

## **TITUS 1**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Titus chapter 1 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

As we have talked about in I and II Timothy, these letters were what are known as the Pastoral Epistles.

And Titus is the last of the three letters known as the Pastoral Epistles, the other two being I Timothy and II Timothy.

But keep in mind, just because Titus is the third epistle of these Pastoral Epistles in our Bible, II Timothy is Paul's last letter he wrote before he was martyred for his faith by Caesar Nero!

Titus, like Timothy was a son in the faith, which may indicate that Paul was the one who led him to Jesus.

Also, according to Galatians 2:3, Titus was a Greek, a Gentile who traveled with Paul extensively.

Now, specifically, Luke, when writing the book of Acts, never mentions Titus' name or his conversion.

So we don't know the events surrounding Titus' conversion, even though I think we get a good idea here, like I have said, in Titus as Paul calls him, “**... my true son in the faith.**” But we do know that he went on to be a valuable part of Paul's life and missionary team.



Now, in Galatians 2:1-5 we are told, **“Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.”**

Paul brought Titus with him to Jerusalem for the first council meeting that dealt with salvation, was it by Works or by Grace?

You see, many of the Jewish believers wanted the Gentiles to convert to Judaism, to keep the Law of Moses, to be circumcised.

And Peter stood up before James, the leader there in the church in Jerusalem, and said, **“Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.”** Acts 15:10-11.

Peter wants them to think this through. And he starts out by saying that the Jews, from the past and right up until their day, could never keep the Law. It was impossible to fulfill it completely. In fact, the only One who has is Jesus!

And if that is true, and it is, then why put this heavy burden upon the Gentiles to keep something that they could never keep in the first place. It would make no sense!



And then he makes this powerful point that many have missed! He said, “**But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.**” Acts 15:11.

In other words, the Jews are saved just as the Gentiles are saved, by Grace through Faith in Jesus Christ and not by the Law through Works and Titus was an example of this salvation by faith.

Now, if Peter said that the Gentiles are saved just like the Jews are saved, some may come to the wrong conclusion, believing that salvation comes through Jesus and the keeping of the Law. But he doesn't put it that way and thus, this is a powerful point that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone!

And James, in hearing the arguments, agreed and sent letters to the Gentile churches to encourage them to continue on in the faith, that you are saved by Grace through Faith!

And this is the response from the Gentile churches when this letter was read to them, “**So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement.**” Acts 15:30-31. There is great joy in knowing that we are saved by grace!

We also see in the Scriptures that after Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment, he took Titus with him to Crete where they ministered together for a time and then Paul left Titus there to continue on with the work, to deal with the problems there, to raise up leaders, to encourage the people to live godly lives, to deal with the Judaizers, which he was very familiar with, they seemed to follow Paul around with their legalist views. And Titus not only saw this, but he saw how to deal with them, to put them to silence by the Word of God! (Titus 1:5, 9)



And, because of what we will see in Titus 1:5, **“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you.”** Clarke makes this point. He wrote, “That St. Paul had been in Crete, though nowhere else intimated, is clear from this passage. That he could not have made such an important visit, and evangelized an island of the first consequence, without it being mentioned by his historian, Luke, had it happened during the period embraced in the Acts of the Apostles, must be evident. That the journey, therefore, must have been performed after the time in which St. Luke ends his history, that is, after St. Paul’s first imprisonment at Rome, seems almost certain.”

The island of Crete, where Titus was ministering, is an island in the Mediterranean Sea and it is about 160 miles long and its width ranges from 7 to 35 miles.

This island, Crete, was strategically located in the shipping lanes being just southeast of Greece, southwest of Asia Minor and north of Africa.

Thus, it had a heavy exposure of Greek and Roman culture. Also, the archenemy of Israel at one time, the Philistines, came from this island of Crete!

We don’t know for sure how the church in Crete was started but on the day of Pentecost, in Acts 2:11, we are told that Jews from Crete were there for the feast day and they saw the power of God, many getting saved and they could have brought the Gospel message back home with them.

If that is true that might explain how there was a move towards legalism from these Jewish believers.

It is a possibility, and it does seem like the church was started, probably on a small scale before Paul got there.



Also, according to Homer, during this period of time there could have been 90-100 cities in Crete, and thus, many local churches spread about. That meant that Titus needed to raise up elders, leaders, godly men to oversee them!

This letter was probably written sometime between 64-66 A. D., at the same time or shortly after Paul wrote I Timothy and before he was placed back in prison there in Rome for his faith in Christ where he wrote his last letter, II Timothy.

Paul, in II Timothy 4:10, tells us that Titus went to Dalmatia or modern-day Yugoslavia or Bosnia for a time and that is the last time Titus is mentioned in the Scriptures.

Tradition tells us that Titus did return to Crete and served there until he was called home to be with the Lord!

The purpose or theme of this letter was not only to encourage Titus to continue on in the work, but as Titus 3:8 tells us, **“This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.”**

In other words, as we are saved by Grace we need to manifest in our lives good works and godliness, not for salvation, but to show that our faith is real and to be an example to others of what God has done in our lives!



I have broken this letter down into six main points or five main points and a conclusion.

They are as follows:

- ***PAUL'S SALUTATION – TITUS 1:1-4***
- ***RAISING UP ELDERS – TITUS 1:5-9***
- ***ERROR IN THE CHURCH – TITUS 1:10-16***
- ***QUALITIES OF A SOUND CHURCH – TITUS 2:1-15***
- ***EXHORTING THE CHURCH – TITUS 3:1-11***
- ***CONCLUSION – TITUS 3:12-15***

With that as our background, let's begin reading in Titus chapter 1, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as Paul makes his opening greetings to Titus and the churches there in Crete.

## **TITUS 1**

### **VERSE 1**

Keep in mind that Titus 1:1-4 is ***PAUL'S SALUTATION*** or greeting. And we will break these verses down as we look at this opening salutation.

We see that Paul is specifically writing to Titus, we see that in Titus 1:4. But in reality, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul was also writing to the churches in Crete and to us.

And here we see that Paul lists his credentials, that he is a DOULOS or bondsman, which was the lowliest slave and a slave by choice.



You see, it was a personal commitment to be a bonds slave just as it is with us, and it was a divine appointment that he was an apostle or one who was sent forth with a mission, specifically the Good News of Jesus Christ!

We see his position – a slave and thus, owned by God!

We see his commission – an apostle and thus, he was sent by God!

That too should be true of us, we are owned by God and we are sent forth by God, what we are doing is by divine appointment!

Then Paul says, “**according to the faith of God’s elect.**” What is he speaking of? I think he is speaking of those who have come to saving faith!

He goes on to say, “**and the acknowledgment of the truth which is according to godliness.**” What is that speaking of? I think it speaks of being built up in the faith or the sanctification process.

That should just make sense because that is what the Great Commission is all about. Jesus said, “**“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.”** Matthew 28:19-20.

It is just what Paul is saying here in Titus. We are to evangelize or bring people the Gospel message so they can come to saving faith, bringing the elect to Christ.

And then there is that discipleship or teaching them the things of God so that they can grow in Christ and be holy as He is holy.

And this is so important and maybe why we see such a problem in the church today. I want you to notice how truth leads to godliness or a godlikeness, why is that?



Because a person can be good but apart from the truths of God, apart from having a personal relationship with Jesus, you are moving away from God, and all that good you think you are doing is not accepted by God.

And the reality is, if you don't know the truths of God found in the Word of God, you are going to do those things that your heart desires and not what God desires. And that is never a good thing.

Remember what Paul told Timothy in II Timothy 2:14-19, **“Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.’”**

You see, sound doctrine, healthy doctrine is profitable to us while unhealthy doctrine is dangerous, it can bring ruin to our lives, it can be catastrophic!

Let me show you what I mean. We are told,

Recently, I became aware of a professor at one of the local colleges whose goal is to convince his students that you can have a system of ethics without a belief in God. Now I agree with him that holding his position is theoretically possible, but I said to him that such an ethical system is one built on sand. It would not stand the test of time nor the waves of adversity.



The U.S.S.R. tried to build an empire on godless atheism, and it failed miserably. Today in Russia we still see the results of the ethics of atheism. You would think that the Russians, having suffered so much under a totalitarian regime, would strive to do the right thing in appreciation for their new freedoms. Many have, but Russia today is torn apart by crime, greed, lawlessness, and immorality. Why? Was it merely too much freedom too soon, or are they still reaping the rewards of the ethics of atheism?

Many people today believe that God is, at best, unnecessary, and at worst, an intolerant task master. They say they don't need God to live right, and they can set their own rules for life.

We live in a world obsessed with personal values. What people do depends on their personal values, but since everyone's values are different, there seems to be no standard by which we must all live. The very idea of basing our morality upon our values means that we have bought into the idea of a system of relativistic ethics. Personal values have replaced values of virtue as the foundation for ethical thought. Virtues speak of some objective realities, but personal values speak only about subjective decisions of our will.

Basing ethical decisions on personal values is problematic. For example, is something good because we love it, or do we love it because it is good? German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche would tell us that something is good because we love it. According to Nietzsche, man himself is the universal and absolute reference point for all of life. "God is dead," he declared, believing this release from the demands of any metaphysical reality was an opportunity to develop his own system of ethics based on self-cultivation.



Today the world is continuing to build an ethical system based on tolerance and enlightenment apart from God. Men have tried many ways to teach this new godless form of morality. A decade ago we constantly heard the term, “values clarification.” It was a national effort to allow even children to set their own standards of behavior. It was a disaster as it justified almost any kind of behavior. Educators may not loosely throw around the term, “values clarification,” as they once did, but many still try to teach a system of ethics based on man’s own values. These are values which are rooted in the idea of desirable goods, i.e., that which we decide is important to us. . . .

God is the creator and sustainer of all things. We would not even be self-aware, let alone aware of right and wrong, if God had not created within us His image, and therefore the ability to make moral distinctions. The truth is we have no reference point for all this discussion about morality except as God reveals it. For us to argue with the source of morality is for the clay to argue with the potter.

Some philosophers say that for God to define what is right or wrong is arbitrary. God is not arbitrary; He is the source of all life and therefore the source of all truth. We have no basis to even understand the concept of being arbitrary except in reference to an unchanging God. That which would be circular reasoning or arbitrary in discussions about ourselves comes into perfect focus as we bring the dilemma close to the universal, absolute focal point for all creation, God Himself. . . .

Intellectuals like Nietzsche, Spinoza, and Tillich and many others who have followed them have tried to create a godless society, a society free to create its own ethical system without the constraints of God-given mandates.



What can we expect if these leaders are able to advance their model for a system of ethics that has no need for God?

An interesting example may be the story of the medical profession in Germany during the Nazi regime. The medical profession is supposed to be the protector of human life. The Hippocratic Oath, that dates back to the Egyptians, states the highest standards of trust for those dedicating themselves to this honorable profession.

How did the medical profession in Germany become nothing more than an instrument of death in the hands of the Nazis? First, one's view of the nature of man had to change from that of a spiritual being to that of a purely physical being of no universal value beyond what society places on the individual. Through years of assault upon traditional morals and biblical truths, the German people began to see mankind through the eyes of German philosophers like Nietzsche and Hiedigger. These men viewed humanity as strictly flesh and blood, different from the animals only in progression, not in basic nature.

Once the German population in general, and the medical profession in particular, was sold on a collectivist-authoritarian way of life, everything was in place to use the medical profession to accomplish the purposes of the Third Reich.

The Nazi holocaust began with a subtle shift in attitude that judged the value of people based upon their cost/benefit ratio to the state. First, it started with sterilization and euthanasia of people with severe psychiatric illnesses. Soon all those with chronic illness were being exterminated.



Before too long, all patients who had been sick for five years or more, or were medically unable to work and unlikely to recover were transported to killing centers; what started as “mercy killings” in rare cases of extreme mental illness soon expanded to mass extermination on an unprecedented scale. Before long all those who could not work and were medically evaluated as incapable of being rehabilitated were killed.

The German medical profession then started using human body parts for medical research, and this led to the grisly “terminal human experiments,” in which live people were used in medical experiments.

It all started with the idea that humans belong to society and the state. According to this view, if someone is a burden to society and the state, it is logical to conclude that their life was not a life worth living. From the first decision to put to death burdensome mental patients, a chain of events followed that ultimately led to the death of the majority of all the Jews in Europe, as well as millions of other “undesirables.”

If we don’t believe we are created by God, but simply highly evolved animals, and if we believe we have accountability only to society, then there is no end to the depths of depravity that we can go in our search to justify our actions. Corrosion of morals begins in microscopic proportions, but if not checked by a standard beyond ourselves, it will continue until the corrosion wipes away the very foundation of our lives, and we find ourselves sinking in a sea of relativity.

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Do you see how important it is to know what we should do and how we should live? I hope so, and this is not based upon what we feel, it is based upon what God has told us in His Word, it is His will for our lives, and it is what is best!

On the other end of the spectrum are the truths of God found in the Word of God and they are profitable to us.

Paul put it this way in II Timothy 3:16-17, **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”**

You see, now you can understand why some churches embrace so much ungodly behavior, it is because they have moved away from the truths of God’s Word! It is as Paul put it, **“... the acknowledgment of the truth which is according to godliness.”**

### VERSES 2-3

When Paul speaks of **“eternal life”** he is not just speaking of the existence of life, but abundant life and that abundant life is only found in Jesus.

In fact, Jesus tells us in John 10:10, **“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”**

That eternal life is a present possession for us, and it is also a future hope, not an uncertainty, but a hope in the promise of God’s Word, that what God has promised He is able to bring to pass.

How can we be sure of that?



Because God cannot lie as Numbers 23:19 tells us, **“God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?”**

You see, before God created the Heavens and the Earth, before time began, because time is a physical property, God promised that He would give His creation abundant life, everlasting life and He has!

That life is found only in Christ!

Jesus said in John 17:3, **“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”** I think He made that very clear to us, that abundant life is found only in Him!

Thus, we have that present possession of eternal life, abundant life in Christ and we are waiting for a future hope as we are gathered to the Lord.

Paul put it this way in Philippians 3:20-21, **“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”**

Our hope is in Him and His promises to us, which will come to pass!

Now, as we get to Titus 1:3 Paul said, **“but has in due time manifested His word through preaching . . .”**

Now, in saying that, how does God manifest Himself to us today?

Through His Word that is opened up to our hearts by the Holy Spirit!



In his excellent book *Toward an Exegetical* [critical interpretation of a text] *Theology*, Walter C. Kaiser writes:

It is no secret that Christ's Church is not at all in good health in many places of the world. She has been languishing because she has been fed, as the current line has it, "junk food"; all kinds of artificial preservatives and all sorts of unnatural substitutes have been served up to her.

As a result, theological and Biblical malnutrition has afflicted the very generation that has taken such giant steps to make sure its physical health is not damaged by using foods or products that are carcinogenic or otherwise harmful to their physical bodies.

Simultaneously, a worldwide spiritual famine resulting from the absence of any genuine publication of the Word of God (Amos 8:11) continues to run wild and almost unabated in most quarters of the Church.

- Walter C. Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, p. 7

Thus, we need to get back to God's Word, to feed upon it for as the Psalmist said, **"Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path."**

May we be guided by the Lord through His Word and take in that spiritual nourishment that we need to grow by as we read and mediate upon it!

#### VERSE 4

From what we read here it seems that Paul could have been the one to share Christ with Titus and he came to saving faith; thus, Paul considers him a **"true son in our common faith."**

Notice, all roads don't lead to God, only one and that is through Christ and thus, it was common faith!



And once again we see grace, mercy and peace in the Pastoral Epistles.

God's grace, mercy and peace are all gifts bestowed upon us because of God's love and that is a gift that is all wrapped up in Christ and His finished work on the cross of Calvary, paying in full the payment for our sins.

It is as Calvin put it, "The Son has brought to us salvation from the Father, and the Father has bestowed it through the Son."

Now, in Titus 1:5-9 Paul's focus to Titus is ***RAISING UP ELDERS*** and specifically, their qualifications!

#### VERSE 5

During this period of time, according to Homer, there were between 90 and 100 cities on the island of Crete, and thus, many churches, as I have said.

And Paul wants Titus to get things in order by appointing elders or leaders in those churches, godly men.

Make no mistake about it, our God is a God of order, not disorder and thus, one of the functions of leadership in the church is to keep things in order.

In speaking of this, Paul uses a word that was a medical term, the setting of broken bones, putting them back together, back in line so they could heal!

If not, the church would be crooked, off balance, it would be unstable!

If you remember from our study in I Corinthians, the church in Corinth was in disorder, people were speaking when they wanted in church, it was a mess.

And Paul reminds them in I Corinthians 14:33, **"For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."**



And God still establishes order, not confusion in the church today through leaders!

Now here in verse 5 Paul uses the Greek word PRESBUTEROS or elder.

In verse 7 he uses the Greek word EPISKOPOS or bishop.

I believe the bishop is what we might call the senior pastor and all bishops are elders but not all elders are bishops or senior pastors.

Here at Calvary that is the form of church government that we have where the senior pastor is the shepherd or overseer of the church.

The elders are there to care for the spiritual matters of the church, assisting the senior pastor.

And the deacons deal with the physical things of the church.

I believe this is the Biblical pattern for church government.

In the Old Testament we see Moses accountable to God for the nation as he leads the people like a shepherd. He, in a sense would be the senior pastor.

Then there were the priests who dealt with the spiritual matters of the nation and they would represent the elders of today.

Next were the judges who dealt with the civil matters of the nation and they would represent today the deacons.

And then you had the children of Israel, the sheep or as we say today, the congregation.

And please understand that leaders are not appointed just because there is a need, but because there is a need and they meet the qualifications to be a leader that God has set forth.

In saying that, this list is also applicable to those who are not in leadership positions; they are for all Christians as they show the true measure of a man, his maturity!



VERSES 6-8

Notice how this begins, “**If a man**” not a woman and thus, as we saw when we studied 1 Timothy, the office of elders, pastors are offices in the church of God that are limited to men. And again, it is not that men are smarter or better than a woman, this is just the role that God has established.

Now we did cover these qualifications for leaders back in 1 Timothy, but let’s look at them again because, like I have said, these are things we should all be doing, not just leaders in the church.

- **BLAMELESS:** Not perfect but there is no big mark that someone can bring against you and the church. This is important!
- **HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE:** Literally, “*a one-woman man*” or a man who is faithful to his wife, he doesn’t have wandering eyes. This does not mean you have to be married, but if you are you are to be faithful to your wife. Obviously, that just makes sense.
- **FAITHFUL CHILDREN:** The idea here is that if you can’t care for your own home, how can you care for God’s? And please understand that this is not saying that your children are perfect, none of us are, but if they do rebel, if they do have problems, how are you dealing with those things? Are you dealing with it in an appropriate manner?
- **NOT SELF-WILLED:** If you are so consumed with self, you won’t be able to care for God’s people!
- **NOT QUICK-TEMPERED:** If you have a short fuse, lash out, if you have a propensity towards anger, you are not qualified to be a leader.
- **NOT GIVEN TO WINE:** The idea here is not lingering long to wine, getting drunk is unacceptable for a leader. Again, I personally feel, because of the society we live in and the problem we have with drinking, that leaders should not drink alcohol because it is a bad witness.
- **NOT VIOLENT:** A leader is to have a gentle spirit.
- **NOT GREEDY FOR MONEY:** How dangerous the love of money can be and if your love for money is an issue, then you can’t be a leader because you can’t serve two masters! The Amplified Bible reads, “**Not a lover of money - insatiable for wealth and ready to attain it by questionable means.**” Money must never be the motivation behind a man becoming a pastor or in his decision making.



- **HOSPITABLE:** They open their homes and their lives to strangers.
- **LOVERS OF WHAT IS GOOD:** That is just obvious. If the evil things of this world are your focus, you can't lead God's people.
- **SOBER-MINDED:** The idea here is that the person is able to handle situations clearly, he is levelheaded.
- **JUST:** You must be right or fair towards people.
- **HOLY:** You must be right towards God.
- **SELF-CONTROLLED:** You must be right towards yourself. It is as Matthew Henry said, "How unfit are those to govern a church who cannot govern themselves!"

As you can see, in Titus 1:7, we moved from elders to Bishops or pastors. And like I have said, all pastors are elders but not all elders are pastors.

And make no mistake about it, ministry is tough. If it was easy, then everyone would be doing it.

It has been said that Biblical leadership is ***"Bent knees, wet eyes and a broken heart."***

Why is that?

Because you love them so much that you are in prayer for them. You weep as they weep, you rejoice as they rejoice. And you are broken when they go astray; they go down those paths that are dangerous, not where God wants them to be!

And I can tell you that over the past 25 years, there has been a lot of weeping in what I have seen with people. My heart breaks as they go astray, as they get into false teaching, and-so-on.

But for me, I know what God has called me to do and I want to finish the race strong. I want to be like Paul who told the Ephesian elders that none of these things will move me from the course that God has for my life.



And I am sure you feel the same way. That you want to finish strong and not be moved from the course that God has for your life.

Now there is one more thing that a pastor is to do, and this is so important. Let's read on and see what Paul tells Titus.

#### VERSE 9

Please understand that this is not a suggestion or just a good idea. He must be a man of the Word, as a pastor you must be a student of God's Word, you must know how to rightly divide the Word of God so that as you teach God's Word.

That is what Paul told Timothy in II Timothy 2:15, "**Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**"

You have to be able to bring the truths of God to the people, and you need to do it correctly. The Bible is not here for you to come up with your interpretations, it is to speak for itself!

Not only that, but as you share God's Word you will exhort or encourage those that need encouragement and you will convict or discourage those who are moving down the wrong path.

It is as one person said, "***God's Word will comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable!***"

Now, if a leader is not standing upon the solid foundation of God's Word, then he is on shaky ground and his exhortation and conviction towards his people will be meaningless because only God's Word is living and powerful and able to transform lives!



You may remember, from our study in II Samuel, one of David's mighty men, Eleazar. Let me share with you his story from II Chronicles 23:9-10, where we are told, **"And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David when they defied the Philistines who were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel had retreated. He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to plunder."**

How did Eleazar defeat the enemy and strengthen the people?

With the sword that cleaved to his hand because he used it so much.

How do we defeat the enemy and strengthen those around us?

With the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God and we should know it so well that it is a natural part of our life, that when we speak, God's Word comes forth!

Know the Word!

Listen again to what Paul said to Timothy in II Timothy 3:16-17, **"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."**

Notice, all of Scripture, from Genesis through Revelation was breathed from the mouth of God to us.

Not only that, but it is profitable to us in that it tells us what is right, it tells us what is wrong, it tells us how to get right when we have gone astray and it tells us how to stay right!

And finally, as you take in the Word of God to your life, you will grow, and you will be **"thoroughly equipped for every good work."**



That is why it is so important for pastors and elders to rightly divide the Word of God, to teach healthy doctrine, so people can grow and mature in the faith!

As we read on here in Titus, we will see Paul deal with the ***ERROR IN THE CHURCH*** in Titus 1:10-16.

### VERSES 10-11

As we can see, and like in Ephesus, there was a problem in the church in Crete. Many in the church refused to submit to the leadership in the church.

And this word, “**insubordinate**” speaks of someone who is not willing to submit to God’s order of authority. In fact, it is the negative form of the word “***submit***” and the idea here is that this person will not submit.

Then what will they do?

Paul tells us that they are “**idol talkers and deceivers.**”

These false teachers with their false doctrines are very good communicators in that they are charming, they are witty, but what they say is without substance!

Peter tells us, “**For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness . . .**”

And, interestingly enough, when Paul says that they are “**deceivers**” it is a Greek word that means “***mind deceivers.***” In other words, they are messing with your mind!

Make no mistake about it, I have seen it before. False teachers who will come and appear very intelligent and they play with your mind, they twist your thinking with their words, saying things like, “***I have studied Hebrew and Greek and this is what it really means.***”



And I have heard from their students that they are deceiving, ***“He is so smart. He knows Hebrew and Greek.”***

And you can get sucked into their false teaching because you either don’t know your Bible or you are listening to the teaching of man instead of what God has said in His Word, which is profitable for us! Be careful!

Here in Crete, they were doing their own thing, supposedly being spiritual but negating God’s desire by not being respectful of the order that God has set forth and they were getting others to join them.

Why?

Paul tells us that it was for dishonest gain and folks, that does not necessarily mean money, it could be speaking of attention, notoriety and-so-on. Again, I have seen that over the years.

Specifically, here in Crete, it seems like the Judaizers were the ones coming in and bringing disorder to the church as well as the Cretans themselves as we will soon see.

#### VERSES 12-14

Paul is quoting from a Greek sixth century B. C. prophet and poet named Epimenides. Not that this was a prophet of God, but that one of their own people saw this moral failure in the Cretans.

Not that everyone was like this, but it was so bad that their reputation had spread far and wide, they were well known for their behavior!

First of all, they were liars, you couldn’t trust them.



Next, they are like evil beasts or they acted like wild animals, living on the level of an animal who tries to satisfy his appetite, whatever it may be.

And lastly, they were lazy gluttons, or they hated to work but they loved to eat.

And now, some 600 years after their own prophet spoke, Paul affirms that nothing has changed, they still are liars, they are still like evil beasts, and they still are lazy gluttons.

And Paul is basically saying to Titus, ***“You know that your ministry there isn’t an easy one given the cultural mindset and character of the Cretans, but don’t give up because the gospel is powerful enough to change anyone and make them a new creation in Christ.”***

And let’s apply that today. Look at how dark and evil things are right now in this world and in our nation. Right is wrong and wrong is right. We applaud the right to murder children in the womb. We allow story time in some libraries with transgender people who are promoting their sin to children and parents are allowing this!

And I don’t have to go on, you already know this. The thing is this, yes, it is tough but don’t give up, don’t stop sharing your faith because the Word of God is living and powerful and it can change people’s lives, just like it changed yours! Don’t lose sight of that.

We also see that the Judaizers were coming in and they were teaching their legalism, and even Jewish myths. And for the people in Crete, the Christians, they just accepted it because they were too lazy to search the Scriptures, to see if what they said was true.

The Judaizers brought in a salvation by the Law through Works and with Jesus, but you can’t add anything to Grace, it stands alone! We are saved by Grace through Faith in Christ and the Cretans were being led astray from the truths of God and Paul wants Titus to rebuke them sharply!



And here is the problem in Crete and what we see today. We have people who will say,  
***“I was born that way, that is why I act like that!”***

The Cretan’s may have said that, it is our nature, but as a Christian, that was not true.

They may have been like that but now that they are born again in Christ and the old things have passed away and all things have become new in Him!

There is no excuse for bad behavior, lazy behavior, ungodly behavior!

And please keep in mind that the purpose of this rebuke was not to condemn them but to cut to the heart of the matter, to bring the conviction of God upon them **“that they may be sound in the faith.”**

Thus, what Paul is basically telling Titus is this, ***“Titus, rebuke these false teachers in the hopes that they might come to a healthy faith (salvation) and become exemplary believers! And for believers not to be taken captive by their false teaching!”***

#### VERSES 15-16

Keep in mind the context here. Paul is speaking about the ceremonial purity and defilement according to the Law of Moses.

And what I mean by that, as an example, is the idea of clean and unclean foods.

What these Judaizers were saying is that when you became a Christian you still had to keep the Jewish dietary laws, even Gentiles!

Thus, they would tell you that if you, as a Christian, ate foods like pork, you were defiled. You had to abstain from these unclean foods to be pure.



Warren Wiersbe gives us this insight as he wrote, *“Paul was refuting the false teaching of these legalists with reference to foods. They were teaching that Jewish dietary laws still applied to Christian believers.”*

And Morgan put it like this, *“The ‘all things’ refers to everything which is non-moral; such as appetite and food, desire and marriage, exchange and commerce, weariness and recreation, and so on through all the varied realm of life. To the pure all these things are pure, and they will be maintained in purity. To the impure, every one of them may be made the vehicle and occasion of impurity.”*

And tragically, I have seen this even in our day with some Christians and this is not right.

And if you don’t think they took this to the extreme, the Jewish religious leaders, they did. The Sabbath Day we see a few verses in the Old Testament on what they were to do and not do.

But the Jewish religious leaders came up with 24 chapters on the do’s and don’ts of this day!

Look at what Paul is saying here, *“To all those who have been made pure through the blood of Christ, to you all foods are clean and pure as God has said. But to those who are Jewish legalists, who haven’t been saved by grace but rather are seeking to be made righteous through the law, to these nothing that God has cleansed in the way of food is pure because their minds and consciences are defiled through their legalism.”*



William MacDonald sums it up like this for us, *“It is not what a person eats that defiles him but what comes out of his heart (Mark 7:20–23). If a man’s inner life is impure, if he does not have faith in the Lord Jesus, then nothing is pure to him. The observance of dietary rules won’t do a thing for him. More than anything else he needs to be converted, to receive salvation as a free gift rather than trying to earn it through rituals and legalism. The very minds and consciences of defiled people are corrupted. Their mental processes and their moral powers are defiled. It is not a question of external ceremonial defilement, but of inward corruption and depravity.”*

But, as they were attracted to Jewish legalism for salvation, every pleasure was bad to them.

But Paul tells us that this is not true.

We see that same thought of denying oneself of things will make you holy and that is wrong as Paul tells us in I Timothy 4:1-5, **“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.”** Thus, if you walked in the purity of the Lord, these things were not wrong, but if you walked in your own purity, then all things are wrong because you will never be able to stand before God in your own righteousness!

You see, what Paul is saying is that the opposite in what they were saying is true!



And when Paul says, “**all things are pure**” he is talking about godly things, the things of God and not evil things, of course.

So be careful with that, don’t let it take you down an unscriptural path like, “*In God’s eyes we are married so I can live and sleep with him!*” Wrong!

It is as Paul said in Romans 16:19, “**For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.**”

And what we see here is that Titus had to deal with those who felt they were more spiritual than he was by their actions and yet their actions themselves deny they are saved because theological error will lead to moral deficiency!

It is as Paul said in Galatians 3:10-14, “**For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.’ But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for ‘the just shall live by faith.’ Yet the law is not of faith, but ‘the man who does them shall live by them.’ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**”

Make no mistake about it, we are accepted in the Beloved, in Christ, case closed! What a comfort, how refreshing it is to know that God loves me that much and to know that God can’t love me anymore than He already does nor can He love me any less! In knowing that, in knowing that He is coming back, it causes me to live my life so that it is pleasing to God, that is my desire and I am sure it is your desire also.



For those who were into this legalism, Paul said, **“They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.”** Titus 1:16.

You see, they were professors of Christ but not possessors of Christ and thus, as Jesus said in Matthew 7:21-23, **“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”**

In other words, good works don’t save a person, Jesus never knew them. Salvation only comes through repenting of your sin and asking Jesus to be Lord and Savior of your life, by grace and not by works, lest we boast about what we have done to be saved!

As I close let me leave you with this, what Paul wrote here in Titus 1:9, **“holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.”**

May we hold fast to God’s Word and as we do, we will be able to expose the false teachers with their false teaching!