

Titus 1.5-16

Transforming Truth



Alan Tippett

told the story of God's Mission
in the Pacific Islands...



As we STEP into the Scripture this Morning –
from Pacific to Mediterranean – back to 1st Century
PASTORAL / PERSONAL / CHURCH Letter

Apostle Paul > Young TITUS on Island of Crete > 146 miles / 235 kms LONG
MYTHICAL Birthplace of ZEUS, Famous for the MINOTAUR

Titus Sent there for ONE PURPOSE > Make Know TRUTH of Jesus Christ

vs. 1,2 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began

God is NOT WAITING for us to BE Godly BEFORE He will Love Us!

Godliness is RESULT of our Relationship with God, NOT REASON for It

The Lord gives the word, and a great army brings the good news. Psalm 68.11

WORD Changed Paul, Titus, Crete, WORKING Powerfully round World Today

1. The Challenge to Truth

Paul VIVID Picture of CRETE 1st C > Could be your CAMPUS in 21st C
NEIGHBORS in APT Next Door – COLLEAGUE in Next Work Cubicle

a. Rejected the Truth - God REVEALED in His SON and the SCRIPTURES
 v. 10 For there are many who are insubordinate > NOT Care, Not LISTEN
 Not just FEW who REJECT God on CRETE > There are MANY Insubordinate
 Like DISLOYAL SOLDIERS who Refuse ORDERS of their COMMANDER
 REBELLIOUS - Will Not Submit, to Others, Scripture, or God

BEWARE OF A TEACHER WHO WILL NOT SUBMIT TO AUTHORITY
 vs. 7,9 For an overseer, as God's steward...must hold firm to the trustworthy
 word as taught

“The BIBLE says” USED to Make People Think, Respect, FEAR – No Longer
 NOW ‘the Bible says’ – LAUGHED At – IGNORED – MEANINGLESS

Last week PRESIDENT of Philippines had some Choice Words for USA Prez
 SHOCKED how BLUNT was > NOT Politically CORRECT > Neither PAUL
 vs. 12,13 One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always
 liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” This testimony is true.

Paul NOT Trying to be MEAN or HURTFUL – Being BLUNTLY HONEST
 DIAGNOSIS is GRIM but their DELIVERANCE can be by GRACE

b. Replaced

v. 10 empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party
 THEY Do Believe SOMETHING – Everyone HAS an ULTIMATE Authority
 They Look to RELIGIOUS Ritual – Something WE do to Earn FAVOR w/ God
 v. 14 devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who
 turn away from the truth

Circumcision Party > Trusting in JEWISH Rituals, Traditions, Laws, MYTHS

v. 16 They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works.

WORST Enemies WHO Claim to KNOW God > DECEIVED & Deceiving
 Claim God given ANOTHER Religious Book, Prophet, Way to Find Him

IF you ADD Something to the Gospel you will LOSE IT

DARE Not Paint a MUSTACHE on God's MASTERPIECE

they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator
Romans 1.26

“each person has the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life.”

US Supreme Court Justice Kennedy

“I am whatever I say I am and you must accept my assertion and behave accordingly, otherwise you are a bigot who is oppressing me.”

ONLY 2 Religions! >> Fundamentally ONLY 2 Religions on Earth >

1. Very Big, Diverse, Many Labels, Books, Leaders, Traditions, Rituals

1 over-riding theme “I can do something to please God, make God accept me”

Then the Buddha addressed all the monks once more, and these were the very last words he spoke: "Behold, O monks, this is my last advice to you. All component things in the world are changeable. They are not lasting. Work hard to gain your own salvation."
www.buddhanet.net

MUSLIMS still Pray for the Soul of Muhammed to be SAVED > No Assurance

If Leader of the Religion not SAVED > What hope for other Billion Followers?

MANY Christians THINK “God helps those who help themselves” Gospel Truth

Ben Franklin (1757) quoted Algernon Sydney (1698)

2. Narrow Way – Road Hard – Few Find it > “I have no perfection to offer God”

GOSPEL TRUTH – God MUST help me, because I can Never HELP Myself!”

DEAD in Sin – Filled with Lies, Lust, and REBELLION AGAINST God

My ONLY HOPE before God is MERCY and GRACE

Find JESUS who ALONE is GOOD > Receive MERCY and GRACE

MERCY – God does NOT give us what we DESERVE

GRACE - God DOES give us what we DO NOT DESERVE

All things are yours whether...the world or life or death or the present or the future - all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God. 1 Corinthians 3:21-23

c. Religion for Riches

v. 11 teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach

Paul not JUST Concerned about MESSAGE, but also their MOTIVES

Opposing Older English Versions > FILTHY LUCRE or BASE GAIN

They were MERCENARIES Not MISSIONARIES – don't Mean Same Thing!

MAIN MOTIVE - GREED - Wanted to Fill Pockets, Not Souls of Others

v. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward...must not be... greedy for gain

NO ONE CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS - Love One, Hate the Other

“You're a fool for Christ so you might as well be a rich fool!” Creflo Dollar

QUESTION for Xtians – Am I SEEKING FIRST the Kingdom of God?

When Ministry is about Gaining and Expecting Favors > Gospel Power DIES

You will be SERVING Yourself and your Empire > Not SAVIOR & Kingdom

If Serving Jesus and His Kingdom > Ministry of GLORY and GRACE

I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”
1 Peter 5.1-5

d. Rebellion v. 11 they are upsetting whole families > lit. OVERTURNING

TOLD LIES FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE / i.e. Church to Church

SOMETIMES Jesus DIVIDES Families – One Member Followers, Others Don't

When Family BELIEVES they are STRONG – Pray Together, Stay Together

False Teaching Shapes BELIEFS, CHOICES, RELATIONSHIPS, FAMILIES

SPECIFIC LIES? v. 10 “circumcision” / v. 14 “Jewish myths”

Damaged doctrine damages people.

Bryan Chapell

v. 15 to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled

IMPURE Men make Pure Things IMPURE > Sin SPREADS like EBOLA
BEGAN TO CALL EVIL GOOD AND GOOD EVIL

FALSE UNDERSTANDING OF HOLINESS, PURITY - External, Rituals

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer. 1 Timothy 4.1-5

DEVIL IS NOT CREATOR - DISTORTS GOOD GIFTS OF GOD

ALL of Life and its GIFTS to be Brought Under AUTHORITY of KING JESUS

v. 10 EMPTY TALKERS - No Fruit, No Health in their Words, HOT AIR

v. 10 DECEIVERS - Actively Leading People Astray - SCATTER SHEEP

v. 11 GREEDY - in Ministry ONLY FOR THE MONEY

v. 12 ALWAYS LIARS, EVIL BRUTES, LAZY GLUTTONS

SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

v. 16 They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

e. Rebuke v. 11 They must be silenced

v. 9 give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it

v. 13 Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith

They must be CONTROLLED, MUZZELED, STOPPED

Strong Words for our PLURALISTIC EARS – How dare you be so Intolerant!

FALSE DOCTRINE - LIKE YEAST - WORKS SLOWLY, INVISIBLE

ELDERS must have their RADAR ON – Know What Gospel IS and IS NOT!

Leaders: BE VERY CAREFUL WHO YOU ALLOW TO SPEAK IN CHURCH

Led: CAREFUL WHO YOU Listen to > Devil can Hide behind PULPITS

REDEMPTIVE REBUKE > RESTORE “that they may be sound in the faith”

Thankless – Unpopular Task – Stand Up to Sin and Error – Protect Flock

Like DISCIPLINE of Children > They may HATE you For It > RIGHT!

Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will. 2 Timothy 2.23-26

REBUKE - not to Shame, but to RESTORE

NOT ABOUT YOU - ITS ABOUT JESUS / Not Win Argument > Win Person

Paul – About my Age – Looking Back life of Debate / Persuasion / Conflict

God USED him to DEFINE, DEFEND, and DECLARE Gospel of Jesus

POSSIBLE to be in SILLY Argument >> Person Not Willing to Change

“If I could Answer that, would it bring you Closer to Following Jesus?”

Spiritual Warfare – Not Against Flesh & Blood – Held Captive by SATAN

2. The Community of Truth

while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son
Romans 5.10

When GOD HAS SPOKEN - 2 Responses - 1) Turn our Back 2) Bow Head
Praise the Lord that SOME – Right on that Evil Island – Bowed their Heads

God is going to BUILD HIS CHURCH right there on ISLAND of CRETE
Not by IMPORTATION of Saints but SALVATION of SINNERS

BIBLICAL Solution to FALSE Teaching > TRAIN more TRUE Teachers
Power of Gospel, Work of Holy Spirit > CRETANS made CHRISTIANS

a. Lord Acknowledged v. 9 hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught

v. 15 To the pure, all things are pure

This is entirely counterintuitive. If you have something pure, virtually anything else will make it impure. Yet, Paul contends that those whose motives are pure in Christ, virtually nothing makes them impure. In fact, their purity invades the impure and purifies it.
Bryan Chapell

Three Tests of Teaching
It's Origin - from God or man? Revelation or Tradition?
It's Essence - Inward or Outward? Spiritual or Ritual?
It's Result - Transformed Life or Moral Creed?
True Faith = Divine Origin, Spiritual Essence, Moral Transformation

Your FREEDOM in Christ is NOT LICENSE to make OTHERS STUMBLE..

Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble
Romans 14.20

b. Leaders Appointed

Paul BEEN in Crete – Only time Recorded: Visited as Prisoner going to ROME
Do NOT Know DETAILS of Paul's MINISTRY Visit or Visits to Crete

LEFT with some UNFINISHED Business on Crete > SENT TITUS

v. 5 This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you

2 Tasks: “Straighten out what is unfinished” / “appoint elders in every town”

MIXED METAPHORES - straighten what is crooked / finish unfinished

Setting a BROKEN BONE – Straighten CROOKED TEETH

GOOD ELDER is CAREFUL ORTHODONIST > Straighten Crooked Doctrine

Paul’s Practice - Appoint Elders wherever he Evangelized

And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. Acts 14.23

Jethro to Moses: “...Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people”
Exodus 18.21

FOUR OBSERVATIONS -

1) Same Officers

vs. 5,7 appoint “elders” (Presbyter) ...For an “overseer” (Episcopos)

2 different titles // v. 5 Elders (RESPECT) / v. 7 Overseer (TASK)

2nd C. 3 Hierarchical Offices Deacon – Elder - Bishop

2 Offices in NT Church: Elders and Deacons

Pastors, Evangelists, Teachers – Ministry GIFTS and FUNCTIONS

“There are no big places or small places of service; there are only faithful people and unfaithful people.”
Francis Schaeffer

2) Team Ministry - “appoint elderS” Support, Encouragement, Accountability

Different Leaders / Different Gifts / Different Ministries - ONE CHURCH

Ordained & Not/ Salaried & Volunteer/ Fulltime & Parttime/ Men & Women

“we are shepherds; we are not ranchers, managers, or corporate heads out to raise money, build buildings, draw crowds, and measure up to the world’s criteria for success”
 Daniel Akin

3) Stewards of God

vs. 7,9 For an overseer, as God's steward...must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

STEWARD - gives food & drink to the household // GIVE WORD OF GOD

We are like HOUSEHOLD MANAGERS in GOD’S House // CHURCH

NOT OUR Church, Our GOSPEL, or Salvation > ALL FROM GOD ALONE

Thru PREACHING > Message THRU Apostles Not FROM Apostles

If you want Apostolic ministry you must be faithful to Message of the Apostles

1 Timothy 3 = Timothy in Ephesus / same standards City & village (Crete)

MESSAGE has NO EXPIRATION Date > from ETERNAL God

Just as RELEVANT in 21st C as it was in 1st C – LIVING Word of God

We preach His ANCIENT Gospel > TRUE, TIMELESS, TRUSTWORTHY

4) Selection of Leaders - CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Paul told Titus to do it - but MEMBERS opinions must be AFFIRMING

People who LIVED with Leaders asked whether those MEN are BLAMELESS

Group of MEN among Church > APPOINTED by God for Ministry DUTIES

Some of YOU being CALLED Right Here - This Place to Serve X in BJ & BICF

Like Young Couple 1st CHILD > Suddenly REALIZE SERIOUS Responsibility

Christian Leaders GRIPPED by their Responsibility for BRIDE of Jesus Christ

c. Lives Anointed - It is ABOUT their SAVIOR, Not the SERVANTS

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior Titus 3.4-6

vs. 6,7 if anyone is above reproach... not open to the charge... must be above reproach = NOT CHARGEABLE WITH SOME OFFENSE, NO GOSSIP

Other Translations: "blameless" - NOT Sinless or PERFECT – They're Cretans!
CANNOT be ACCUSED - SINS are CONFESSED & COVERED & CLEARED
Community Involved - NEEDS OPINIONS OF OTHERS - RELATIONSHIPS

He must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. 1 Timothy 3.7

Note that among Christian leadership qualifications there are no mountains to climb, no alligators to wrestle, no pilgrimages to make, no prophecies to utter, no ancient manuscripts to decode, no visions to conjure, no tortures to endure, and no miracles to perform. The standards for Christian leadership strictly relate to one's example before others. Bryan Chapell

1) Blameless in Marriage and Family > How we LIVE before OTHERS

v. 6 if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife

ONE WOMAN MAN, Not MUST be MARRIED or KIDS > Ex. Paul and Jesus

"The house of a believer ought to be like a little church" John Calvin

SPEND Long Time talking about MARRIAGE / DIVORCE & WILD CHILDS

BICF Leadership Marriage Policy

Pastoral, elder, and deacon positions in the BICF may not be held by anyone who has been divorced and remarried or who is married to someone who has been divorced and remarried as long as previous spouses are still living (1 Timothy 3:1-13).

Divorces Usually Happen FAR AWAY > Hard for Elders to know True Picture

There HAVE BEEN and NOW ARE some Divorced Leaders in BICF

Paul's marital standards for leader relate to what their community observes about them...more than a technical question of whether he was Biblically, or even unbiblically, divorced two months or twenty years ago...The cleansing and renewing nature of the gospel would seem to be at odds with the standard that does not recognize the reality of spiritual change and the benefit of leadership that has experienced it.

Bryan Chapell

v. 6 and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination.

SCARRY Words 4 ANY Parent in Christian MINISTRY > Save the Date Nov 5
3 Sons about 30, PROUD, FINE Young Men – Wondered if I Needed to Resign?
ONE EXTREME...

"if a man's children fall away from the faith (either doctrinally or morally), he is at that point disqualified from formal ministry in the church" . . . a man might decide (and, I think, should decide) to step down if one of his six children denies the faith"

Douglas Wilson

What is at Stake > "the children's behavior, not their eternal state."

Our Kids Salvation NOT Connected to our Household MANAGERIAL Skills

We are PARENTS Not SAVIORS > Parents should Model the Savior

"The contrast is made not between believing and unbelieving children, but between obedient, respectful children and lawless, uncontrolled children."

Alexander Strauch

It is HEARTBREAK to have Kids that Don't Follow Jesus

But Not Necessarily a DISQUALIFICATION from MINISTRY

Have YOU the Parent done Your Part to Point them to Jesus?

MAKE Family your FIRST Ministry Priority!

Can Rejoice in 300 People in ZGC – Greatest Concern have 3 Sons in Heaven!

Parenting like Piloting Ship > Cannot Control Wind & Waves > Hold ON!

2) Blameless in Character and Conduct

BALANCED Life – 11 Character Qualities vs. 7 & 8 – 5 Negative / 6 Positive

v. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain

5 Areas of STRONG TEMPTATION > Pride, Temper, Drink, Power, Money

Same PRINCIPLE: Way you Lead Family reveals Readiness to Lead Church

So cannot CONTROL the Church if you cannot CONTROL Yourself

One Student I taught in Seminary in KZ – Russian as BIG as Me

Church Planter/Pastor – People did not SHOW UP for Services > House to Fight!

“...visible evidence in their behavior that they have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, that their new birth has led to a new life, they their fallen passions are under control, and the ninefold fruit of the Spirit has at least begun to appear and to ripen in their lives”
John Stott

v. 7 - 5 NEGATIVE VICIES / v. 8 – 6 POSITIVE VIRTUES...

v. 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

Welcoming – Loving – Sensible – Just and Fair – Devout – Self Controlled

LAST One is Self-Management > You will be ALONE, Often Unsupervised

Need FIRE in your BELLY – ZEAL in your SOUL – H.S. in your LIFE

1) LET US COPY PAUL'S STRATEGY - Teach and Defend TRUE GOSPEL

2) LET US MAINTAIN PAUL'S STANDARDS –

Only those who are Called by God and Equipped by God be Church Leaders

A leader needs two voices, one for gathering the sheep and the other for driving away wolves and thieves. The Scripture supplies him with the means for doing both, and he who has been rightly instructed in it will be able to rule those who are teachable and to refute the enemies of the truth. John Calvin

First Century Faith is Alive and Well in Twenty-First Century

God SENT Titus to CRETE – Same God BROUGHT you to BEIJING

SIMILAR Mission to KNOW and FOLLOW Him – INVITE Others to Follow

The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. Isaiah 52.10

Titus 1.5 This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—6 if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it. 10 For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. 11 They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. 12 One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” 13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth. 15 To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. 16 They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.