

Titus 1:10-16

**Introduction:** In this section Paul explains the reasons why Biblical congregations in a godless culture need Biblically qualified men as pastors (cf. 1:5-9).

**1) Because of the large number of false-teachers—1:10-11**

- a) The description of the opposition—1:10
  - i) They are described **numerically**—1:10 <sup>10</sup> *For there are many*
  - ii) They are described **morally**—they possess ...
    - (1) Corrupt **wills**—*insubordinate people*, (cf. 1:6)
    - (2) Corrupt **speech**—*both idle talkers*
      - (a) Impressive communication with no content
    - (3) Corrupt **minds**—*and deceivers*,
      - (a) To cause someone to no longer believe what a true
  - iii) They are described **religiously**—*especially those of the circumcision*,
- b) Titus has a serious responsibility—1:11a <sup>11</sup> *whom it is necessary to muzzle*,
  - i) Handle the Word (1:9) in such a way that you keep them from teaching others.
  - ii) Do what is necessary to keep them from disseminating their views. The church must not offer the freedom of misleading speech. (Hiebert)
  - iii) It is not enough to ignore them and hope they will go away. Paul does not recommend patient dialogue or peaceful arbitration for the sake of unity.
- c) The activity of the opposition—1:11b
  - i) The WHAT?—devastation—*who are upsetting whole households*,
  - ii) The HOW?—by teaching—*teaching what they ought not*
  - iii) The WHY?—for greed—*for the purpose of shameful profit*. (cf. 1:7)

**2) Because even unbelievers recognize the godlessness of their own culture—1:12-13a**

- a) A self-incriminating Cretan prophet—1:12 <sup>12</sup> *A certain one of them, a prophet of their own* (or so they claim), *said*,
  - Attributed to Epimenides from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC
  - i) Godlessness is a way of life—*“Cretans are always ...*
  - ii) Godlessness on Crete had 3 characteristics:
    - (1) They are anti-Truth—*liars*,
    - (2) They are harmful and animalistic—*evil beasts*,
    - (3) They are idle with no self-control of their appetites—*lazy gluttons.*”
    - (4) Someone has rephrased it this way: “Liars ever, men of Crete, Nasty brutes that live to eat.”
  - iii) This description fits the description of Zeus in Homer’s *Iliad*. We become like what we worship (Ps. 115:8; 135:18).
- b) The Spirit of God agrees with their prophet—1:13a <sup>13</sup> *This testimony is true.*
  - i) This is how all Cretans begin and end life apart from God’s grace.

- ii) This forces the Cretans to either admit the truthfulness of his verdict concerning them or deny the charge and brand their own prophet a liar. (Hiebert)
- iii) Cultural values that conflict with biblical standards must be challenged. (Moody B.C.)

### 3) **Because Titus has a difficult task ahead of him—1:13b-16**

- a) *For this reason* (because God agrees with this description of the Cretans),
- b) Skillfully, convincingly, and with a no-nonsense approach expose their sin—1:13b-1:14 *convict [evle.gcw] them sharply*, (cf. 1:9)
  - Note: If you think the apostle was wrong in his approach, then you are doubting the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. (Adams)
  - How sharp would you like the surgeon's scalpel to be?
- i) The POSITIVE purpose of the rebuke—1:13c *so that they may be healthy in the faith*, (cf. 1:9)
- ii) The NEGATIVE purpose of the rebuke—1:14 <sup>14</sup> *not paying attention to*
  - (1) Human traditions—*Jewish myths* (cf. 1 Tim. 1:4)
  - (2) Human commands—*and commandments of people who are turning (themselves) away from (repudiating) the truth.*
- c) There are two types of people with whom Titus will interact—1:15-16
  - i) Believers—1:15a <sup>15</sup> *On the one hand, **everything** (emphatic) is (ritually) clean to the (morally) clean,*
  - ii) Unbelievers—1:15b-16 *but on the other hand, to those who are (morally) stained and untrusting **nothing** is (ritually) clean;*
    - (1) They are intellectually and morally unacceptable to God—*but both their mind and conscience are **stained** (emphatic).*
    - (2) They inconsistently profess Christianity—1:16
      - (a) Their profession—<sup>16</sup> *They claim to know God,*
      - (b) Their reality in relationship to God—*but in works they are renouncing (that they know God),*
        - (i) *being detestable, and unpersuadable and unacceptable for every good work.*
  - iii) Internal character either purifies or pollutes everything else in one's life.
  - iv) One's consistent conduct demonstrates what one really believes.

### 4) **Things we need to remember:**

- a) Belief and practice cannot be separated, as the false teachers assumed. The mere appearance of piety is ultimately not pleasing to God.
- b) One responsibility of elders is to silence false teachers who threaten the flock of God so the flock will be healthy.
- c) Titus is engaged in a fierce battle for the heart and soul of the churches on Crete. Grace, mercy, and peace to you from the Father and the Son as you do this.