed reliably & often catastrophically*.
1. Society jokingly refers to duct tape as, **the force that holds the universe together**. While good for many functions, **it could not fulfill the one purpose for which it was designed**.

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<sup>1</sup> Faithlife Study Bible (Tt 1:12). Lexham Press.

- a) **Religious training** does not guarantee **meaningful leadership**. We learn here that those in Crete, who claim to be *the most real religious*, were often *the least equipped* for biblical leadership.
- b) **Slide3b Wrong words, Wrong motives, and Wrong actions** mark the ungodly leaders path of error. And so we see the sharp contrast with true leaders in *Christ's church with errant leaders*.

## II. Slide4a **DAMAGED DOCTRINE AND HARMED HOUSEHOLDS (10-12) READ**

A. Slide4b (11) **Whole families** were affected by their *unhealthy teachings*.

1. Since the early church assemblies **usually met in private homes**, it is easy to understand how **whole houses** could be upset by *false teachers*.
2. People today who have Bible studies in their homes must be careful lest visitors/guests/friends come in with strange doctrines. *Maybe, but i think it's sneaker than that.*

3. Slide4c **How do we deal with lies** in our culture today?

- a) Can we start with, *we are all biased*. I am, and so are you. And we are very comfortable in our bias. *I like this group, I don't like that group.*

4. **Confirmation bias** is the tendency to *search for, interpret, favor, and recall information* in a way that confirms or supports one's prior beliefs or values.

- a) People display this bias when they select information that supports their views, *ignoring contrary information*, or when they interpret ambiguous evidence as supporting their existing attitudes.
- b) Confirmation bias cannot be *eliminated*, but it can be **managed**, for example, by education and training in *critical thinking skills*.

B. Slide4d Here they were teaching **Jewish legalism**, those of the circumcision (for salvation), which Paul rejected.

C. They were also teaching **Jewish myths** (mythos) refers to *legendary stories about the gods*.

1. Such tales *distracted* believers from the truth (i.e., the gospel message) and sound doctrine, resulting in *ungodly behavior*. [Read Col.2:16]
  2. *Slide5a* As the old adage goes, *When the plain sense of Scripture makes good sense, seek no other sense*. David L. Cooper
- D.(11) *Teaching things that they ought not* - **George Lucas** (Star Wars, Indiana Jones) *accepting a lifetime achievement award at the Academy Award ceremonies, March 1992 said, "I've always tried to be aware of what I say in my films because all of us who make motion pictures are teachers, teachers with very loud voices."*
- E.(12) *Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons* - *wasn't* invented by *some tourist who gave a bad review on Trip Advisor, at Crete's Quality Inn*.
1. *Slide5b* Paul quotes from **Epimenides** (600bc), a famous figure of Crete, who was considered to be a prophet ... who condemns his own people. [although being a Cretan himself ... that would make him a liar?]
- F. *It must have been hard ministering on the island of Crete*. It was full of **problems & challenges**.
1. But this group was nothing more than **people with a reputation**.
- G. *Cities, towns, or states* are *known* for, *or* have a *reputation* for, different things (+ or -)
1. *Corinth*/excessive immorality. What happens in *Vegas* \_\_\_\_\_ . *Texas*/known for everything **big**. *Temecula*/Vineyards. *Murrieta*/was ranked as the #6 safest *midsize city* this year (July 12th, 2021).
- H. *Slide5c* *But let's remember, God loves the Cretans*. He placed churches there. (vs.5)
1. Some towns are more **difficult** than others, when it comes to ministry.
  2. Some experience a very **transient** vacation population (Maui)
  3. Some near **military bases** have a constantly rotating congregation.
  4. Crete bustled w/many **sea-weary sailors** on shore leave.
    - a) But Praise God ... *He loves the dirty, the bad reputations, the cussing, lying, cheating types* ... that's who He's after.
    - b) What a great place to plant a church ... with those who **need a Physician**, **not** to those who *think they don't*.

## I. 3 Lessons:

1. Decipher between **doctrine** (teaching) **vs. dogma** (opinion)
2. **Ask yourself** ... Do they model Christlike values & virtues? Do they point to Christ or to themselves? Do you see accountability & transparency? Do they exhibit true humility? Authenticity? Love? Do they submit themselves to the authority of God's Word? Do they submit themselves to any other authority? What do their followers look like?
3. **Listen closely & think critically.**

III. Slide6a **DEAL WITH THEM (13-16)** *READ*

- A. Slide6b (13) So, **Rebuke them sharply** - Is it right to **warn** about Cults, false teachers or even friends w/bad doctrine, **or** is that being *mean & judgmental*?
1. Is it seen as mean when a **doctor** informs a patient, that he has a **terminal illness**? **Or**, when one yells **"fire! fire!"** awaking a sleeping family that is about to perish? **Or**, **roughly grabbing a child** out of the street, just being missed by an on coming car?
    - a) **No** patient would respond to the doctor, *you are mean*. **Nor** to the yeller, *we were sleeping!* **Nor** to the child saver, *hey don't grab my child that way!*
  2. **And yet**, the Bible Study leader is seen as mean or judgmental if he/she **warns** his listeners of wolves, **or** bad wolf teachings, that might creep in unaware?
  3. Here Paul warns the church, **not** of *wolves in wolves clothing* (unbelievers that persecute the church). **Not** even *wolves in sheep's clothing* (unbelievers posing as Christians). **But** *wolves, dressed like sheep, & sporting clerical collars* (unbelievers posing as *spiritual leaders*).
- B. Slide6c (13b) Don't miss vs.13b - **that** they may be **sound/healthy in the faith**. Goal of the rebuke? *healing, not destroying*.
- C. (15,16) **Defiled conscience** - Remember, *the conscience is that internal judge that either accuses or excuses our actions*.

1. The only compelling argument is the argument of the Christian life.
2. I like the illustration of **the conscience** being like a **window** that lets in the light of God's truth. If we persist in disobeying ... the window gets dirtier & dirtier.

- a) A defiled conscience is like this dirty window: *no light can enter*.
- b) **Slide6d Caution:** a defiled conscience (Titus 1:15), leads to a seared conscience (1 Tim. 4:2), & ultimately to an evil conscience (Heb.10:22) if it's not dealt with.
  - (1) Saints, keep your window clean, so God's Word can shine in, & for the world to peer in.

D. **Slide7a** Paul reminds his readers of his Lord's teachings that purification is largely a matter of the **internal** rather than the **external**. *There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.*

1. Nothing **outside** can corrupt one who is **internally** pure; **but** someone who is **internally** impure corrupts **all he touches**. BKC
2. The false teachers were corrupt to the core (mind & conscience)
3. **Result?** Even though they *claimed to know God*, their corrupt actions belied their true natures.
  - a) The man who says, *I know him, but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*
4. **Slide7b** Their impure **interiors** thus rendered them **externally** detestable.
  - a) Once again Paul connected theological error with moral deficiency.

E. **Slide7c Changed Hearts Change Culture** [eg. Crete Culture, California Culture, Calvary Culture, Crazy Culture]

1. Paul's basic premise at the beginning of this passage was **false teachers nor religion are going to change a culture**.

a) The Cretans needed to be released from their bondage (they were enslaved to sinful lives) which produce a *sinful culture*. **Only Jesus** can change a *sinful culture*.

2. Slide7d Like the Cretans, the only hope we have for changed hearts is through *the sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ*. The **old heart** needs to be replaced with a **new heart**, one that's **redeemed & regenerated** by Jesus.

3. When people clearly **hear** the gospel and **receive** forgiveness through Christ, **then their hearts are changed**. And out of that changed heart comes a **changed culture** of *good morals and good works*.

F. Slide8a Msg, *For there are a lot of rebels out there, full of loose, confusing, and deceiving talk. Those who were brought up religious and ought to know better are the worst. They've got to be shut up. They're disrupting entire families with their teaching, and all for the sake of a fast buck. One of their own prophets said it best: The Cretans are liars from the womb, barking dogs, lazy bellies. He certainly spoke the truth. Get on them right away. Stop that diseased talk of Jewish make-believe and made-up rules so they can recover a robust faith. Everything is clean to the clean-minded; nothing is clean to dirty-minded unbelievers. They leave their dirty fingerprints on every thought and act. They say they know God, but their actions speak louder than their words. They're real creeps, disobedient good-for-nothings.*

G. Slide8b You **cannot** just simply be *instructed in biblical principles*. You **have to get to Jesus** every week! How do you read the Bible? There are only 2 ways to read the Bible:

1. It is basically about **me**, or basically about **Jesus**.
2. It's about what I must **do**, or what he has **done**.

H. Keywords: religion, sin.