

**TITUS:
THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE GRACE OF GOD
AND THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH**

The Cretans (Part 1)

Titus 1:10-16

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Titus and the men who would become Elders were responsible for addressing the people in the local assembly who were creating problems for the congregation by promoting bad doctrine and ungodly living as a result of listening to Jewish myths and the commandments of men who turn away from God. This influence was coming from particular Cretans involved in the local church. Paul explains the character of these individuals, the conversation to have with them, and some things the congregation should consider in relation to the mess being made by these individuals.

I. The Character of These Individual Cretans

- A. Rebellious men – defiant, resistant to authority, rejecting the true gospel
- B. Empty talkers – speaking words that carry no true value or worth, void of genuine effect
- C. Deceivers – seeking to lead people to believe a lie through words spoken
- D. Some of these individuals were of Jewish descent, more than likely Jewish converts to Christianity
- E. Liars – those who profess salvation but think and live contrary to Christian truth¹
- F. Evil beast – bad in heart, conduct, and character²; being both harmful and dangerous³
- G. Lazy gluttons – constantly unemployed, useless, good for nothing, one who lives only to satisfy his appetite for food⁴
- H. Upsetting whole families by teaching things they should not teach for sordid gain – teaching possibly Jewish regulations and laws, and/or teaching ascetic laws (laws of restraining one's body and life from certain worldly pleasures or physical possessions, believing it makes one holy and right before God)

¹ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

² Ibid.

³ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 754.

⁴ Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg, and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament (Baker's Greek New Testament Library)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2000), 96.

II. The Conversation to Have With These Individual Cretans

- A. Must be silenced – to muzzle, stop the mouth, check, curb⁵
- B. Since the testimony is true about the Cretans, reprove them severely – to rebuke another with such effectual wielding of the victorious arms of the truth as to bring him, if not always to a confession, at least to a conviction of his sin; to refute an opponent⁶ severely, abruptly, curtly, in a manner that cuts⁷
- C. So that they may be sound in the faith – to be accurate or correct in one’s view of the Christian faith and practices thereof
- D. So that they would not pay attention to Jewish myths – not pay attention to stories that are in contradiction to the Christian faith and practice thereof
- E. So that they would not pay attention to the commandments of men who turn away from the truth – not listening to "commandments of humans," something that is put in the place of obedience to God and what He requires; men who by promoting these commandments demonstrate that they have turned away from the truth⁸

III. The Consideration for the Congregation

- A. To the pure all things are pure – “All things are [ritually] clean to the [morally] clean.” Paul’s Jewish Christian opponents would have been teaching that a morally pure person is still made unclean by eating unclean foods or by touching any defiled thing. However, to the morally pure all things are ritually pure. Therefore, they are not to follow the rituals or commands presented by those opponents of Paul. It is not the body that defiles the man but the heart. Therefore, when a person is purified in his heart, he is clean before God. He cannot be defiled by food. He is made pure and kept pure through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, resulting in the washing and regeneration of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).⁹
- B. To those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure – Paul’s opponents were evidently teaching that one could attain ritual purity by following the ascetic laws (laws of restraining one’s body and life from certain worldly pleasures or physical possessions, believing it makes one holy and right before God). Paul asserts, rather, that those who

⁵ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

⁶ Richard Chenevix Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1880), 13.

⁷ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

⁸ George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles (The New International Greek Testament Commentary)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1992). Kindle Location 5092.

⁹ William D. Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 46: Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Thomas Nelson Inc., 2000), 597. Kindle.

are morally defiled and do not believe in the person and work of Jesus Christ cannot be made acceptable to God even by ritual purity because everything about them is unclean. To the (morally) impure, all things are (ritually) impure. Their real problem is not ceremonial but moral.¹⁰

1. Their mind and conscience are defiled – their understanding and evaluation of what is right and wrong is tainted by evil
2. They profess to know God but by their deeds they deny Him – the way they live does not demonstrate that they have a relationship with God; it shows a contradiction to their claim
3. Being detestable – they are doing vile and disgusting things, defacing the holiness of God
4. Being disobedient – living a lifestyle that is not compliant with God's command
5. Being worthless for any good deed – morally unfit to accomplish God's Kingdom agenda work

¹⁰ William D. Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 46: Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Thomas Nelson Inc., 2000), 598. Kindle Edition.