

December 17, 2017

“Silence the Rebellious”

Focal Passage: Titus 1:10-16 (NASB)

Cross References: Romans 1:18-32; 6:16-23; 2 Timothy 3:1-7; James 2:14-26

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

Dec 10 Ephesians 4-6	Dec 11 Philippians 1-4
Dec 12 Colossians 1-4	Dec 13 1 Thess 1-5
Dec 14 2 Thess 1-3	Dec 15 1 Timothy 1-6
Dec 16 2 Timothy 1-4	Dec 17 Titus-Philemon

Background: False teachers and false doctrine seemed to plague all the churches in the New Testament. Most of Paul’s letters address these kinds of issues. His letter to Titus is no exception. The island of Crete was notorious for its rough people and brutal lifestyles. As people became believers, they had to be reminded that the Lordship of Jesus meant a call to purity—both in their teaching and in their deeds. Paul instructed Titus to guard the purity of the Gospel and rebuke the false teachers.

In the first part of chapter 1, Paul told Titus to appoint qualified elders who could exemplify Christlikeness in their conduct, and could guard the doctrine of the church against falsehood. In fact, he concludes his list of qualifications and characteristics of ministers with this in verse 9: ***holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.*** In the rest of chapter 1, Paul will show why the leaders must *hold fast the faithful Word* and *be able to refute those who contradict.*

Foundational Truths from the Passage:

- **False teachers are recognized by their empty talk and their greedy motives.**
- **False teachers need to be reprovved, and brought back into sound doctrine.**
- **Believers are recognized by purity.**
- **Just because someone professes to know Christ does not mean that they do. A true Christian’s life will always be demonstrated by their deeds.**

Lesson Idea: We need to guard sound teaching in the church and live lives that reflect our faith.

Titus 1:10-16

10 For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain. 12 One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” 13 This testimony is true. For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. 15 To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. 16 They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

DISCUSSION:

- V 10. How did Paul describe the false teachers? Are there still *many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers* in churches today? Why? How can we recognize them?
- V 11. Why did they need to be silenced? How are they silenced? What was their purpose?
- V 12. Why did Paul use this quote about Cretans? How did this describe false teachers?
- V 13. What does it mean to “*reprove*” someone *severely*? What kinds of things should be reprovved? (see v 10-12) What does it mean to be *sound in the faith*?
- V 14. What would Paul refer to as *Jewish myths and commandments of men*? Why is it easy to move away from the truth to follow the commandments of men?
- V 15. How does Paul contrast the pure and the impure? Why are all things pure to those who are pure? How does someone’s *mind and conscience become defiled*? (see Romans 1:18-32; 6:16-23; 2 Timothy 3:1-7)
- V 16. How would someone’s deeds *deny what they profess about knowing God*? (see James 2:14-26) What does it mean to be *detestable*? ...*disobedient*? ... *worthless for any good deed*?

APPLICATION:

- ✓ How do people turn away from the faith to follow commandments of men today? How do you arm yourselves to know and recognize the truth?
- ✓ How do you guard your purity? What do your deeds reflect about your relationship with Christ?

Lesson by Bro Stan

NOTES from David Guzik, Titus (Enduring Word Commentary)

V 9. Titus must appoint leaders who will also use the word properly. ***That he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.***

A godly leader will use his solid foundation in God's word to exhort (encourage) those who are on the right track. He will also use it to convict (discourage) those who are on the wrong track, those who contradict.

By sound doctrine: A godly leader deals with those who contradict, and he does it with sound doctrine. He doesn't do it with pompous authority and political backstabbing. He brings correction with sound doctrine. If a leader does not have a basis in sound doctrine to either exhort or convict an individual, he probably shouldn't do it. Leaders need to stand on the foundation of the word.

V 10. ***For there are many insubordinate:*** The word *insubordinate* (NASB "rebellious") indicates someone who will not submit to God's order of authority. The ancient Greek word translated insubordinate is the negative form of the word submit – an insubordinate man will not submit. God has established an order of authority in several different areas of life. There is an order of authority in the home, in the church, in the workplace, and in the community. God wants us to recognize the places where He has placed an order of authority in our lives, and He wants us to submit to that authority.

V 11. ***Teaching things which they ought not:*** There are at least three things which should not be taught among Christians. First, false doctrine ought not to be taught. Second, insubordinate things ought not to be taught. Third, unprofitable things ought not to be taught.

In 1 Timothy 1:4, Paul warned Timothy to *not give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.* There are certain spiritual subjects that are not edifying, and are not profitable. All they do is cause speculations and arguments. When Titus found men teaching things which they ought not, he was supposed to stop it.

V 12-14. ***Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons:*** The problem was difficult because of the general character of the Cretans. Even prophets among the Cretans described the island people as liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons, it indicates that there is a character problem. If the Cretans had this basic character, it shows why it was so important for Titus to appoint elders to lead the church. If these congregations were left to themselves, chaos and error would dominate the churches... Because of the generally hardened character of the people of the island of Crete, they must be dealt with directly. Titus himself must ***rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,*** and he must also appoint leaders who will do the same.

V 15-16. ***To the pure, all things are pure:*** With their attraction to Jewish legalism, the difficult people Titus had to confront seemed to believe that nothing is pure. They denied Christians basic and godly pleasures that were not sin. Timothy had to deal with the same kind of people. Paul warned Timothy about those *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* (1 Timothy 4:3). Paul knew that if a Christian walked in the purity of the Lord, these things were pure to him. But to those of a legalistic mind (those who are defiled and unbelieving), they seemed to believe nothing is pure. The problem was with their defiled and unbelieving minds and consciences, not with the things themselves.

All things are pure: Of course, Paul does not mean that obviously sinful things (pornography, illicit drugs, and the like) are pure. Paul has in mind those things which are permitted by Scripture, but forbidden by legalists in a mistaken attempt to earn favor with God.

Being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work: These are strong words, but Paul means it. These difficult people probably pretended to have a higher spirituality than Titus or other godly leaders. But Paul saw right through their spiritual façade and wanted Titus – and all the Christians on Crete – to see through it also. The word ***abominable*** has the idea of polluted by idolatry.

Disqualified: The ancient Greek word is *adokimos*, and was used in many different ways: ...a counterfeit coin... a cowardly soldier who failed in battle... a candidate rejected for elected office... stone rejected by builders. If a stone had a bad enough flaw, it was marked with a capital A (for *adokimos*) and set aside as unfit.