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INTERNATIONAL

TEACHING THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD

Titus 1C

Chapter 1:10-16

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- This morning, we come to the end of Titus Chapter One as we explore verses 10-16.
 - If you weren't with us for the teaching of Titus in Chapter 1:5-9, we discussed the qualifications and characteristics of Elders in the church.
 - If you haven't had the opportunity to check out the previous teachings on Titus, we encourage you to check out our website at vbvmi.org.
 - This morning we will look at the opposite spectrum of upstanding Christian character and elder qualifications as we discuss False Teachers:
 - What their objectives are
 - How we must deal with them in the church
 - And how to not be deceived by their cunning tricks.
- Turn with me to Titus 1:10-16

Titus 1:10 For there are many rebellious people, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,

Titus 1:11 who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of dishonest gain.

Titus 1:12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.”

Titus 1:13 This testimony is true. For this reason reprimand them severely so that they may be sound in the faith,

Titus 1:14 not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth.

Titus 1:15 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.

Titus 1:16 They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

- In 1861, The prince of preachers, Charles H. Spurgeon, in his sermon “The Weeding of the Garden” stated this regarding sound Christian ministry.

A ministry that never uproots will never water; a ministry that does not pull down will never build up. He who knoweth not how to pluck up the plants which God hath not planted, scarcely understandeth how to be a worker of God in his vineyard. Our ministry ought always to be a killing as well as a healing one, — a ministry which kills all false hopes, blights all wrong confidences, and weeds out all foolish trusts, while at the same time it trains up the feeblest shoot of real hope, and tends comfort and encouragement even to the weakest of the sincere followers of Christ.

- False hope will always over-promise but never deliver.
 - It masquerades itself as a viable option but yet when it comes down to providing substance it lacks all confidence and assurance.

- If we are not careful and aware of what true hope is, we can be pulled away from the truth because we never had a grip on it in the first place.
- False teaching to many people starts off very subtle and inconspicuous in many ways.
 - It can sound right and for some false teachers, they can even look the part.
 - However, it is not until their lives are hard pressed and the weight of testing comes down upon their shoulders that who they are is seen.
 - You can try to fake it till you make it but through pressure with time, what is in you will come out of you.
- The Apostle Paul in these 10 verses lays before us a few things that we must pay close attention to regarding false teachers.
 - The text will show us the following things regarding False Teachers:
 - Who these false teachers are and their objectives/motives
 - How are we to deal with these false teachers?
 - How do we detect wolves in sheep's clothing?
- Pick up with me in verse 10.

Titus 1:10 For there are many rebellious people, empty talkers, and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,

- Paul begins by making known the quantity of these false teachers.
 - He says that there are many. Not a few, not a small amount, but many.
 - So clearly, this is not an isolated issue regarding a particular area.
 - With Crete being 160 miles in width the spread of these Judaizers was significant.
 - He then mentions the attributes of these men. They are:
 - Rebellious men, empty talkers, and deceivers.
 - Clearly, these are not kind words at the least bit, and according to the text rightfully so.
 - This word rebellious in Greek is *anypotaktos* (an-oo-pot'-ak-tos)
 - It means not made subject, unrestrained, free.
 - Their allegiance is not to the scriptures nor are they willing to submit to leadership.
 - It's as if someone who is in the military who declares full allegiance to their country turns around and commits treason.
 - Treason is the response of a rebellious heart.
 - They become unhinged or remove themselves from under proper authority for the sake of their own personal interest.
 - Paul makes mention that this idea of being unhinged from scriptural and doctrinal authority is rebellious.
 - These false teachers play the part well when in their hearts there is no true

allegiance, it's just a means to get what they want.

- And while they are there they can ruffle some feathers and stir confusion.
- This is why Paul lets us know in Titus 1:9 what the life of an elder looks like and that they MUST “hold firm” to the trustworthy word as taught.
 - The true position of every believer is to be a slave to Christ and not a slave to our own devices.
 - We must be submitted to Christ and the text.
- This is why Paul began in his greeting in Titus Chapter 1 by saying “Paul a bond-servant, a slave of God”.
 - Paul makes this reality known from the start of this letter who he is submitted to.
 - And anyone that is not a slave to Christ and is not willing to submit under His authority is unhinged from the truth.
- Paul continues on that these men are empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of circumcision.
 - He calls out this particular group straight out of the gate. It is obvious that Paul has some familiarity and frustration pertaining to this particular group.
 - Although there are many kinds of false teachers out there, the text makes it known that this circumcision group was unique.
- In order for us to understand Paul’s familiarity and frustration with this group it requires we do some digging in the text.
 - It is well recorded throughout the book of Acts, Paul’s missionary journeys, and ministry to the Gentiles.
 - There were many Jews and Gentiles that would come to faith through the ministry of Peter, Paul and Barnabas.
 - However, there were some Jews that insisted on sabotaging the work of the Gospel attempting to undo and unravel the work of the God.
 - Luke documents this in Acts 13:44

Acts 13:44 The next Sabbath nearly all the city assembled to hear the word of the Lord.

Acts 13:45 But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming.

- And another situation documented in Acts 14:1-2

Acts 14:1 In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a way that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks.

Acts 14:2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and embittered them against the brothers.

- The non-believing Jews that were spewing these empty lies and religious babble had no substance to their talk. Their sole motivation here was to plant confusion.
 - This very fact speaks to how wicked and deceitful some of these false teachers' hearts really were.
 - And because these men's hearts were ill-intended and not submitted to the truth of scripture and the apostle's teaching, Paul informs Titus these men must be silenced.
- Check it out, verse 11.

Titus 1:11 who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of dishonest gain.

- After Paul makes clear who these false teachers are at the core and how they have no allegiance to the truth of the scriptures, he firmly states, “they must be silenced”.
 - The word for silence in the Greek is *epistomizo*. It means to muzzle or to close someone's mouth.
 - And Paul spares no expense with these men who have crept into these home churches.
 - Paul says “shut these men up”. They need not say another word.
 - The reality is false teaching must be silenced wherever it may be spewed, especially within the church.
 - Why must they be dealt with so harshly? Because the ramifications of not uprooting false teaching is unraveled families and churches.
 - I want to come back to the word “silence” in the text, so place a pin right here in your minds.
 - I believe that what we will see regarding the word “silence” will be quite interesting.
- It is evident that these false teachers are causing chaos in these home churches and the result of their lies are causing issues in these families/communities.
 - Paul uses the term “upsetting whole families”.
 - Now this word to some can cause a bit of confusion because it can be mistaken as an emotional situation.
 - This word upsetting in the Greek, in this context, actually means destroying or ruining faith.
 - In other words, the teaching from these false teachers are causing men and women in these gospel communities and churches to fall away from the truth.
 - If the cause of this unraveling is from false teaching and the solution is to shut them up, the question becomes who will do it?
 - Herein lies Paul's urgency to Titus, the elders are to serve in this capacity.
 - Remember, the Elders serve as the authoritative guards of the body in regards to remaining sound in doctrine, orthodoxy, and orthopraxy.
 - Imagine a home without the presence of a loving and faithful father in it.

- If the home lacks a sound paternal presence, it leaves the family vulnerable and susceptible to attack.
- One of the most startling statistics I came across regarding fatherlessness in the nuclear family was stunning. For example:
 - Because of the lack of presence of the father in the home, many young boys, without fathers, join gangs in order to seek approval.
 - There is an increase in behavioral issues with that child when proper discipline is not implemented in the home
 - And the rate of incarceration increases due to the lack of that father figure.
- What am I saying here? Paul’s urgent and brass-tone regarding elders being established is because if they are not there, any Joe Blow can creep in.
 - And with all intention of creating controversy, chaos and confusion the false teacher has full reign to unravel the family structure.
- Paul is serious about this matter and as Pastors and Leaders in the church we too are hyper-diligent in the protection of this body at VBVF.
 - And dare I take it a step farther, you too as the body of Christ, you too should be diligent in guarding against false teaching.
- Paul then mentions that these false teachers’ motives are way off base. Their motivation is “sordid gain”.
 - Check it out, the text says they were teaching things that were contrary to the Gospel message in order to profit either financially or for their own satisfaction.
 - It was simply to build up their pocket books or their following.
 - Their shameful gain is very subtle.
 - The fact that these men crept into these home churches and have caused damage shows how smooth and inconspicuous they are.
 - This isn’t too far off from what we see today, is it?
- Today we can clearly see this being prostituted in the pulpits in America and around the world
 - The “Name it and Claim it” groups
 - Pastors who ask their congregations for thousands of dollars for private jets to go and do ministry.
 - And all of these things disguised under the banner of Jesus’ name.
 - Let’s keep pushing to verse 12 and 13

Titus 1:12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.”

Titus 1:13 This testimony is true. For this reason reprimand them severely so that they may be sound in the faith,

- What a powerful and forth-telling statement by Crete’s own prophet. Here is what Epimenides characterized and Paul confirms:
 - The culture on this island was notoriously known as habitual liars,

murderous/violent men of the highest degree, and greedy beyond their control.

- This statement was so widely known that one scholar records that the Greek world accepted it as being true.
- What nails the coffin in it all is in verse 13, Paul says, after having read many of the Greeks' writings, that this testimony of Crete is true.
 - What is so encouraging through all of this is that although Paul is laying down the gavel, he still manages to provide opportunity for grace.
- Verse 13 says, For THIS reason reprimand them SO THAT, they may be sound in faith.
 - Reprimand who? Those in the body who are believing these lies and false teachings or was it that false teacher?
 - Some scholars have argued that it could potentially be both.
- This wasn't a matter of simply calling people out for the sake of argument, but rather for the sake of winning that individual over to the truth.
- Church, the goal for those who have been deceived by fake news is to bring them to a knowledge of the truth.
 - In grade school when you were learning word problems, if you had a good math teacher, they required you show your proof of the answer off to the side.
- This way if your answer was wrong, he or she could go to your proof column and identify where you were off.
 - In the same way, the elders and leaders in the church can come alongside your life.
 - And if error is found, we can identify it, correct it in love by going through the scriptures to help you turn from error.
 - Therein lies the grace! Therein lies the love of God.
- God's grace reaches down in the muck and the mire and He makes those in whom He calls, clean.
 - God's grace should leave you and I in awestruck wonder.
- For some here, God may have rescued you from the Muslim Faith, Jehovah's Witness sect, the Mormon Church or even the Catholic Church.
 - It is clear that those in whom God chooses, He calls, and those in whom He calls He cleans, and those in whom He cleans He keeps!
- Let's keep moving to verse 14.

Titus 1:14 not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth.

- Paul's objective in this section is to hinge the believer in the truth of Who has saved them.
 - Their affections and their focus should be upon the teaching of scripture and not skeptics.
 - The moment that we begin to add anything to the person and work of Jesus

Christ you lose the Gospel.

- One of the main issues that stirred up much controversy during Paul's ministry to the Gentiles was the topic of salvation.
 - It got so bad that the Apostles and Elders of the churches got together to discuss this issue at the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15.
 - During that time non-believing Jews would attempt to dissuade believers from the truth by saying salvation required circumcision.
 - However, men like Paul, Barnabas, and Peter testified to the work that God was doing amongst the Gentiles.
 - From Cornelius and his family receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 10 to the large crowds that came to faith in Iconium, Gentiles were being saved.
 - With that being said, this did not settle well with non-believing Jews.
 - So as a result of the works of God that were happening, these men of the circumcision would demand Gentiles to be circumcised.
 - Paul's argument as well as Peter's testimony were clear: salvation was not by means of Jewishness or religious custom and tradition.
 - Rather, salvation is through faith alone, in Christ alone, by grace alone, to the glory of God alone.
 - Peter would confirm in Acts 15:11

Acts 15:11 But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they (Gentiles) also are."

- This agreement in unity in the faith and in the Spirit was accepted by the Apostles and the Elders.
 - James would then send a letter to all the churches telling them that salvation is not based upon religious position or custom.
 - Salvation is a work that is done by God Himself.
 - Here is a timeline of when the Jerusalem Council met in Acts 15 versus when Paul wrote the letter to Titus. *(See slide)*
 - Do you see that gap in time? 15 years have passed since the matter of salvation by Christ alone was settled!
 - This was Paul's aggravation.
 - It was clear that those whose hearts were not submitted to the authority of the church leadership or scripture did not want to hear the truth.
 - May I suggest that the reason that those who did not agree with the decision were individuals whose hearts did not belong to the Lord.
 - The Spirit of God will always point to Christ and will point to the truth.
 - There are no needed additions or alterations to the Gospel. The Gospel is Christ and Him crucified alone.
 - Jesus plus nothing is enough.
 - Colossians 2:20-22 says this:

Col. 2:20 If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,

Col. 2:21 “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!”

Col. 2:22 (which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of man?

- In verse 15, Paul makes a headline statement that I pray we grasp this morning. Here it is:

Titus 1:15 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.

- Paul at this point is getting to the meat of the issue here.
 - He makes it known that this issue of what is pure versus what is unclean, is a matter of what’s within.
 - This is a matter of the heart.
 - What are the true motives of this person? What is driving them?
 - If we really wanted to dig deeper into this issue of the heart, the real question would be, who is driving the motives?
 - Is it the Lord or the master deceiver, satan himself?
 - For if you are pure in all things and a submitted slave to the scriptures, even if you may have been taught the wrong thing, your heart is set on being one with Christ.
 - You may be wondering, how is that so?
 - Remember I said in the beginning of our time together, I wanted to come back to the word “silent” referencing Titus 1:11
 - Here is why:
 - I want to show you two instances regarding this word silent and the context in which it was used and the response from those who were silenced in the text.
- Turn to the book of Acts 11:18
 - This is the scene where Peter reports to the Jerusalem Church that Gentiles have received salvation in Christ.
 - In the midst of that some Jewish Believers took issue with this report being that Peter would fellowship with Gentiles.
 - However, after a detailed report showing how the Holy Spirit demonstrated His power as He did for them at the day of Pentecost, the Jewish believers' response changed.
 - Here is what was documented:

Acts 11:18 When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, “Well then, God has also granted to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to

life.”

- When Peter first shared the Gospel with the Gentiles in Acts 10, he had his Jewish crew with him.
 - No Jew expected Gentiles to come to salvation, yet they could not deny what they saw.
 - The true question is, why were they quieted or silenced?
 - Friends, I believe they were quieted because they too doubted, and could not agree with what took place, in their hearts.
 - However, because these men with Peter, had the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit Himself silenced and convicted them of the truth.
 - Look at their response after they are convicted of the truth in silence...they praise God for what He has done and accept it as truth!
 - Why is this important...check out John 16:13-14

John 16:13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

John 16:14 He will glorify Me, for He will take from Mine and will disclose it to you.

- So we see how the Holy Spirit deals with believers, but check out how Paul says these False Teachers should be dealt with in verse 11.
 - He says, they must be silenced!
 - Notice there is no inward conviction with a non-believer because the truth is not in them.
 - There is no gauge in their conscience, only evil intent to disrupt the work of God.
 - We see an example of this disruption from the Judaizers in Acts 14.

Acts 14:1 In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a way that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks.

Acts 14:2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and embittered them against the brothers.

- This is why Paul says “to the pure all things are pure”.
 - Who is your allegiance to? Are you a slave to Christ or are you a slave to sin?
 - Because the reality is, what is in you will flow out of you.
 - Paul says it best in Romans 6:17:

Romans 6:17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you

became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were entrusted,

- The reality is each and every one of us in this room at one point in our lives were a slave to sin.
 - But thanks be to God for the mercies that He has shown us that while we were yet sinners, Christ came and died.
 - We did not become obedient through behavioral change or tradition or having extra religious participation.
 - No, it took a Holy God to see an unholy and unworthy man and woman and impute His righteousness upon us!
 - The reason that we are pure friends, is because God has made us pure through the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ.
- And I love how Paul wraps up verse 16.

Titus 1:16 They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

- I love Paul's use of words in the text. He says they profess to know God, but yet their deeds deny Him.
 - Intellectually they are familiar but applicably they are foreign because they do not know Him.
 - Ceremonially they are clean on the outside but in their hearts they are filthy.
 - They may be circumcised in the physical sense but yet their hearts have not been cut by the Spirit.
 - These false teachers talk a big game but they lack substance.
 - The text tells us in 1 John 2:4

1 John 2:4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

- Ultimately, this statement deals with how what I know translates to what I do, but the thing that translates it all is the heart.
 - If the heart is convinced of the truth then you will live well.
 - Why? Because of the Spirit of God in you, that convicts and convinces us of the truth.
 - No matter how bad you may have messed up or failed, the fact that your compass rose is the truth of God's word, you will always find your north.
 - Why? Because you are God's slave, His *doulos*, His possession.
 - Those in who God calls He always conforms...keyword: who God calls.
 - False teachers are always based upon one thing – defiance of God's work and plan.

- Their work is never to the good of God’s glory. Their primary objective is to sabotage the work of the Lord.
- We must be ever so careful to guard against these types of people. They are in fact wolves in sheep’s clothing.
 - They will look the part, act the part, even feel like a Christian. They will use the right words to the point that it is convincing.
 - And once they have won you over they will devour you.
 - These types of men and women when tested by God, not only do they fail the test of authentication, you will also see that they never produce fruit.
 - For nothing good comes from dead things.