

TITUS

Justified by grace... heirs according to the hope of eternal life

Imagine being called to minister to newly formed churches in an area that was self-characterized as “liars, evil beasts and lazy gluttons.” This is what Titus was instructed to do with the believers in the cities on the island of Crete. Paul writes this letter to Titus (a younger man that had accompanied him on many of his journeys and who had been entrusted to deliver some of his letters) to “set in order what remains” while “appointing elders in every city.” This letter was likely written after the accounts in the book of Acts and after Paul’s first Roman imprisonment. It is also likely that churches were formed after the Day of Pentecost where some Jews from Crete heard the Gospel (Acts 2:11).

Paul uses this letter to instruct (and authorize) Titus to appoint strong, qualified leaders (Elders) because in Crete there was no shortage of “rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers.” (1:10). The secular society of Crete was known for being somewhat less “civilized” and the influence on these new churches was apparently causing them to become less Godly in their living/practice which is why Paul stresses the byproduct of Godliness with genuine salvation/conversion. The believers in Crete needed to be taught “sound doctrine” and along with it to come to understand the basic guidelines each was to live according to (older men, older women, young women, young men and slaves - 2:1-10). It’s in this context that Paul stresses that God’s grace “has appeared to all men” (not just a select human grouping/ethnicity).

The message of the Gospel was being adulterated/alterd by Judaistic “spins” (1:10-14) as well as other extremes, like we see in our day, that were looking to practically define God’s grace as a license to sin (2:11-14). Having countered these influences, Titus was to instruct these Cretan Christians to be good people and citizens and to be “subject to rulers” ready for “every good deed.” (3:1) The core of the Gospel is stressed including its intended outcome; we are “saved” on the basis of God’s mercy, which produces (by His grace) regeneration and renewing by means of the Holy Spirit. (3:3-5)

I. Faith of the Elect/Chosen and the Knowledge of the Truth - 1:1-4

A. Paul’s credentials and calling - vs. 1

1. Paul’s chief credential was in being the “slave of God” (δοῦλος - one owned by another so they served for the will and purposes of another) and an “apostle of Jesus Christ”

- To (up-front) mention that one belongs to another, takes attention and authority off of the “slave” and directs it to the “owner” (master) - so the desire of the listener would be to know what the master has said and the slave would seek to express the words/will of their master and complete (with reverence) all that was assigned
- Paul, in his greetings like this, sets the standard for those that were to follow his lead - he, as a slave of God, is answerable to God, and those that follow should find comfort/encouragement knowing this - too many demonstrate that they answer to themselves and such become difficult to trust (because they are not clearly under God’s authority)
- He was an apostle of Jesus Christ - an Apostle was simply a messenger (a herald) to deliver a message from someone of importance (he was a delegate sent with orders) - it would be the authority of Christ that he would bring and represent (as each of us does to some degree, and should be very cautious that we are actually communicating His word/message and not our own word, agendas, or personal will)
- An Apostle in the New Testament typically referenced one of “the 12” and carried with it an authoritative rank (though there were others with “apostolic” works, but not with the same authority) - this authority though, was not one of “proud power,” for the authority was only inasmuch as they spoke for or worked for Christ
- Titus would be able to use this letter as his credential - such authoritative credentials are seen today in “ordinations” (churches endorsing a person as reliably called of God)

The other option is to be the slave to sin - see Rom. 6:17-18

All that are “in Christ” start and stay “at the bottom,” all equally answering to God, though He assigns each different positions in His work/callings

A “lording it” spirit over any in the church is always wrong and demonstrates a misunderstanding of a call/position - those under God-ordained leadership submit because of the Lord and not because of the leader

2. Paul, as a slave of God called in the capacity of an Apostle, had the specific purposes (points of focus) “for the faith” (also “for the sake of the faith”) of those chosen of God (literally “ἐκλεκτῶν Θεοῦ” elect/chosen of God) and “the knowledge of the truth”

For instance, true Godly love grows out of the faith and our knowledge of the truth - pseudo love stems from false faith (living by sight) and false “truth” (conclusions based outside of the faith)

No one will naturally live by the faith in God - this faith is always supernatural!

Such knowing/knowledge and understanding of it is governed by the faith

Christianity is not to be looking to have “our intellectuals” stand against “their intellectuals,” for unbelievers (not “of faith”) cannot come to receive it without God’s intervention, and then it will be by faith and not by the mind

There is the overriding idea in “truth” here that indicates “reality” as it always is regardless of how people see it or interpret “what (really) is what” - knowing the temporal nature of life here (the truth about it) we pursue Godliness since all things are about God, of God and for God

Living in an unGodly way (immoral, proud, covetous, irresponsible (lazy), bitter - all opposites to God’s character) is a clear indicator something is either not fully trusted as regards the Truth or there is willful disobedience to it

“Intractable” being “stubborn, difficult” - hope must be based in the truth of where it’s all heading (eternal life) so we’re not caught-up in the hopelessness of this age which leads to living for “temporary life”

There could be no greater basis for assurance! The only thing left is the actual discovery of what “eternal life” will entail

compare to Rom. 3:3-4; Heb. 6:13-20 - to doubt Him is to think Him a liar or deceiver

- a. These two “assignments” show the core of his work and demonstrate to us the two key ingredients in our growth in Christ - the “outgrowth” (fruits) of this are often discussed, but these (faith and knowledge) are the “practical causes” of these evidences of growth
- b. So Paul realizes his calling was for the sake of the instilling and growth of the faith of “the chosen” of God - God sovereignly ordains all, including the means to His predetermined will (as seen here in the faith (saving faith and the faith/trust that we live with/in throughout life)) - God uses others and the Faith to create/work-in us saving faith and a life focus of faith (none of which is “normal” and will seem foolish to the unregenerates) - see II Thes. 2:13-14
- c. All spiritual leadership that is truly ordained/called of God senses the responsibility to direct others to trust/rely upon/believe God at all times - it is not uncommon to see many, professing to be spiritual leaders in Christianity, directing the faith/confidence of those they influence to other points of trust and not God
- d. Paul also identifies his calling for “the knowledge of truth” of the elect - the word for knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) is more than just knowing something - it is a correct and full knowing (the word “understanding” also gives us a good idea of it)
- e. This was in contrast to the Gnostics who propagated a “knowledge” that only elites or the highly intellectual could come to know/understand - Paul’s assignment was to teach the proper and full knowledge of truth to all the elect
- f. As with any knowledge, there is an expectation of learning and understanding over time, and an expectation that we will have teachers/mentors - we need to have a learner’s spirit, for the goal isn’t knowledge alone, but true/right knowledge (for there is knowledge to be gleaned from this age that is in opposition to the truth (especially in what it avoids and leaves out in its learning)), and understanding (often seen to be true when it becomes a part of our living (how we see/look at everything)) - compare to 1:10

3. The expected outcome - Godliness and the “hope of eternal life” - vs. 1-2

- a. The learning of the truth will lead toward Godly living - this is setting part of the purpose of this letter in refuting any type of justification for any unholy living as a result of learning of the truth (such as the Gospel) and concluding that unholy living is permissible (see 2:12)
- b. We often associate “Godliness” with being moral/good, but the underlying word (εὐσέβεια) has the idea of reverence and great respect for God which then results in a pursuit to live pleasing to Him - so “Godliness” is learning of God (that’s the “truth” just referenced) and in our reverential awe, we live to please Him and be like Him in what we think, love and do
- c. Ungodly living/thinking is either the result of ignorance of the true truth or resistance to it-coming to know what we are to know in Scripture could not possibly end up leading (permitting) a life of ungodliness (anti-Godness or Godlessness) - and Godliness is not defined/determined by our definitions (since God is the definer of Godliness) - see 1:11 - unGodliness stems from selfishness (“selfness” - it’s mostly (or all) about me)
- d. Godliness is grounded in the truth that points us to the “hope of eternal life” - “hope” here is not as if a wish; it is a confident expectation (such an assurance that it is fully anticipated and life is lived with it (this hope) directly influencing its outlook)
- e. There are only two ultimate destinations for our soul/spirit; either eternal life (living) or eternal death (dying) in separation from the goodness of our creator
- f. “The future God promises is more powerful in this fallen world than the seemingly intractable evil and setbacks that can easily darken church leaders’ vision, skew their judgment, and extinguish their hope.” Robert W. Yarbrough
- g. The reason we can have confident expectation of this is because of God’s promise regarding it - it’s key to realize that since this promise of eternal life (about the “elect”) was made “before the ages began” (πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων - before time eternal (before in eternity past)) that the promise was within the Godhead (since no one else was in eternity past)
- h. There is no possible grounds to doubt it (as stressed here) for God cannot lie (literally “ὁ ἀψευδὴς Θεὸς” (the “cannot lie God”) because He is free from any and all falsehoods)

compare this to James 1:27 and Romans 4:21

- i. God's trustworthiness is contrasted to some of the major influences in Crete (see 1:10-12)- we should consider that even the well-intended can be wrong in what they tell us, or be incapable of delivering on a promise - we even break promises to ourselves at times!
- j. This eternal life rests in God's work based upon His eternal promise - there is no fluctuation

B. Entrusted with the heralding of God's Word - vs. 3-4

1. It is all God's message, God's word and God's timing - vs. 3

God's timing is never based upon us nor "perfect timing" as far as our "readiness" or awareness - His timing is perfect because He is perfect, and in His perfection His Word is successful in all He purposes in it - see Isa. 55:10-11

- a. Verse 3 begins with the idea of "the proper time" as to when God revealed salvation
- b. "Proper time" indicates in the Greek, the idea of "at just the right moment of His" God had, through "preaching" manifested (revealed, made clear) this hope of salvation - it had always been (from eternity past) God's promise of His will to do what He willed, and those before this time (e.g. prophets) trusted He would do it and now Paul is commissioned to proclaim its details and reality - we also have an eternal message to share
- c. There is a seriousness that is to be linked with the public (formal) "preaching" of His Word- such a calling is to be "entrusted" - since it is from the "command of God our Savior" (to those genuinely commissioned/called) it is treated with highest reverence
- d. The handling of God's Word is to be looked upon as something of an intimidating responsibility (not crippling but sobering) - it is to be treated with respect (because of whose Word it is and whose calling it is) by the one called and the ones being ministered to
- e. Those then listening to Titus, having read this commission of Paul and now that of Titus, were to revere it as from the Lord (this calling, this service) - the same is true today, where the respect is not of the "agent" (minister) but of the commission and the Lord who gave/ established it - this is the authority behind Titus 2:15

This is why Paul is about to list out qualifications for an elder, realizing the significance of such a formal responsibility

This is to be core to the motivation of any "preacher" to proclaim and teach what God's Word actually says - misrepresenting His word is criminal!

2. Unified and "related" through a "common faith" - vs. 4

He is a "true child" because he has been proven to be genuine and not hypocritical - consistency is one of the great indicators of being "real"

- a. Paul addresses Titus as "my true child in common faith" - "true" being γνήσιος used to describe someone as a lawful relation - here it also includes the idea of "genuine" demonstrating the relationship that we who are in Christ actually have (more legitimate than our biological relationships)
- b. This "child" is now fully entrusted as a co-laborer (a brother) in the work of Christ - regarding this, William Barclay wrote, "The great day for a preacher or a teacher is the day when his child in the faith becomes his brother in the faith, when the one whom he has taught is able to take his place in the work of the church, no longer as a junior, but as an equal."
- c. They are united in the "common faith" - this unites them more than anything else, more than ethnicity, age, fraternities and other general groupings of life
- d. This faith is the answer of true grace which is then the source of true peace from the only one who could promise and deliver true peace, for the "God our Savior" gave us "Christ Jesus our Savior" - this is the message Paul (and now Titus) were to not just proclaim but to live -out (share the source of this peace (because of grace) and to trust it themselves)
- e. Paul's calling was one of writing and declaring the Gospel and the outworking (as their (the Godhead) fortunate slave) their saving work (salvation not just of the person to eternity, but all aspects of His saving work from the influence and so the results of sin)

Here we see two unlike-ly people united - one an older man from a strict Jewish background and a young man fully Gentile united around the only "Savior of the world"

Imagine the thrill of such a calling! Offering true peace to a hopeless and false-hope world disillusioned by the blindness of sin

II. Qualities of Godly Leadership Versus That of Rebellious "Empty Talkers" - 1:5-16

A. This next section in Titus begins instruction regarding the appointment of "Elders" and the evidence of good character, followed by instruction to "refute" those contradicting "the faithful word"

1. General instruction - "Set in order what remains" - vs. 5

In a church's structure there is to be leadership and set guidelines (these firmly established upon God's Word and consistently practiced and reiterated)

- a. Churches (groups of believers) are not "free-for-all" as in everyone does and thinks as they please, and so-called "church autonomy" does not involve an organization founded upon popular thought/opinion
- b. Paul had apparently been with Titus in Crete and had to leave him behind - from the sound of it, there were many, from multiple cities that were converted - these needed to be guided, led and taught (ongoing) and this was part of what Titus was assigned
- c. The "what remains" could also be translated "what is lacking" and we could look on all that Paul deals with in this letter as what is being referred to
- d. This was to be organized/structured all beginning with the leadership

Titus had already been told some of this, but Paul reiterates "as I directed you" possibly so others could read it and not question Titus' authority and his responsibility

2. Appointing Elders who meet proper criteria - vs. 5

Congregations might “elect” someone because he is a populist or a man might feel led to be a leader in the church and may not meet the prescribed qualifications

- a. To “appoint” an elder is to καθίστημι (set them in charge over) in the leadership/guidance of each local “body” of believers - as regards church polity, notice these are not elected by the congregation but are assigned/appointed (even ordained) by other church authorities
- b. Not all that fit these qualifications of an Elder ought to be Elders, but for certain we know that any that is to be an Elder must meet them - as true Biblical/New Testament polity (form of government) is left untaught or not followed, churches acquire leaders not called of God (possibly meeting these qualifications is the first evidences of such a genuine call)

3. Qualifications of Elders (local Church leadership) - vs. 6-8

“Blameless” also describing one not guilty of any “notable crime” and so not bring harm to the church and its reputation (and so its calling/ministry)

A flirtatious man and a man given to lustful thoughts is extremely vulnerable for the sure to come attacks/temptations - see Pr. 6:26 where the harlot seeks not just substance but “precious life”

The parallel text to this is I Tim. 3:4-5 where his children are “submissive” and the elder manages his household

Hiebert quoting Lipscomb adds that “the family is the nursery of the church and these two act and react upon each other so that a bad or weak father can never be an efficient elder.”

In handling the text at face value these qualifications are met at the time of appointment to the position - afterward, steps can be followed such as in I Tim. 5:17-22

While the children are little, the I Tim. 3:4-5 standard is applied and as they are older this verse is applied

If a man’s poor character lends to his rebellious children then he should not be considered, but if his Christ-likeness unavoidably results in his older children rebelling against it, then he should still be considered

This word was used often to describe those living to please themselves (pleasing self was the motive behind why they do what they do - life is about them and not the Lord’s work)

- a. No man is perfect and none of these descriptions are intended to define a form of perfectionism - these are characteristic of their “walk” (their overall life)
- b. The first quality is general in nature and may be best defined by all that follows - this “blameless” clearly does not define flawless but the underlying word (ἀνέγκλητος) describes someone that cannot have a legal charge against them, and here describes an overall good character of life (so much so that no one can “lay hold of” something in their life that would disqualify him or that has not been properly dealt with) - Phillips translated this word as “men of unquestioned integrity” (considering their apparent character before God)
- c. Part of this blamelessness is his being “the husband of one wife” - plainly it means he must be married to only one woman (his wife) and has several implications - one of the general applications of it is that he is “a one woman man” (faithful and dedicated to his wife outwardly and inwardly in his thoughts/heart) - it was also often applied to disqualify a man that had divorced his wife (and she was still living)
- d. This qualification also clearly rules out polygamy
- e. He is to have “believing children” (τέκνα ἔχων πιστά - children having faith/faithfulness)- the word for children is usually used of those who are dependent offspring, so still under the authority of the father - some have made the point that “elders” were usually older men who would have fully grown sons and daughters
- f. Children are the responsibilities of the parents as fellow congregants of a local church are also the responsibility of the Elders, and if a man cannot keep his family faithful he ought not hold this position (or be appointed to it) - What if a child rebels when they are grown? This is not precisely clear though the next adjectives describing what his children must not be accused of, seem to be (at least “dissipation”) something only older children could be accused of and “rebellion” is fully realized when they are adults
- g. So, again, what if a child of an Elder rebels later? It seems reasonable that this is a possibility for any Elder/Pastor and that if this occurs, their response to it would be crucial - if their focus is truly the repentance of their son/daughter then their heart in the matter is correct - each man considered for an Elder must (though) fit these qualifications at the time
- h. There must not be a legitimate accusation of “ἄσωτία” (often translated “dissipation” which is a reckless, wasteful life of self-satisfaction, and at its most basic idea means “unsaveable”)- it must be noted that this word was used of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15 who did later repent and return to his father, so if strictly enforced, one cannot be an elder if a child has rebelled but can be considered if the child has returned)
- i. There must not be a legitimate accusation of his children being “ἄνυπότακτα” (insubordinate, not under rule/authority and so uncontrollable), thus “rebellion”
- j. All of this appears to be focused on the man’s overall handling of his family (if, for instance, his children’s rebellion is directly associated with his neglect, poor character or negligent leadership) - texts such as Matthew 10:34-39 must be taken into consideration for a direct result of Christ’s influence on lives will be many separated families
- k. In verse 7 the first word in the Greek of the sentence is “δεῖ” translated as “must” (stressing the necessity) that such a man as an elder or here an “overseer” must be “above reproach” (as mentioned in verse 6 also) in not only his personal character but particularly as “God’s steward” - the more important the work and the more important the master, the higher the qualifications - these positions are to be treated with utmost seriousness!
- l. Being above reproach includes not being “self-willed” (αὐθάδης - arrogant, stubborn) and as such typically has an inflated opinion of himself

There may be those who need to receive anger (as the Lord did with the religious leaders) but the general character ought to be gentle patience, helping others along

There are many such drugs and substances that alter the consciousness (which is their appeal) as wine/alcoholic beverages are often sought out to do (which is why the overseer is not to be given over to such)

see I Peter 5:1-3

If an Elder is too focused on making money he will be distracted from feeding the sheep

These seek to make "strangers" feel at ease and welcome- such encourages openness regarding needs- every stranger represents potential

Note that such qualifications are demanded so as to bring all others along with them in these traits - these are to serve as examples

There should be a respectableness of them because of their clear reverence for God and their reverence of their calling rather than a flippancy for their position/responsibility

This pictures something or someone trying to wrestle it away, anticipating an aggressive opposition

see also Rom. 6:17-18

This is in contrast to "bad for you" teaching, which is designed to be sweet and pleasant so as to conceal its poisons

This "doctrine" is referenced as the "Apostles doctrine" in Acts 2:42 - see also II Peter 3:1-3

These just need to stir-up doubt and just question to be successful (if they are not dealt with)

- m. He must not be "quick tempered" (ὀργίλον - not characterized as an angry man) - such a calling requires patience with people, else how could they ever be "apt to teach?" - he needs to leave room for failure in those he's called to serve (not excusing, but neither overbearing with those needing help and seeking to grow) - see also James 1:19-20
- n. He must not be "addicted to wine" (πάροινος - "given to wine" as in wine is their constant companion) - generally this also includes the idea of that which is intoxicating and clouds the senses (such need to keep their wits and not be given to that which dulls the senses (especially thinking)) - even with psychoactive and other types drugs there can be an addictive nature that deadens emotional pain ("clouding" it), yet we need to consider that many "pains" of life are constructive, and leaders need to face them, endure them and not seeking out "feeling deadeners" (versus reigning in emotions under faith)
- o. Paul warned all against "being drunk with wine" because it leads to bad behavior - Eph. 5:18
- p. He must not be a bully (πλήκτην - quarrelsome, seeking out fights and even violent) - such tend to "lead" by intimidation, and force conformity while neglecting the heart
- q. He must not be greedy, "fond of sordid gain" (αἰσχροκερδής - getting profit in shameful ways, describing one so focused on getting money/advantage that he will do just about anything) - Paul described it more as "not a lover of money" - I Tim. 3:3
- r. "...not making gain their first or chief end, not entering into the ministry nor managing it with base worldly views. Nothing is more unbecoming a minister, who is to direct his own and others' eyes to another world, than to be too intent upon this." MH
- s. Instead (now in the positives) these are to be hospitable (φιλόξεον - friendly to /fond of stagers/guests); they are welcoming - such will likely be vulnerable to hurts by those with ill-intent, but it is considered worth the risk in view of the potential encouragement opportunity
- t. He must be a "lover of good" (φιλάγαθον - attracted to what is good) - these are to be characterized as lovers of good people (they are drawn to them) and good things (versus tending toward questionable or "bad" things) - their "normal" conversation may reveal this
- u. They must be "sensible" (σώφρονα - sober-minded, controlled in their thinking) - we might put it "they are good thinkers," prudent and having well thought-out opinions
- v. They are to be characterized as "righteous" or "just" (δίκαιον - upright, as in his behavior and his treatment of others) - he is fair and strives to be right in his character before God and others
- w. He is to be "holy" (ὅσιον - pious, set apart in his behavior and character out of reverence for God) - there is a sense with this word that he is to be one who can be "reverenced"
- x. They must be disciplined (ἐγκρατῆ - in control, self-controlled, having power over self) - the opposite being undisciplined and so lazy and so susceptible to physical/mental/emotional distractions that would become more a controlling factor than their sense of responsibility

B. The core focus of the Elder in his responsibility - vs. 9-16

- 1. The Elders are to "hold fast" (ἀντεχόμενον - gripping something so as to hold on to it and to withstand what would seek to force it away) to the "faithful/trustworthy word" - vs. 9

- a. These are to "hold firm" the reliable (as opposed to all other philosophies and teachings that are not truly trustworthy) Word (of God), just as they had been taught it - they are not to get creative with it and alter it nor distort it (though there would be influences pushing for this)
- b. There is to be an expected faithfulness in adhering to what they had been taught - there is a tendency in most to come to view themselves as the authority in interpretation (meaning) and application more so than the text/doctrine/teaching itself - see also II Tim. 1:7-15
- c. There are two purposes for this: the first being to use, by means of "sound doctrine" to encourage/challenge those that hear and heed it - the word for "sound" (ὕγιαίνω) is where we get our word for "hygiene" and means healthy, clean and so truly "good for you"
- d. Even though "sound teaching" may not be desired by the masses, it is still the only effective encourager and motivator toward what is truly right and best
- e. For, the second purpose they are to relentlessly hang-on to sound doctrine is to refute those that are trying to contradict it - these are to be (by this teaching) rebuked, convicted, exposed and reprimanded for their attempts at speaking against it
- f. Notice it is by use of this teaching (the Word) these are countered and for the purpose to convict them (in their wrong) - if they are not, their influence (contradictions) will spread

2. The reality of “rebellious men” who will try to influence and sway from the Truth - vs. 10-11

The word “ἀνυπότακτος” describes one who refuses to be under authority and so will challenge it to either discredit it or to draw others away to themselves

An empty talker is one who can say many things without saying anything of value (as it relates true/genuine sound teaching as handed down through the Lord and His Apostles)

And there might be a clue as to some of their deception in verse 12 - where “loose” morality was “just who they were” as Cretans

There will always be active groups/movements coming to add to the Faith, draw others from it or just question (cloud) it with controversies

There is no “first amendment to free speech” in the Church

The early Christian leaders were instructed to teach, so teaching was not the infraction - it was the content, teaching what should not be taught (as though it was the “Apostles’ Doctrine”)

The objective is to choose out men who contrast the “bad” cultural norms, not those that exemplify them

These are the qualities of sin and what it is bound to result in - even in its “truths” are lies; even in its “loves” are tendencies to brutality

The basic idea in this wording also involves that of converting someone - here are some of the worst of people... not focused on coddling them!

compare to II Cor. 7:8-12

see also II Tim. 4:1-4

- a. These “rebellious,” unruly men are insubordinate (not under authority because they are an authority to themselves) - they will defy Church leadership directly because they do not recognize its authority
- b. Calvin wrote, “A pastor needs two voices, one for gathering the sheep and the other for driving away wolves and thieves.” - and here, Paul uses the word “many” indicating not just a significant number but also the frequency (they will continue to come)
- c. Such are not to be ignored (for the sake of peace, avoiding conflict) but, instead, are to be “silenced” because they contradict the teaching that the Elders were to be firmly holding to
- d. Paul describes them first of all as “empty talkers” which, compared also to I Tim. 1:6-8, looks to refer to those would-be teachers who love to talk and yet do not have anything of substance to share, and likely do not truly know what they are saying (even the things they are confident in) - notice Titus 3:9
- e. They are also “deceivers” (φρεναπάτης - deluding, misdirecting the heart and mind) - a deceiver that is “good” at what they do, is so because they are not obvious and may be more convincing not just because of their wordy arguments but even by their sincerity or appearance of “holiness” (as we the case with some of the Judaizers)
- f. This group of those now actively working to deceive and recruit/convert followers after themselves were largely those “of the circumcision” - and it was generally known for trying to work-in aspects of Judaism and the Mosaic Law into Christianity (such as the practice of circumcision) - they emphasized the need for standards of genuineness that could be tracked within a religious order
- g. The instruction regarding these (as to the course of action) is that they must be silenced (ἐπιστομίξειν - muzzled, stop the mouth) - this is worded as a necessity and not as an option
- h. This does demonstrate not only the authority of the Elders to do so, but their responsibility to do so (they are the ones that need to do the silencing)
- i. The reason for this urgency is in their results being the overturning/overthrowing entire households with their infectious error - this doesn’t have to mean that everyone in the household rebels, just that everyone is impacted and the household as a unit is upset/toppled
- j. These “household upsetters” teach what they should not be teaching motivated by “shameful” (disgraceful) gain/profit - it is profit using shameful methods (convincing their “buyers” of content and quality that is not true/right)

3. Elders are to protect from cultural influence and norms that are contrary to truth - vs. 12-14

- a. Paul uses a quote from one of their “prophets” (likely from long before who was not just describing what Cretans were like in the past but what they would become) - these are described as “Cretans by nature are incessant liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons.” (Wuest)
- b. Paul affirms this as true to Titus (emphasizing the character of the society in which he and the Elders will be ministering)
- c. These are perpetual liars (they cannot be trusted, and lying is an expected norm in their culture) - this would also mean that they would not be inclined to trust the Gospel message - notice this is not acceptable (as a trait) for these leaders - the culture does not usurp the authority of God’s Word
- d. These are “evil beasts” (acting like animals, unrestrained instincts and indulgences) - the term used for this describes “wild animals” and so not tame; likely dangerous
- e. These are “lazy gluttons” (γαστέρες ἀργαί - literally stomachs not working, as in those who loved to eat/feast but not work) - it describes those eating without laboring
- f. Since this is the case, Titus is instructed (as well as the Elders) to reprove them severely (literally to “cut them off”) by convicting them (as in expose them for what they are before God, “shown as guilty”) - notice how Peter deals with such trying to influence within- II Pet. 2:12-22
- g. The purpose for the direct and even harsh treatment is for the purpose to make them “sound in the faith” (the underlying word describing what is healthy or leads to health versus what is sickening and leads to disease and death)
- h. This is partly done by having them “not pay attention to Jewish myths” - these were traditional stories and practices that would appeal to the mystical and Gnostics

We have aspects of these “myths” still today where there is more focus and research in obscure details of Scripture that attract those seeking some type of intellectual advantage and stimulation to bolster pride or personal insecurities

It is incredible to realize the end of such; they “turn away from the truth” - not necessarily because they are openly immoral/evil, but because they are “taken” with the attention on “heady” (gnostic-like) concepts and devote themselves to these man-made structures/ideologies and are more devoted to them than Scripture

There is to be an avoidance of faddish teaching - for many will (at times) be intrigued more with speculation than solid, proven truth

Compare this to Mt. 15:10-20- the heart is the source of evil and not “things”

For instance, food (morally) is good but can be misused in evil ways. Marriage is good but can be defiled in many ways by its participants - communication/speech is a good thing but can become impure in its usage and the thoughts promoted

The endless causes of man-made religions and values must never be looked to as though they can set things “right” - even though they may benefit the culture (for a while), they are too shortsighted and cannot account for the truest purity and the need for it in light of eternity, not just during our lifetimes or even just within “election cycles” when “causes” are stressed

“Sound faith” recognizes the source and authoritative definer of purity/rightness being God and His Word

- i. Such “myths” were part historical, philosophical and fantasy mixed together - as seen in I Tim. 1:4, Paul warned against the same (myths) as well as “endless genealogies,” all of which (historical research) led them to focus on speculation... “which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith” - these distractions/competitors were in opposition to “sound teaching” (the Lord’s and Apostles’ doctrine) - see Jude 1:1-4
- j. Along with the context in I Tim. 1:4-11 is the revealing of the underlying motive of such and that being the avoidance of “the administration of God which is by faith” - the goal of “instruction” (doctrine) as indicated in verse 5 is genuine love (which comes as a result of a pure heart and good conscience all brought about and maintained by genuine faith) - those focused on myths and “commandments of men” will suffer from a deficiency in one or all these areas - note also II Tim. 3:10-13
- j. Essentially then the goal is to “not pay attention” (don’t focus) to such things - based on the next verse (verse 15), it looks as though their erroneous focus was related to ways to define and identify (and even create) righteousness/purity and so such men would leverage made-up facts and accounts (fables) to control others by means of “commands”
- k. Paul deals with this more directly in II Tim. 4:1-5 - Timothy was told to “preach the word” because of the time coming when “people will not endure sound teaching” (they will not be able to, and will refuse to put-up with it) so the trend will be to accumulate for themselves those who teach them (tell them) what they are itching to hear
4. Defilement (impurity) is inward and not a result of the “environment” - vs. 15-16
 - a. There was, apparently, factions of some of these “myth promoters” specializing in the commandments of men and turning away from the actual truth to a subjective, popularly acceptable “truth” (that stood for an approach of a form of righteousness, that if followed would make a person “righteous”)
 - b. The reality is, though, that to those truly “pure” (καθαρός - clean, upright) “all things are pure” - things are not innately evil but are made so in how they are perceived or utilized
 - c. It is offensive to realize (for most) that mankind (in sin) is the primary corrupting force (taking what was made “good” and using it for evil/sinful purpose) - mankind has re-purposed most of God’s creation (physical/mental/conceptual) and infected it with sin - even in man’s religions there are the infections of self-righteous sin
 - d. So, to someone who is inwardly pure (in our case, because of Christ’s work and creation within us of a new nature) everything is pure (because it will be seen and used for purified/sanctified purposes) - this is the ideal, and even though we do not practice such perfectly, the point in this proverbial statement is clear - it is the impure “actor” acting within and upon something that introduces the impurity
 - e. The extreme opposite, those defiled (and are characterized as “unbelieving”) nothing is pure (even what is considered sacred, because of their interaction with it - a dish can be purified but as soon as dirty hands touch it, it is made impure - this is why it is questioned in Col. 2:20-23 as to why one in Christ would set themselves under the “elemental principles” of the world (the very basics of what the world/age would consider what “makes” someone pure/right)
 - f. This is all so because (as all are born) their “minds and consciences are defiled” - this is why we are not to look to the world for their ideals of purity/righteousness
 - g. The part of everyone (by nature) that is used to reason/think (the mind), is tainted and flawed and the part of us that is designed to sense right and wrong (the conscience) is also tainted and so the trustworthiness of both together to rightly determine/define what is pure versus what is defiled is not possible - see Mt. 6:22-23
 - h. Yet there are some even within the Church that trust the collective human minds and consciences to generally be trustworthy, and so permit and invite its input and integration into our faith and practice - such were even the Jewish leaders and other “moral authorities commanding men” - their minds and consciences are “μυαίνω” (polluted, infected)
 - i. Even these will openly confess that they know God and are in agreement with Him, yet it is all lip-service, for in their behavior, their actions and so their character, they “deny Him” (refuse, disavow, contradict) - they “profess but don’t possess”

But whenever man becomes the authority of being the determiner of right and wrong, he denies God His rightful place and suffers the unavoidable consequences - so why should churches allow such influences? Elders must be there to stop it from getting a foothold!

The word for "deny" (ἀρνέομαι) simply means to "say no" to - these are practical atheists and so are found "unapproved" (held against the standards already provided (and others)) that they must be silenced if they try to become teachers/influencers in the church

- j. History (even in the first century) has numerous examples of man-made religions of all sorts (including humanism's variants throughout the ages) that have been identified as "right" and "moral," with much of it finding its authority or origin within ones who declare "right" what strikes them at the time to be "right" and with available data (as to what should then be universally they promote should considered "right")
- k. These, in contrast to the "secular," profess (openly acknowledge) that they know God but are ultimately identified, not necessarily by what they say/teach, but by what they do and don't do (by their works they deny Him) - they can come across as religious scholars but prove themselves to be false (defiled) by their conduct/deeds/character
- l. The adjectives describing them are quite harsh - "detestable" (abominable), as in what they do and how they act/ behave is abhorrent (and is a word associated with idolatry) this is similar to Rom. 2:17-23 (they teach "the law" but contradict it themselves) - and so they are "disobedient" (literally "unpersuadable"), this being their inner disposition (pushing others to obey what they are unconvinced of themselves) and so they are "worthless for any good work" (they are unfit to produce anything that is truly "good" before God)

III. Adorning the Doctrine of God Our Savior - 2:1-10

A. As was just demonstrated, there will be many in the church that outwardly stand with God and His word, and will openly proclaim to know Him, but their teaching and character contradict - there is a required consistency that is needed in not only church leadership, but in church members - vs. 1

- 1. This next section (2:1-10) ends with the phrase, "adorn the doctrine of God" which is descriptive of what we should expect as the result of what our listening/learning is to produce
 - a. Too many look on learning Scripture to be an intellectual/philosophical discipline (as if in getting "all the answers correct") rather than a life- changing process
 - b. One of the best "proofs" for us and others of our complete assent to the Truth of God's Word, is our living it ("wearing" it) - if sitting under the teaching of God's Word makes no definite, lasting change, why would we believe we are genuine believers?

Simply put, believers believe and do, but unbelievers don't believe and so don't do - see Eph. 4:1, Php. 1:27-28; 2:12-16

2. Titus, as a spiritual leader, must teach what is "sound" in his speaking

We get our word "didactic" from it, describing teaching, instruction

- a. Teaching (διδασκαλία) is an explanation, a working-through of information (here, the Scripture and the "Apostle's Doctrine") - it is the impartation of information, walking others through it with needed, clarifying explanation
- b. The two qualifiers for this teaching are "sound" (healthy, uninfected, so pure from erroneous and competing ideas) and "fitting" (in harmony, "accord" with this sound doctrine) - it is limited so as to not allow the infiltration of worldly, temporal and humanistic thinking/ideas

B. The expected, impacting result for "older men" - vs. 2

1. Older men (likely around 50 years and older) are to be "temperate"

Older men are to exhibit these qualities as examples for others to follow and can be guides in setting goals of maturity in younger men; and younger women as to what to look for in a possible husband

- a. "νηφαλέος" describes one who is sober (clear-headed, alert so not given-to life's distracting frivolities), and is a word also used to describe self-control
- b. Being focused/alert thinkers, they hold themselves back from what is of little to no value and in doing so remain clear-headed/sober - compare with Luke 21:29-36
- c. The opposite (what these must not be (adorn)) being one unsettled in life's purpose and direction as regards his purpose before his Creator and Savior

2. They are to be characterized as being "dignified" (KJV has "grave")

Men who live their lives overbearingly (selfishly) or who live as weak, fearful (intimidated) men, will not receive an honorable respect - those that live their lives (over a long period of time) are apt to inspire respect in their serving as "proof" of the values that they stand for and teach

- a. "σεμνός" - respectable, honorable, being serious about life - to be undignified would be to dishonor what they are to be standing for and representing as well as misbehavior in general
- b. They ought to be men who can be revered and "looked-up to" as examples of what others should aspire to be like (in their life demeanor and life direction)
- c. This adjective entails more than just behaving - some may be unrespectable (not deserving respect and not inspiring it) just in their inactions and in demonstrating an unprincipled life (nothing being worth standing for or suffering for)

3. They are to be "sensible" (clear thinkers)

- a. "σώφρων" - this word describes a self-controlled mind/thinking, the plain idea behind it being "safe-thinking" - there is an alertness and guardedness regarding their own thinking and thought process - they do not "flirt" with dangerous and questionable considerations

b. This word also includes the idea of one who is in control of his emotions (so one who is not a reactor, but one who thinks/considers before responding)

4. They are to be “sound in the faith, in the love, in the endurance” - vs. 2

It's faith, love and endurance as defined in Scripture and not by popular sentiment

“The faith must not be adulterated with superstitions—the love must be chivalrous, not sentimental. It must be no partisan feeling, but a tender affection, broad and inclusive, as was St. Paul's and his Master Christ's. The patience must be no mere tame acquiescence in what seems to be the inevitable, but must be brave, enduring, suffering...” Ellicott

a. Again, “sound” having the idea of “healthy” because it is not polluted (not infected, so not infectious) and this in three areas, the faith, the love, the endurance (notice the proper article - it's not referencing a subjective form of any of these three)

b. Elders are to teach and defend sound teaching, and older men are to be well-versed... so those who can teach and promote the faith as was handed down - they may have much to offer with their experience, but “the faith” is more important for them to promote and to preserve/protect from distortion

c. Their love needs to be genuine (for God and others), so “healthy” in the sense it is proper (focused on the other, for self-focus leads to “love” with a price) - true love of God and others will keep them motivated correctly (others' genuine need for a genuine answer/solution)

d. Their endurance (the godly form and actuality of patience) with others and circumstances- they ought to be the examples of suffering through what must be faced because their faith and love are focused on God and His purposes in all things

e. The church needs such men, and they must not be relegated as if obsolete and out of touch

C. The expected, impacting result for “older women and younger women” - vs. 3-5

1. Older women are to be “reverent in their behavior” - vs. 3

This is key because it is the goal of all of us (to live as those who clearly belong to God)

These are to realize they represent the Lord, which then dictates how they conduct themselves

This word in this context is in reference to speech (more precisely, the content of what they say about others)

Addiction to wine (drunkenness) was apparently common in Crete - we have various intoxicants today that can become “masters” over us, dictating daily priorities

It is common and fairly easy to teach (verbally) how one should conduct themselves, but is more difficult to live it out as a life-lesson/demonstration of what it actually looks like

a. This is one characterized “as becometh women consecrated to God” because the Greek word indicated something associated with something sacred - their overall demeanor is as one who realizes they are set - apart to God for His purposes - these are to be as “saintly grandmothers” being a spiritual benefit/encouragement to their families and their friends

b. The parallel text to this is I Tim. 2:9-10 where we see their Godly character is reflected in what they wear, in modesty and self-control, while not seeking to have their true beauty found in what they wear and how they look

c. In particular, they are not “malicious gossips” (not slanderers, not a false accuser) - such a bad quality often stems from resentment, envy, bitterness or an overall dissatisfaction in life (so they seek to find or create faults in others to feel better about themselves) - the underlying word (διαβόλους) in its masculine singular form is used of the Devil, for he accuses and slanders to tear down and destroy - as with Satan, the content can be true or contain truth, but the intent is to destroy (rather than restore/rebuild or correct)

d. As to appetite, they must not be “addicted to much wine” (literally, enslaved to it) - for whatever reason, one might give themselves over to an intoxicating substance, and so become slaves to it (addicted so as to be convinced the “need” it)

e. Such diversions must be avoided so their attention can be focused on teaching “what is good” - note that it does not say “teach what they see as good” so there needs to be a set (objective) standard of what is truly “good” that they seek to teach

f. There is one Greek word for “teach what is good” (καλοδιδασκάλους) and means more than just teach “good things” - instead it describes actually teaching what “good” and is not just in their words, but illustrating what it is in their demeanor/behavior

2. The younger women are to be taught by the older women - vs. 4-5

Note the foundational concept of this in Deut. 6:4-9 (and this done in God's design... the family)

Note Acts 21:8-9 as well as I Cor. 7:34 (in the context of the benefit of remaining single)

It has become too common to see and hear of women who do not honor and love their husbands - this is disobedience to God at its core

a. As we begin this section, it should be noted the emphasis on family and home - it is given priority here and in the opening qualifications of Elders, demonstrating that before God, this is of the highest priority, though our era has devalued its importance (while elevating that of culture/society's influence on children more so than that of parents/family)

b. Texts such as this are often excused as more cultural than “Biblical” - it is true that many young women will not marry and will not have children and will (as Anna) devote themselves to the Lord's service - but if there is marriage and so a husband and (likely) children, their husband, children and home are to be their top priority (without question!)

c. The older women are told (as training what is good) to “love their husbands” - it seems allowable to say that even if an older woman is not or never has been married, that she is to still teach such to younger women - older women who are married should exemplify what it means to love a husband

To love only the loving (and lovely) falls far short of the Godly love stressed here

In equality, neither male nor female is above or better than the other - it is not a quality difference as much as it is a positional difference in God's order

There is a form (today) of "love" of husband and children that lacks the dedicated focus and priority these words describe - rather family is an "accessory" more so than purpose

They need to be careful what affects their thinking (heart) (for it is what dictates (practically) how one lives and life's priorities)

Purity is grown as affection/inclination for what is evil lessens and love of right grows

We see a warning against the opposite of this in 1 Tim. 5:13

The home is the core place for the influence of the next generation, so if it is lacking in Godly principle, so also will the society be - in our nation "bad" people would not be as electable if the majority of the electorate were rightly principled (and this all finds its foundations in the home)

And none of these scenarios indicates that this is only done when the "leader" deserves it - we all submit to God and in so doing submit to His order

If a young woman is seeking out a man to impress her friends she is apt to prioritize the wrong traits

Take note the importance placed upon the reputation of God's Word as it is showcased in the lives of these women - there is far more at stake than their perceived "happiness"

- d. It needs to be noted, that it is highly likely many of these women were married to non-Christian husbands (yet this was not to take away from their obligation/need to love them)
- e. Younger women need to see what it looks like to love a husband, so they will have their expectations set correctly - this "love" is not a blind infatuation, but a very focused "will to love" even in the face of a husband's flaws/weaknesses
- f. With various tenants of "feminism" having influenced our society, texts such as this are frowned upon (shocked that she should have a particular focus toward her husband and family) - yet even when considering feminism's general offerings, it is an "equality" (and a definition of value) based on all things which contradict the God-given norms
- g. The words for the "love" of their husbands and their children are compound words (φιλάνδρους and φιλοτέκνους) picturing an affectionate love of someone close - such genuine affection will help them with the other qualities mentioned next - the opposite to this is not necessarily hatred of husband and children as much as it is an obsession with self that leads to the neglect and even resentment of husband and children
- h. As with other believers, the young women (besides their dedication to family) are to be "sensible" ("self-controlled" in other translations) and is also translated "prudent" indicating sound in their mind/thinking (clear thinkers) and is the same word as in 2:2 of what older men are to be characterized by - they are behaviorally controlled because they are controlled in their thinking/thoughts
- i. Part of this clear, controlled thinking is what determines why they do what they do (it has been thought out versus reactions grounded in emotion and circumstances rather than principle)
- j. They are to be "ἀγνάς" (holy and so set apart from society in their purity of heart, mind and body) and as the older women are to be "reverend" in the behavior, so are these (stemming from a purity within)
- k. They are to be taught to be "workers at home" - for those married, this is a clear indicator of their main focus (not that they don't have any other responsibilities outside the home, for the "virtuous woman" of Prov. 31 had several occupations (yet all focused on providing the needs of her home))
- l. There is application also for those young women who are not married to maintain responsibility in the overall support/work of the home - again, this is not belittling as though such a focus would ever be below any of them
- m. They are to be "ἀγαθός" (translated "kind" but it has a broader meaning than that) - they are to be (as we might put it) "good" at what they do (growing in skill and disciplines) and so more "useful" and "effective" in their pursuits of God's ideals - it also includes the idea of "goodness" (morally in behavior and kindness/graciousness with others)
- n. They are also to learn (and be taught by the older women) to be submissive to their own husbands (this word "submissive" used in 2:9 of slaves of their masters, in 3:1 of citizens to their "rulers") - these other applications demonstrate some of the thought process needed in focusing on the overruling control of God (over our all our leaders and He will deal with them when it is not right for us to try to "deal" with them in our own way)
- o. Even though this is an unpopular term, it is clear here and in other texts such as Eph. 5 - the original word (ὑποτάσσω) simply describes arranging the order of something under another - it would do well for older women to counsel younger women to (when seeking for a husband) to seek out a man they could place themselves under (gladly) their authority
- p. All of these qualities are to be pursued and integrated "that the word of God may not be dishonored" (also, "not be evil spoken of") - the Word of God can be dishonored in many ways: it can be dishonored by the open inconsistencies of its professing followers and it can also be dishonored when it is redefined/reworked to seem to indicate its allowance and support of the opposites of what it actually says
- q. Contradictory followers bring a greater blot to the name of Christ than they do themselves - by nature, mankind is at odds with God and will use any means to attempt to discredit Him (and quite often this is done by finding actual faults/flaws in our actual belief of God's Word (and either following it or holding to it verbally while contradicting it with how we actually live) - we are to be ambassadors, but if we "make it about me" we will mock our Lord