

Abounding Grace Christian Church

The Epistle of Paul to Titus – Part 3

I. Exposition of Chapter One (continued).

A. **Verses 10-11** – “For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.” In context with **verse 9**, the reason why a bishop must be “**holding fast the faithful word**” and by “**sound doctrine...exhort and convict those who contradict...**” is because the following exist:

1. “**Insubordinate**” means; “**pertaining to being rebelliously disobedient—‘disobedient, rebellious.’**”¹ Same word as is found in **verse 6** concerning children.
2. “**Idle talkers**” – “**one who engages in empty and idle talk—‘empty talker, foolish babbler.’**”²
3. “**deceivers**” – “**one who misleads people concerning the truth**”³
4. “**...especially those of the circumcision...**” – Speaks of Jews, who professed to be Christians, but insisted Gentiles must keep the law in addition to receiving Christ. Could be called legalists or Judaizers.
5. “**...whose mouths must be stopped...**” – Dr. Bob Utley asserts; “**...‘to put on the mouth’ (i.e. to muzzle, to gag, or silence). Church leaders must control who speaks in the house churches.**”⁴ This, of course applies today. We try to be careful who we allow to speak to the congregation.
6. “**...who subvert whole households...**” – The word “**subvert**” means; “**to cause something to be completely overturned**”⁵ Entire families were having the faith damaged, if not totally reversed, due to the false teaching. How was Titus going to stop them? Presumably, the same way Timothy was to do it. He was instructed to “**charge**” them that they teach no other doctrine (**I Timothy 1:3-4**), and to “**turn away**” from those who would persist (**II Timothy 3:5**).
7. “**...teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.**” – The word “**dishonest**” means; “**pertaining to behaving in a disgraceful or shameful manner**”⁶ – We know that the “**...love of money is a root of all kinds of evil...**” (**I Timothy 6:3-5, 10**). Cf. **II Peter 2:3**. Warren Wiersbe writes:

“**Their main motive was to make money “for filthy lucre’s sake” (Titus 1:11). They were not ministering to the church; they were using religion to fill their own pockets. This explains why Paul said that ‘not given to filthy lucre’ was one requirement for an elder. A true servant of God does not minister for personal gain; he ministers to help others grow in the faith...No one can serve two masters. These deceivers’ love for money caused them to teach false doctrine and live false lives, and the result was a defiled conscience that did not convict them. This is one step closer to that ‘seared conscience’ that Paul wrote about (1 Tim. 4:2).**”⁷

B. **Verses 12-13** – “**One of them, 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,**”

1. “**One of them, a prophet of their own, said, ‘Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons...**” – To explain this, A. Duane Litfin asserts:

“**To emphasize his point Paul quoted from Epimenides, a Cretan poet and philosopher from the sixth century B.C. who was widely believed to be a religious prophet. Though the quotation may originally have referred to a particular lie (...that Zeus was buried in Crete, which was especially offensive to those who believed Zeus was still alive), by Paul’s day the saying had become a proverb which merely emphasized the low reputations of Cretans generally. So little did others think of the Cretans that the verb *krētizō* was invented to mean “to lie.” Of course many noble Christians were in the congregations in Crete, but Paul was frontal in his assertion that the false teachers possessed these baser Cretan tendencies.**”⁸

2. “**This testimony is true.**” – Paul agrees that the overall people of Crete were, indeed, all of these things.

¹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 468.

² Ibid., 431.

³ Ibid., 366.

⁴ Robert James Utley, *Paul’s Fourth Missionary Journey: I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy*, vol. Volume 9, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 102.

⁵ Louw and Nida, 213.

⁶ Ibid., 758.

⁷ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 263.

⁸ A. Duane Litfin, “Titus,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 763.

3. **“Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith”** – The word **“rebuke”** means; **“expose; refute, show one’s fault, implying that there is a convincing of that fault”**⁹ To do this **“sharply”** means; to do it **“harshly, severely, rigorously”**¹⁰

“And this account of them is [really] true. Because it is [true], rebuke them sharply [deal sternly, even severely with them], so that they may be sound in the faith and free from error,” – Titus 1:13 – Amplified Bible

C. **Verse 14** – **“...not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth.”** – This is one of five times the word **“fables”** is found in the New Testament. The meaning of the word is: **“legend, myth, tale.”**¹¹ (cf. I Timothy 1:4; 4:7; II Timothy 4:4; II Peter 1:16). The phrase **“...commandments of men...”** refers to rules that are man-made rather than given by God. In context, this is referring to particular Jewish laws that certain ones were attempting to impose on the believers. Jesus warned about this also **Matthew 15:1-6.** (cf. **Colossians 2:8.**)

D. **Verse 15** – **“To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.”**

1. **“To the pure all things are pure...”** – The word **“pure”** means; **“clear of dirt, clean, spotless, unsoiled”**¹² Dr. Gordon Fee writes:

“Paul begins with the positive: To the pure, all things are pure. Although the concern here is different, this restates Paul’s position given in Romans 14:20. It reflects a clear understanding of Jesus as found in Mark 7, that what people eat cannot defile them. Paul’s point seems clear: All things, including those things thought to be unclean by some, are [ritually] pure—that is, nothing is unclean of itself (cf. 1 Tim. 4:4, “nothing is to be rejected”)—to the [morally] pure, since they have been “cleansed” by faith in Christ.”¹³

2. **“...but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.”** The word **“defiled”** means; **“corrupt morally, defile pollute ritually, stain”**¹⁴ A. Duane Litfin explains:

“Paul set the matter straight by reminding his readers of the Lord’s teaching that purification is largely a matter of the internal rather than the external (cf. Mark 7:15; Luke 11:39–41)....The problem with the false teachers was that on the inside, in their minds and consciences, they were impure.”¹⁵

E. **Verse 16** – **“They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.”**

1. **They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him...”** – There are many people today who think the same way. They say they know God, but if knowing God doesn’t result in a changed life, it’s a dead faith! (cf. **James 1:14-26**). The word **“deny”** means; **“to refuse to give thought to or express concern for—‘to disregard, to pay no attention to, to say no to.”**¹⁶
2. **“...abominable...”** – **“pertaining to one who or that which is or should be detested or regarded as abhorrent”**¹⁷
3. **“...disobedience...”** – Self explanatory.
4. **“...disqualified for every good work.”** – **“pertaining to having been proven worthless—‘of no value”**¹⁸

“They profess to know God [to recognize, perceive, and be acquainted with Him], but deny and disown and renounce Him by what they do; they are detestable and loathsome, unbelieving and disobedient and disloyal and rebellious, and [they are] unfit and worthless for good work (deed or enterprise) of any kind.”

Titus 1:16 – Amplified Bible

⁹ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² H.G. Liddell, *A Lexicon: Abridged from Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996), 388.

¹³ Gordon D. Fee, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1988)

¹⁴ Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

¹⁵ A. Duane Litfin, “Titus,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 763.

¹⁶ Louw and Nida, 355.

¹⁷ Ibid., 308.

¹⁸ Ibid., 621.