



Connect Discussion Guide

12.12.21 Message | Chuck Sackett | Titus 1:5-16

Key Scriptures:

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.”

- Matthew 1:18-25

“This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth. To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both

their minds and their consciences are defiled. They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work."

- Titus 1:5-16

Message Highlights:

- Embodying Christmas leadership in a lost world means being countercultural.
- As messengers, we must tell the right message, embrace the right values and live the right life.
- The lifestyle of leadership determines the lifestyle of the body which in turn determines the lifestyle of the one deployed into the world." (Joseph Aldrich)
- The greatest gift we can give is to be a model to look at, a life to imitate, a direction to follow.

Conversation Starter:

In our message saturated world, many have the potential to distract us from the ultimate Christmas message, however many have the potential to enrich this season with truth. What resources have you found to be helpful in drawing you closer to the savior this Advent season?

Discuss the Message:

1. Titus' assignment to appoint leaders among the church was in response to a real felt problem in the church-- breaches of character and conduct in the Cretans. What can you glean from the fact that Paul and Titus didn't shrink back at the prospect of leading a difficult people, but rather tried to lead them in the name of Christ?
2. The impact of leaders within the church is often far reaching. Think back to a leader - whether it be a pastor, small group leader, mentor, etc. - whose guiding presence has significantly altered your ministry and your relationship with the Lord. What aspects of their leadership had the greatest impact on you?
3. One of the ways we embody Christian leadership is by telling the right message; sometimes fear and doubt can stop us in our tracks before we get any kind of message out at all. As simply as you can, craft with your group a Christmas message that you can practice to feel confident in sharing the good news of the gospel. Challenge each other to share your message at some point throughout the upcoming week.
4. What standards does Paul list in Titus 1 that are to compose the character of a leader in the church? Out of all the standards he could have highlighted, why do you think he chose these?
5. In what ways have you seen Madison Park lead out in counter cultural ways? Consider a wide variety of areas, including generosity, service and the scope of Madison Park's reach.

Pray:

Father in Heaven, we thank you for the love that you have shown for us in the advent of your Son, Jesus, our Christ. Just as you sent him into the darkness of this world to live and lead and to rescue us from our sin, you have called us to be salt and light in this world, messengers who point the way to Jesus. Father we pray that, by your grace, our lives may fully align with the message we proclaim. Jesus, when fear and doubt creep in, remind us that you never leave us or forsake us. Empower us by your Holy Spirit to live this week as living testimonies to the reality of Emmanuel, God with us. Amen.