

*5For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, 6namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. 7For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, 8but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, 9holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. 10For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain. Titus 1:5-11*

Titus was left behind by Paul in Crete and commissioned to *set in order what remains*. Titus was to *set in order* (from *orthos*; to straighten further, i.e. (figuratively) arrange additionally) *what remains* (what was left unfinished or lacking). The churches Paul had evangelized on Crete were newly formed bodies. At this point they had little or no structure. It was Titus's job to help them build structure in order for them to survive and also to thrive as mature churches. In addition to Titus training them he was also to *appoint elders*, stable and moral men, *above reproach* (blameless), to function as *God's stewards* (home manager, the "steward" of a household, and was generally a freedman – i.e. a slave released from forced, legal servitude J. Thayer) Titus is to put in charge in the churches are to be *home managers*. Paul writes in of the overseer in First Timothy, *He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity. 1 Tim 3:4* Titus was to function as a pastor and teacher, *equipping of the saints for ministry*. This is what Paul describes in Ephesians 4,

*11And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; Eph 4:11-13*

Titus is to appoint leaders who are good family men, men who are *above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. 7For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward. Titus 1:6* This makes good sense since the most basic and essential bedrock of an ordered society is the family. The church as a society is to function much like an expanded family, the household of God. For the church to endure it must be trusted into the hands of leaders who will be able to ensure its survival doctrinally but also morally. To Timothy Paul wrote,

*I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. 1 Tim 3:15*

Titus was to appoint overseers, elders, home managers to make it possible for the church to endure, to allow the *love of the brethren* to continue. *Heb 13:1* God wants the church to dwell in unity. As David writes in Psalms, *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity! Psalm 133:1* Church leaders are to be mature and able to play well with others as God is dealing with the sinful nature of man. Even in the church Paul warned, *there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain. Titus 1:10-11* Paul's solution was to appoint overseers competent managers that could help organize healthy churches.

The first criteria for leadership was godly character. Now this was difficult in the early church for a number of reasons. Many of the early Christians had a Jewish heritage. You would think this would set them up to be the best Christians. But Paul writes Titus, the worst problems in the church come from converted Jews, *especially those of the circumcision*. Paul wrote in Romans 3 *Then what's the advantage of being a Jew? Is there any value in the ceremony of circumcision? Yes, there are great benefits! First of all, the Jews were entrusted with the whole revelation of God. Rom 3:1,2* The Jews had the OT and thus the Law and the Prophets. They should have known what was right to do. Paul speaks to Jewish believers in his letter to the Romans,

*You who call yourselves Jews are relying on God's law, and you boast about your special relationship with him. You know what he wants; you know what is right because you have been taught his law. You are convinced that you are a guide for the blind and a light for people who are lost in darkness. You think you can instruct the ignorant and teach children the ways of God. For you are certain that God's law gives you complete knowledge and truth. Well then, if you teach others, why don't you teach yourself? You tell others not to steal, but do you steal? You say it is wrong to commit adultery, but do you commit adultery? You condemn idolatry, but do you use items stolen from pagan temples? You are so proud of knowing the law, but you dishonor God by breaking it. No wonder the Scriptures say, "The Gentiles blaspheme the name of God because of you." Rom 2:17-24*

So Titus most likely was to deal with believers of Jewish heritage who gloried in their Jewish heritage. Paul called these Jewish believers Judaizers, they wanted to hold on to their traditional Jewish faith but also embrace Christianity. These were moral people who could grasp the gospel of grace. They wanted Gentile Christians to convert to Judaism. Paul wrote his letter to Galatians to combat this belief. Paul wrote,

*21Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? 22For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. 23But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. Gal 4:21-23*

How does this related to us today? There are many people that can be called legalist Christians. They don't keep the Jewish law but they make the rules of their churches things that are necessary for godly living. These are things like, women wearing head coverings and long dresses, not cutting hair. The reformers considered the Roman church guilty of this because they had added sacraments to the doctrine of *faith alone*. We all tend to come up with laws, things we add to our being saved so we don't live by *grace alone*.

*6I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! Gal 1:6-8*

*1You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? 2This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Gal 3:1,2*

Another error the Jews entered into was dependence on their being Jewish but not living it, they were ready to teach others, because of their heritage, but haven't learned salvation is by, *grace alone*. These would be similar to the Jews leaders Jesus spoke of, *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.*

*Mat 23:15* There are many, who suppose themselves to be Christians, who talk the talk but don't walk the walk. An example of this is many of the Baptists in the south of our country. They are in church every Sunday but during the week they are *son of hell*, living in ways that don't mirror the image of Christ. Many of Jewish believers, if their behavior didn't match their confession were guilty of antinomianism, (*Greek anti, "against"; nomos, "law"*), *doctrine according to which Christians are freed by grace from the necessity of obeying the Mosaic Law*. As believers we can be guilty of this. We are call as believers to live a holy life but the power of the Spirit of God working in us, not anything goes living. To combat these errant beliefs Paul wrote Titus to appoint mature men to manage the Church.

*4He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity 5(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), 6and not a new convert*

These leaders must manage house well, with good character, *not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching. Titus 1 7,8* They needed to be students of the Word as Paul stated to Timothy, *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. 2 Tim 2:15* These leaders are to be men who were *holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that (they) would be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict*. Men able establish sound teaching consistent with the eternal truth of God.