

## Titus 1:10-16 – Silence False Teachers

Paul left Titus in Crete to complete unfinished business which included appointing elders. Titus 1:6-9 listed the qualifications for elders. The elders needed to be people of strong moral character, not easily provoked, not greedy for money, but above reproach, just and holy. They needed to manage their own households well before they could become overseers of God's household. Elders needed to be able teachers who could instruct the faithful with sound doctrine. They also needed to be capable defenders of the faith against the enemies of God. Sound doctrine is important for living a life pleasing to God.

### **Read Titus 1:10-16.**

The reason for verse nine's qualification for sound teaching is seen in verse 10 as well as the rest of the chapter. How did Paul describe the people who were opposing sound doctrine? "Insubordinate" is the same word that was used to describe what the elder's children should not be accused of (1:6). What does it mean to be an empty talker? Which group did Paul single out? See Galatians 2:12 where the same term was used by Paul.

What needed to happen to the false teachers? How do you silence someone? What impact were the false teachers having on some of the people of Crete? What were the false teachers teaching? What was their motivation? (1:11)

Which statement expresses your feelings on doctrine?

- Doctrine should be left to professional ministers and seminary professors.
- Doctrine just produces arguments. It is a divider, not a uniter.
- Doctrine is nice, but we should focus our energy on doing good.
- Good doctrine produces good living.

A Cretan prophet, Epimenides (6th to 5th century B. C.), said that "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts and lazy gluttons." Paul gave his "Amen" to this statement. What insight does this give us into the general culture of the Cretans? In response to this truth, what was Titus told to do? Who needed to be rebuked sharply; the false teachers or the Cretan believers? Note that this instruction was given to Titus specifically. Given the need for elders and their qualifications, it seems reasonable to think that the elders would take over this duty once they were appointed. (1:12-13)

Besides being prone to immoral character, it appears that the people of Crete were also prone to devote themselves to Jewish myths. What do you think Paul had in mind when he spoke of “Jewish myths”? See 1 Timothy 1:4. What do you think Paul meant by “commands of people who turn away from the truth”? (1:14)

In verse 15, who are the “defiled and unbelieving”? Why is nothing pure for them? Who are “the pure”? Why are all things pure to the pure? See Mark 7:15 and Matthew 23.

The false teachers professed to know God with their words? How can false teachers be identified, based on verse 16? What else was true of these false teachers? What did Paul mean when he called them “detestable”?

Were these false teachers believers? They professed to know God.

How can we tell the difference between a sound teacher and a false teacher?

Who should confront false teachers?

What false teachers can you think of today who are hurting Christ’s Church?

Should they be silenced? Can they be silenced? How?

Based on Titus 1:10-16, why is sound doctrine important?