

## ***Dealing with Deceivers***

### **Titus 1:9-16**

The worst place for a church to be in is **having no vision** for why they exist. Not knowing the purpose or reason for being is the most frustrating feeling for leadership & congregation alike. **Voice declare-light shine-magnet draw**

Paul tells Titus to set the churches of Crete in order-**implies disorder-**  
**a medical term--setting a bone that's out of joint** & appoint elders. He lists qualifications for elders, **strong in Gods word the most critical**. Able to confront those who distort-twist Gods word **for personal gain** But hold fast word of God. Challenge false teachers-Instruct wayward believers w/ truth.

Gods' kind of leadership is essential for the church to function as God intends. **Biblical leadership** requires a **biblical response** from church members. Not to respond appropriately is disastrous to spiritual health.

In 1984 an Avianca Airlines jet crashed in Spain. Investigators studying the crash made an **eerie** discovery. The "black box" cockpit recorders revealed that several minutes before impact a shrill, computer-synthesized voice from plane's automatic warning system told the crew repeatedly in English, "Pull up! Pull up!" The pilot, evidently thinking the system was malfunctioning, snapped, "Shut up, Gringo!" & switched the system off. Minutes later the plane plowed into the side of a mountain. Everyone on board died.

God's word warns the unruly & disobedient '**pull up**' '**change course**' - their response will determine the outcome to spiritual life—**life & death**.

**Titus 1:9 holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance w/ the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine & to refute those who contradict. 10 For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers & deceivers, especially those of the circumcision**

Whenever there is a move of **God**, there is also a move of **Satan** to counter Wherever truth is proclaimed, error shows it's ugly head preaching lies.

This was Titus' mission, **put men in charge** who will **exhort**-encourage the faithful & **refute** challenge, bring conviction to the rebellious.

"A preacher must be both soldier & shepherd. He must nourish, defend, & teach; he must have teeth in his mouth & be able to bite & fight." **Luther**

## ***Dealing with Deceivers***

**Titus 1:9-16**

**Sound doctrine**—only basis we have authority to confront & convict **unruly**. It's never on the basis of position, status, how much we know or how spiritual we appear. **God's word only**--true basis of authority

Paul points out the reasons why strong church leadership is so important--***false teachers were troubling Crete***. Saying the cross of Christ is not enough for a **deep spiritual life**. Needed are the allegorical stories early Rabbi's concocted using OT genealogies.

Also food regulations, washing ceremonies & Mosaic laws, Rabbinic traditions will give greater spiritual enlightenment.

What were these teachers like? ***Rebellious***--unruly, not subject to authority— unsubdued. ***Disloyal soldier refusing orders of commanding officer***. The negative form of submit--**not submitted**. ***You under but not them***

Early in life we learn submission to authority. To **parents** at home, **teachers & administration** in school, **bosses & managers** in workplace, to **governmental** authorities such as police, in **church**.

Rebels refuse to be under church leadership. Reject basic bible doctrines & church authority. ***Many rebels*** in the 1<sup>st</sup>C when Paul taught--& so it is today---***Gypsy Christians-nice but reject authority*** coffee

***Empty talkers*** – speech w/o profit, vain, bag of hot air, no positive influence in spiritual things—***gibberish***—Not bringing others closer to God. No substance to what they say. No power to transform lives. ***Sodom apple Deceivers – especially the circumcision-Jews*** – Teaching a form of religion by means of law keeping, ceremony or ritual (***circumcision, baptism, confirmation, communion, Sabbath***) ***2 Tim 3:13 But evil men & impostors will proceed from bad to worse deceiving & being deceived. You will know them by their fruits-every good tree bears good fruit but the bad tree bears bad fruit.***

**11** who must be **silenced** because they are **upsetting whole families**, **teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain**.

## **Dealing with Deceivers**

**Titus 1:9-16**

*Silenced* – Grk **muzzled** - Confronted w/ truth--told not to teach what's false & if refuse to listen, **kick them out** of the fellowship if necessary. The spiritual life of whole families is at stake. Don't give equal time. Truth will not get truer but error will get more erroneous-flawed. Don't need to stick head in garbage can to know it stinks. False teaching stinks so rid the church of it  
Their motive for ministry is more money--**Balaam style**

**2 Pet 2:15 forsaking the right way they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness,**

Barclay-When a teacher or preacher looks on his teaching or preaching as a career designed for personal advancement & personal profit & gain, he is in a perilous condition

**12 One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."**

Paul reaches back **600 yrs** & quotes **Epimenides**, who is not a prophet of God but a **poet & philosopher** who has insight into the social dynamic of Crete

What an indictment by one of their own. No one in that ancient culture had a more sordid reputation than the **Cretans**. Famed for drunkenness, disrespect, dishonesty, debauchery, deceitfulness & excess.

**2<sup>nd</sup> C Grk historian Polybius 'on account of their innate greed, live in a perpetual state of private quarrel and public feud and civil strife...and you will hardly find anywhere characters more tricky and deceitful than those of Crete.'**

Cretan's bad behavior so notorious the Greeks invented a verb **'to Cretize'** someone --**'to lie & to cheat'**. A proverb was invented to **Cretize a Cretan** or match **lies w/ lies**.

They were driven by fleshly appetites. Not just **liars** but **always liars**, not just **beasts** but **evil beasts** & not just **gluttons** but **lazy gluttons**. They totally given over to the flesh. Body appetites uppermost in thought & deed.

Paul doesn't excuse their behavior **'oh they're just Cretans'** oh **'he's just Norwegian-Vikings-Plunderer'**...blaming your ancestry is copout .

**13 This testimony is true. For this cause prove them severely 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.**

## **Dealing with Deceivers**

**Titus 1:9-16**

Paul doesn't say these people are too far gone let's plant a church w/ more respectable sinners. **No!** But he says convert them-*reprove severely that they may be sound in the faith*. Jesus sees no person as hopeless. You haven't gone so far that God cannot reach you this morning.

**Corrie ten Boom** There is no pit to deep that God isn't deeper still

Greater the sinner the greater grace to save. *North Shore--Town*

A chief feature of Jewish religion was thousands of rules & regulations added over time. They contrived laws & rules for every conceivable situation & how if necessary to get around them. *Sabbath-Travel* – string at home to marker away then count. *Woman* not pluck gray hair. Not put *artificial leg* on. *Spit* on ground made clay. *Food* no chicken & dairy.

Jewish Gnostics--body unclean, marriage taboo, natural instincts evil. **Sin** to touch, eat, marry, bare children. Turned what was natural & normal into something sinful. Made harmless, harmful, pure, impure, good into evil.

The longer the list of rules the greater potential to break them & be considered sinful. *Rom 14:20....All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense.*

*Jewish myths*--another form or bondage in Crete. **Joseph Gaer a contemporary scholar of 'Jewish literature & legends'** writes 'In their nostalgic recollection of biblical times, preachers often went far beyond anything implied in the Scripture narrative. The more romanticized the stories, the more the people liked them. The Book of Jubilee, a commentary by Jewish authors on the book of Genesis, is embellished so much that the truth can hardly be discerned. Three of the points in that commentary say, 'The reason we keep the Sabbath is because the archangels kept the Sabbath, the reason we know that circumcision is so valuable is because angels were circumcised, & Jacob never tricked anybody.'

When Abraham lifted the knife to sacrifice Isaac, angels wept in heaven, their tears falling on the knife in Ab hand melted it. **Jesus In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men**

**Mormons, Mary, Marshal Applewhite-Hale-Bopp, Evangelicals id anti-Christ, Y2K, 88 reasons why Jesus will return in 1988-speculations.**

**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.

## **Dealing with Deceivers**

**Titus 1:9-16**

*To the pure all things pure* – Not sinful practices--what Cretans known for. But refers to one who doesn't read wickedness & perversion into simple ordinary things of life. Doesn't have filthy mind polluting what comes near it

Barclay: His mind soils every thought that enters into it; his imagination turns to lust every picture which it forms; he misinterprets every motive; he gives a double meaning to every statement; he cannot see the world except thru the uncleanness of his own mind.

A man goes to a psychiatrist for a Rorschach inkblot test because feelings of obsession. The psychiatrist, hoping find out his problem shows him the first inkblot & asks what do you see? **A woman scantily dressed**. Doctors shows a second inkblot, now what do you see? **Two women on the beach sunbathing nude**. Doctors somewhat concerned shows a third inkblot, now what do you see? **He says a woman in the shower**. Doctors stares at the man & says you've got an obsession w/ sex. The patience looks shocked & says to the doctor what do you mean me, you're the one showing me the dirty pictures.

*Defiled* living a lie--outward one thing inward polluted. *Defiled* conscience is one step away from **seared** conscience *1 Tim 4:2* beyond feeling. Things innocent & pure looked upon as sinful. **Recreation**-surf on Sunday.

**Marriage, meats**, Sabbath days, washings, ways of worship—More holy than other because you abstained from.

How to escape a defiled conscience? Make a decision to live in the ever present consciousness of Jesus Christ, bring every thought captive.

**16** They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him being detestable and disobedient, and worthless for any good deed.

Defiled character: First they are **fakes**, phonies, false professors of Christ. But are detestable, disobedient (**will not & cannot be persuaded**). Their minds are closed to truth-like **cement all mixed up & firmly set**

Jesus said of these *'they clean the outside of the cup but inside are full of wickedness...Lk 11:39...like whitewashed tombs ...appear beautiful but inside are full of dead men's bones & all uncleanness ....outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly are full of hypocrisy & lawlessness. Matt 23:27-28*

***Detestable-term for pagan idols--word abomination comes***

Barclay There is something repulsive about a man w/ curious, prying, obscene mind, the kind of person who makes sniggering jests, & who is a master of the suggestive & unclean innuendo. There is always a simple & essential beauty in sheer cleanliness; & there is always a disgust in the presence of that which is soiled, & filthy & unclean.

## **Dealing with Deceivers**

**Titus 1:9-16**

**Disobedient** – unable to obey God because of a darkened conscience & in turn unable to discern truth = because of all the wickedness cluttering the soul. He has judged himself unfit for the Masters use.

**Worthless**--word is use to describe a counterfeit coin-below standard grade  
A cowardly soldier--who fails on the battlefield. A candidate rejected for office. A flawed stone rejected by builders in construction.

This is a sad condition. Not allowing the word of God to correct your life. Soon you adjust to your surroundings to what is false unable to see error of your way all the while scriptures yells 'pull up' 'pull up' 'change course' you ignore--turn off God's instruction & head toward disaster. 1Cor 6:11

***Not long ago research was conducted in which a group of individuals were fitted w/ special **prismatic glasses**. The glasses greatly distorted vision causing straight lines to appear curved & sharp outlines to blur w/ color. As the experiment progressed w/in a few days these unnatural shapes, blurred edges, curved lines gradually disappeared & the brain adjusted to see these sub-normal shapes as normal--the unnatural became natural. In other words the world around them was now perceived as ordinary, natural & normal although seeing thru their special prismatic glasses.***

W/o God's word to correct our understanding of life....living may seem normal & natural from sins point of view, when in reality it is distorted & irregular. But because, **for so long**, we have been looking thru a worldly mindset we are unable to discern what a life w/ God is truly like. Only the word of God can correct & give a right perspective.

Titus is told to deal w/ those in the fellowship who are causing distortions & not to stand by idly, letting it all happen. So appoint elders who will do the same, confronting those who ***vs 11 are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain*** in order to protect the church & ministry Christ died for.