

The Book of Titus

The Life of Christians in a Congregation:

“The Knowledge of the Truth
Which Accords With Godliness”

Trinity Lutheran Church Norman, OK.

Pastor David Nehrenz

Date: 7-24-16 Study: 4



A. THE TEXT

(Titus 1:1-16) 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, (2) in hope of eternal life, which **God, who never lies,** promised before the ages began (3) and at the proper time manifested in **his word** through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior;

(4) To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace **from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.** (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.

B. THE STUDY NOTES

1. The insubordinate group deceived fellow Christians by telling them: a. In order to be saved, they needed to be circumcised and keep the Jewish ceremonial laws (**Ac 10:45; 11:2; 15:1; Gal 2:12**), b. They were teaching Jewish myths and genealogies as necessary to the faith (**1 Tim 1:4**), c. They told people they must be ascetic and have scruples about avoiding various foods and things God had declared good. It was just empty talk (**Mt 23:23; 1 Tim 1:6**)

2. Teaching for shameful gain and upsetting families, rebuke them
(**Mt 22:34; 2 Cor 13:10; 1 Tim 5:13,20; 2 Tim 4:4; 2 Pet 2:3**)

3. One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." This quote is by the poet Epimenides from the 6th century B.C. who was a native of Knossos, Crete. To "Cretanize" meant to lie. Paul quotes pagan sources when useful to make a point (**Acts 17:28; 1 Cor 15:33**)

4. "To the pure, all things are pure" Since we are purified by the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, all his good gifts can be used in purity and thankfulness to God
(**Ps 18:26; Mt 15:10-20; Mk 7:14-19; Lk 11:41; Ac 10:9-16,28; 1 Tim 4:3,4**)

5. "To the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled." Unbelievers who are defiled, because they remain in their sin, can hold nothing pure. The ascetics try to impress people with their rules about food and marriage
(**Rom 14:14,20,23; 1 Tim 4:3; 5:8; 6:5; Col 2:20-22**).

They take away Christian freedom and thankfulness for God's gifts and replace it with arbitrary man-made rules and prohibitions about what they consider impure. (**Rom 14:20; 1 Tim 4:2-4**) They end up needlessly burdening people's consciences.

6. They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works.
(**Jer 5:2; 12:2; 1 Jn 2:4; Hos 8:2,3; Mt 7:15-20**)

Doctrine and practice go hand in hand. Godly knowledge leads to godly living.

Luther's Works 28:225 "First, *a pure heart*. What is this? Titus 1:15: "To the pure all things are pure." What value is there in your teaching people by genealogies and myths the purities of the Law (as also the Enthusiasts do) but not the purities of the heart? The pure heart simply does not get stuck in anything, not in shamelessness, properly called greed and lust. This expression has a wider application. You see, a pure heart loves nothing except God, as Christ explains in Matt. 5:8. I have an impure heart when I become attached to anything beside the mercy of God. A psalm says: "They purify my raiment, etc."

But what is inside? Outside they are righteous, but inside they are abominable, because they trust in their own works, and from this they develop their own laws, etc., and think: "If I keep these laws, I have a kindly God; if I don't, He will be angry." This is the most impure and wicked heart of all... This is the heart of a man who takes his own merits to heart. He evaluates God according to the image which he imagines in his heart. He sees neither his own sin nor the righteousness of God. The Law therefore demands that you have a pure heart, that you reject all your own righteousness, that you place no confidence in righteousness, power, or wealth, but in the mercy of God. The pure heart, then, is one that knows that it is saved solely by the mercy of God and that it is special for that same reason."

C. LIFE APPLICATION

1. Who today are the many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach?
2. Why do we rebuke false teachers sharply, so that they may be sound in the faith, not devoting themselves to the commands of people who turn away from the truth?
3. How are we made pure, so that to us all things are pure?