

Open in prayer

Read Titus 1:10-16

¹⁰ For there are many rebellious people, full of empty talk and deception, especially those from the circumcision party.

¹¹ It is necessary to silence them; they are ruining entire households by teaching what *they* shouldn't in order to get money dishonestly. ¹² One of their very own prophets said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." ¹³ This testimony is true.

For this reason, rebuke them sharply, so that they may be sound in the faith ¹⁴ and may not pay attention to Jewish myths and the commands of people who reject the truth.

¹⁵ To the pure, everything is pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; in fact, both their mind and conscience are defiled.

¹⁶ They claim to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for any good work.

Introduction

o You go to the doctor. Something's wrong. Deep inside. You can't name it. But you feel it. The doctor runs tests. Studies the results. Nods with confidence. Then prescribes cough syrup.

ø The problem? He misdiagnosed you. He treated symptoms. He missed the disease. That's what false teachers do. They treat symptoms. They rearrange furniture. They polish the outside. They prescribe religious cough syrup for a heart that is dead.

R Paul described the qualifications for elders. Men who can hold the truth. Men who can refute error. Now he explains why. False teachers have infiltrated the church. And they've come with a cure that cannot heal. A diagnosis that cannot save.

O Titus must silence them. Not because Paul is a control freak. Because souls are at stake. Because the gospel is on the line.

And here's what you need to understand. This is not ancient history. This is your podcast. Your bookshelf. Your social media feed. This is the theology drifting into your home under the guise of revelation or anointing or fresh insight.

ð False teachers haven't gone anywhere. They've just rebranded.

Å And the church is still vulnerable.

R The gospel purifies corrupt hearts that false teaching cannot cleanse.

R We'll see this in three movements. First, the outward danger of a false teacher. Second, the inward corruption of a defiled heart. Third, the purifying power of a risen Saviour.

~ But first, we need to understand the enemy. We need to see him clearly. We need to know what we're up against. So look with me at Titus 1:10-14.

1) The outward danger of a false teacher (Titus 1:10-14)

R Verse 10, For there are many rebellious people. Full of empty talk and deception. Especially those from the circumcision party.

Ø Many. Not a few. Not isolated troublemakers. Many.

R Many rebellious people. Rebellious means insubordinate. They refuse to submit. Not to Paul. Not even to the truth itself.

Ø They are full of empty talk. Sure, they sound impressive to some. Sound sophisticated. Sound modern. But their words mean nothing. No substance. No weight. No truth. Their words are hot air.

ð And they are full of deception. You've got to understand, false teachers aren't confused. They know what they're doing. They twist the truth with intent. Lead others astray on purpose.

Ø Especially those from the circumcision party. This is the Jewish faction. The ones who insisted Gentile believers must become Jewish. They added requirements. They imposed burdens. They corrupted the gospel. This is the controversy from Acts 15. The battle Paul fought in Galatians. The Judaizers who followed Paul from city to city.

R Last week, in Titus 1:5-9, Paul established qualifications for elders. Elders must hold the trustworthy message. They must encourage by sound doctrine. They must refute opposition. Now Paul explains why. False teachers have infiltrated the local church. A church without leadership is a church without protection. Sheep without shepherds are easy prey for ravenous wolves.

ð False teachers infiltrating churches is a recurring theme in the New

Testament. Peter warns about false teachers. John warns about antichrists. Jude writes his entire letter to contend for the faith. The church faced this threat from its earliest days. And the church faces this threat today.

Ø Jude pictures these false teachers for us. These people are dangerous reefs at your love feasts as they eat with you without reverence. They are shepherds who only look after themselves. They are waterless clouds carried along by winds. Trees in late autumn—fruitless, twice dead and uprooted. They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shameful deeds. Wandering stars for whom the blackness of darkness is reserved forever (Jude 12-13). Jude says they're inside your church. Hidden hazards at the bring and share. They're dead because they've got nothing life-giving to share. And here's the key. They're wandering stars who cannot guide to safe harbour. They're the blind leading the blind. They'll take you somewhere. But not to God.

Ø How should Titus respond to men like this? Verse 11, It is necessary to silence them. They are ruining entire households by teaching what *they shouldn't* in order to get money dishonestly.

Ø Silence them. Stop their mouths. Cut off their influence. Not with violence. With truth. With correction. With the authority of sound doctrine. With the truth of Scripture. Leaders must be willing to remove false teachers from positions of influence. To exercise church discipline when necessary. To publicly correct error.

~ Why? Because the danger is real. They are ruining entire households. Families. Generations. The end of their teaching is to destroy what Christ builds up.

Ø How do they do it? By teaching what *they shouldn't*. They don't teach that salvation is by faith alone. They teach salvation comes by faith and obedience. They don't preach that salvation is by grace alone. They preach salvation comes by grace and your ritual purity. They don't proclaim salvation is in Christ alone. They proclaim salvation comes by Christ and the commands of people. Instead of heralding from Scripture alone, they herald Scripture and, in this case, Jewish myths.

Ø What is their motivation? Money. They do it in order to get money dishonestly. Sordid gain. Paul warned Timothy about it. Peter warned about it. Jesus condemned the Pharisees for it.

~ And still, all over the world, men and women fleece the people of God for their own material gain. Turn on DayStar, TBN Africa, FAITH, any day of the

week. Joel Osteen. Creflo Dollar, Joseph Prince, Paula White, Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland. Snake-skin salesmen promising health and wealth if you sow your seed. A blessing for a fee. Empty talkers. Deceivers. Exploiters. Titus, shut them up.

On Verse 12, One of their very own prophets said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” ¹³ This testimony is true.

R Paul quotes Epimenides, a Cretan prophet. Cretans had a bad rap. And these false teachers, they live up to the reputation. They're liars. They're evil beasts. They're lazy gluttons. Paul exposes their character and their conduct.

O For this reason, rebuke them sharply. Don't be gentle. Don't be polite. The gospel demands actions. The souls of the people must be defended.

R Why? So that they may be sound in the faith. Sound. Healthy. Wholesome. Not diseased. Not twisted. Not corrupted.

R And so that they may not pay attention to Jewish myths and the commands of people who reject the truth. These are the traditions. The regulations. The purity laws. The requirements legalists add to the gospel. This is the attack. They undermine the truth of the gospel.

R The outward danger is clear. False teachers are real. They are rebellious. They are empty talkers. They are deceivers. They ruin households. They corrupt the gospel. They must be silenced. They must be rebuked. And so Titus must confront them because the church's vitality depends on it. This is our first point. The outward danger of a false teacher.

Q But what drives them? What motivates them? What is in their hearts? Why do they do this? Well, we're going to peel back the layers of the heart and take a look inside. And what we're going to see is something sinister.

2) The inward corruption of a defiled heart (Titus 1:15-16)

R Verse 15, To the pure, everything is pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure. In fact, both their mind and conscience are defiled.

R Paul turns from the outside to the inside. From what they do to who they are.

P To the pure, everything is pure. This is about the heart. The pure in heart see things rightly. Their consciences are clean. Their minds are sound. They discern truth from error. They distinguish clean from unclean. Not because they're clever. Because they're clean.

Ø But to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure. Nothing. Not the food they eat. Not the ceremonies they keep. Not the rules they follow. Not even their prayers. Everything is tainted. Everything is corrupted. Everything comes from a poisoned well.

Å Why? Because both their mind and conscience are defiled. The mind is where thinking happens. Where truth is weighed up. Defiled. The conscience is the moral compass. The inner judge. Defiled. This is total depravity.

R The phrase total depravity does not mean every person is as wicked as they could be. It means the fall of man into sin in Genesis 3 has affected the whole person. The body. The mind. The will. The spirit. The affections. The conscience. All of it. Infected. Corrupted. Broken.

Å We still have the capacity to think. But our mind is darkened. We still have a will. But our will is in bondage. We still have a conscience. But it's unreliable. This is not a surface problem. This is a heart problem.

Ø Man is dead in trespasses and sins. Dead. Not sick. Not wounded. Not morally confused. Dead. We are born bent away from God. We do not seek Him. We do not understand Him. We do not fear Him. We do not obey Him. We cannot come to Him. The will is enslaved to sin. Enslaved to self. Enslaved to Satan.

Å And the tragedy is this. We do not know we are enslaved. We think we are free. We think we are choosing. We think we are neutral. But Jesus said, Everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin (John 8:34). We are not neutral. We are hostile by nature. We are rebels by nature. This is the condition of every human being outside of Christ.

Ø And here is what you must see. If this is true, then no amount of religious activity can fix it. Ceremonies cannot purify a defiled conscience. Rituals cannot cleanse a corrupt heart. Human traditions cannot make a dead man live. The false teachers thought they were pure because they kept the rules.

Paul says they are defiled. They thought they were clean because of their heritage. Paul says nothing is pure. They thought their teachings were righteous. Paul says their mind is corrupted.

R The principle is this, outward depravity puts inward defilement on display. The heart determines everything.

O Verse 16, They claim to know God. The word for claim carries weight. They profess to know God. They say the right things. They use the right vocabulary. They claim the right credentials. But they deny him by their works. Salvation always looks like something. Faith always produces fruit. Grace always transforms. These men talk like believers. They live like unbelievers. Their conduct contradicts their confession. Their lives undermine their lips.

O Paul says three things about them. First, they are detestable. The word means abominable. Loathsome. The opposite of pleasing to God. Second, they are disobedient. The word means rebellious. Unsubmissive. Disobedient is the opposite of obedient. And obedience is the mark of genuine faith. Third, they are unfit for any good work. Unfit means rejected. Disapproved. Worthless. They are detestable, disobedient, and disqualified.

o This is terrifying. A person can claim to know God. Yet lead households astray. A person can teach with authority. Yet not know God. A person can know about Him. Yet not know Him.

R Jesus illustrates the point beautifully. Be on your guard against false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves. You'll recognise them by their fruit... Every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit (Matthew 7:15-17). The tree is the heart. The fruit is the life. You cannot have a corrupt tree and good fruit. The root determines the fruit. False teachers are corrupt trees. Their teaching is corrupt. Their character is corrupt. Their motives are corrupt. Their lives are corrupt. They are trees. But their fruit exposes them as bad trees.

O Titus must confront false teachers. Because their outward rebellion reveals inward corruption that undermines the gospel. These false teachers are defiled. Their hearts are corrupt. Their consciences are seared. Their minds are darkened. They claim to know God. Their lives deny Him. This is why Titus must act. This is why the church must protect the truth. This is why sound doctrine matters. Because the gospel purifies corrupt hearts that false teaching cannot cleanse.

o How may the heart be healed? How may a corrupted soul be cleansed?

Now we connect to the gospel, and praise the Lord for the purifying power of our risen Saviour.

3) The purifying power of a risen Saviour

R Titus must confront false teachers. Because their outward rebellion reveals inward corruption that undermines the gospel. They're inwardly corrupted. To the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure. Their mind is defiled. Their conscience is defiled. This is the universal condition since the fall.

Ø Paul writes to the Romans, There is no one righteous, not even one. There is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away; all alike have become worthless. There is no one who does what is good, not even one (**Romans 3:10b-12**).

Å That is the state of every son of Adam, through every generation, right down to me and you. The heart is defiled. The conscience is corrupted. The mind is darkened.

Ø False teachers offer a solution. But they cannot reach the heart. Their rules cannot cleanse. Their rituals cannot purify. Their myths cannot transform. They offer a surface fix for a deep problem. They treat the symptom but ignore the disease.

P But the gospel declares something else. Christ gave himself for us. Not for the righteous. For us. For rebels. For the defiled. For the corrupt. For those whose minds are darkened and whose consciences are seared. He gave himself for us. To redeem us from all lawlessness. To purify for himself a people for his own possession.

P The writer to the Hebrews makes it plain. How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works so that we can serve the living God (**Hebrews 9:14**)? Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water (**Hebrews 10:22**).

P And he gives us a new heart. In Ezekiel we read, I will also sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will place my Spirit within you and cause you to follow my statutes and carefully observe my ordinances (**Ezekiel 36:25-27**).

P This is the promise. A new heart. A clean conscience. A Spirit-empowered

life. The gospel does what the law could not do. The gospel does what human effort could never do. The gospel does what false teaching cannot even touch.

∂ This explains the danger of the false teacher. We are defiled by nature. We cannot purify ourselves. And false teaching offers us the lie that we can. It says, keep these rules. Observe these traditions. Follow these commands. Add these requirements. And you will be clean. But it cannot cleanse. It cannot transform. It cannot save.

^ The only remedy is the gospel's power to purify our lives and transform our hearts. Not human effort. Not religious ritual. Not moral improvement. Not self-help. Not therapy. Not the right community. Not the right politics. Not the right causes. The blood of Christ. The resurrection of Christ. The Spirit of Christ.

P This is the purifying power of a risen Saviour. This is what false teaching cannot give. This is what only the gospel supplies.

P How then should we live?

Application for believers

P You have been purified. Christ has done it. The conscience is clean. The heart is new. The standing is secure. Now live like it.

^ Fight sin. Not to earn approval. You already have it. Fight because you have it. Fight as an act of joyful gratitude. Fight because the Spirit empowers you. Fight so your conduct matches your standing.

∂ Do not drift. Do not let false teaching dull your conscience. Do not let comfort soften your obedience.

Å Is there sin you are coddling? Is there a habit you are excusing? Is there a pattern you have stopped fighting? Is there a quiet compromise? Is there a secret indulgence? Is there a private hatred?

Ø Kill it. Not with your strength. You cannot. But you are not alone. The Spirit lives in you. The Spirit works through you. The Spirit empowers you. Rest in the finished work. Rely on His power. And fight.

P You are pure in Christ. Now live pure for Christ.

Application for unbelievers

ð You are not pure. You feel it. You know it. You try to fix it. You try harder. You clean the outside. You polish the behaviour. You attend the services. You say the right words. But the heart remains defiled.

Å Your conscience accuses you. Your mind knows the truth. Your efforts cannot reach the problem. Your religion cannot heal the wound. Your goodness cannot cleanse the corruption.

Å You are not basically good. You are utterly lost.

Ø So stop pretending. Stop performing. Stop covering. You cannot purify yourself. You cannot earn your way. You cannot work your way. Not your prayers. Not your penance. Not your sincerity.

˘ Turn. Turn from self. Turn from effort. Turn from every false hope. Turn to Christ alone. He died. He rose. He cleanses. He gives new hearts.

Conclusion

Å The doctor prescribed religious cough syrup. He missed the disease. And that is what false teachers do.

R We have seen the outward danger. False teachers are everywhere. We have seen the inward corruption. The heart is defiled. And we have seen the purifying power of a risen Saviour. The gospel purifies corrupt hearts that false teaching cannot cleanse.

˘ So, Christians, fight sin. Not to earn approval. You already have it. Fight because the Spirit empowers you. Non-Christian, stop pretending. Turn from self. Turn to Christ alone. He cleanses. He gives new hearts.

P He is the cure. The only cure. The final cure.

P And he has done it. Christ has finished the work. The tomb is empty. The conscience is clean. The heart is new.

˘ Now live like it.

P Amen.

Close in prayer

Homiletic indicators

- The operative word in the sentence is underlined.
- R – Instruction
 - **Body:** Natural, one hand gestures.
 - **Voice:** measured, firm.
- ^ – Uncion
 - **Body:** Forward, expressive.
 - **Voice:** Raised, faster.
- Ø – Fear
 - **Body:** Narrow eyes, still shoulders, lift your chin slightly (exposed posture).
 - **Voice:** Breathy, higher pitch, quick shallow breaths. Speak into the back of the throat.
- O' – Anger
 - **Body:** Jaw forward, stable feet (no shifting weight), sharp hand strikes (karate chop motion).
 - **Voice:** Hard attack on consonants. Drop pitch slightly, but increase volume on key syllables. Staccato.
- P – Happiness
 - **Body:** Relax shoulders, soften the brow. Open palms, wider stance.
 - **Voice:** Rise in melody at the end of phrases. Bright, forward resonance (smile while speaking).
- Å – Sadness
 - **Body:** Heavy eyelids, slight forward slump, hands still or clasped low.
 - **Voice:** Lower volume, monotone descent (each phrase ends lower than it started). Use mostly single-syllable words.
- □ – Disgust
 - **Body:** Wrinkle nose, pull back your head, sharp turning away from the pulpit.
 - **Voice:** Nasal, sharp, with a "negation cadence" (rising then falling sharply on the sin's name). Hard glottal stops.
- ɹ – Surprise
 - **Body:** Eyebrows up, slight backward step or open-mouth inhale.
 - **Voice:** Bright, high onset. Use a sudden upward interval (a leap in pitch on the unexpected word).
- ● – Pause
 - **What it does:** Allows the last sentence to land, convict, or heal.
 - **Length:** 1 second (colon), 2 seconds (period), 3+ seconds (after a weighty statement or call to worship).
 - **Body:** Stop moving. Hold eye contact. Do not smile or nod. Let the silence be uncomfortable.
 - **Delivery note:** A pause feels longer to you than to them. Trust it. Hold one more beat than you think is comfortable.

1) The outward danger of a false teacher (Titus 1:10-14)

i) The problem: There are many deceptive teachers (Titus 1:10)

[G] ¹⁰ For [1:9] there are [PAI] many **rebellious people** [1:6], 1.) full of **empty talk** [idle speech]
2.) [S] and **deception** [mind-deceivers],
especially those [from] **the circumcision party** [τῆς περιτομῆς, 1:6; Acts 15:1; Galatians 2:12]].

ii) The first response: Titus must silence them or their lies will cause destruction (Titus 1:11-13a)

1.) ¹¹ It is necessary [PAI, urgency] to **silence** [PAN, LIT: stop the mouth, muzzle] them;
they are ruining [PAI] entire **households** *by* **teaching** [PAP, 1:9] what *they shouldn't* [PAI]
[in order to] **get money dishonestly** [motive, 1 Timothy 3:3, 8; 6:5; 1 Peter 5:2].

¹² One [of their very own] **prophets** [Epimenides, 6th century B.C.] said [AAI],

“Cretans are always 1.) **liars**, 2.) **evil beasts**, 3.) **lazy gluttons** [charge 1:10-11].”

¹³ This testimony is [PAI] true.

iii) The second response: Titus must rebuke them for the sake of sound belief (Titus 1:13b-14)

2.) [For this reason] [drawing from 1:12-13a],

[C] **rebuke** [PAM, same word as 1:9, Titus must do what elders must do] them **sharply**,

[E] so that

1.) they may be **sound** [PAS, health] [in the faith]

2.) [S] ¹⁴ and may not pay attention [PAP] to **Jewish myths** [speculation]

3.) [S] and the commands [man-made rules] of people who reject [PPP] **the truth**.

2) The inward corruption of a defiled heart (Titus 1:15-16)

i) The principle: Inward defilement is evidenced by outward depravity (Titus 1:15)

[+] ¹⁵ To the pure, everything [∞] is pure,

[-] but to those who 1.) are defiled [RMP, moral corruption]

2.) [S] and unbelieving nothing [] is pure;

[P] in fact, both 1.) their mind [1 Tim 6:5 talks of a depraved mind]

2.) [S] and conscience [1 Tim 4:2 talks of a seared conscience] are defiled [RMI].

ii) The evidence: Their work contradicts their profession because they are unfit (Titus 1:16)

[+] ¹⁶ They claim [PAI] to know [RAN, special knowledge] God,

[-] but they deny [PMI] him by their works.

1.) They are [PAP] detestable,

2.) [S] disobedient,

3.) [S] and unfit [for any good work].

This is how I indicate the function of conjunctions:

- I put a letter in square brackets before a clause to indicate a logical relationship.
 - [S] - SERIES, Each proposition makes an independent contribution to the whole (and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [P] - PROGRESSION, Each proposition is a further step toward a climax (then, and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [A] - ALTERNATIVE, Each proposition expresses an opposite possibility arising from a situation (or, but while...).
 - [W] [Ed] - WAY-END (ACTION-MANNER), Statement of an action and one which tells more explicitly what is involved in carrying out this action (in that, by).
 - [/] [/] - COMPARISON, Statement that clarifies an action or idea by showing what it is like (even as, as...so).
 - [-] [+] - NEGATIVE-POSITIVE, The relationship between two alternatives in which one is denied so the other is enforced, implicit in contrasting statements (not...but).
 - [Gn] [Sp] - GENERAL-SPECIFIC, Statement of a whole and one or more statements which set forth parts of the whole.
 - [Ft] [In] - FACT-INTERPRETATION, Statement and clarifying statement; does not set forth a distinguishable part of the preceding whole.
 - [G] - GROUND, Statement followed by the argument or reason on which it stands; supporting proposition follows the supported proposition (for, since, because).
 - [I'] - INFERENCE, Supporting statement followed by the conclusion drawn from it; supporting proposition precedes the supported proposition (therefore, wherefore, consequently).
 - [C] [E] - CAUSE-EFFECT (ACTION-RESULT), One action and another action which results from the first as an automatic consequence (that, so that, with the result that).
 - [C?] [E] - CONDITIONAL, Like cause-effect except existence of the cause is only potential (if...then, if, except...).
 - [M] [Ed] - MEANS-END (ACTION-PURPOSE), One action and another that is intended as the goal or purpose of the first (in order that, that, lest, to the end that).
 - [T] - TEMPORAL, Proposition and the occasion when it occurs (when, after, before).
 - [L] - LOCATIVE, Proposition and the place where it can be true (where, wherever).
 - [Adv] - ADVERSATIVE, Main clause that stands despite a contrary statement (although, yet, but, nevertheless).
 - [Q] [A] - QUESTION-ANSWER, Statement of question and answer to that question (question mark ?).
 - [S] [R] - SITUATION-RESPONSE, The relationship between a situation in one clause and a response in another.
 - [B] [L] - BILATERAL, A proposition which supports propositions in both directions, rarely used.

This is how I use colour highlighting:

- **Orange**: structure indicator, conjunctions, and prepositions.
- **Yellow**: verbs, Greek, and Scripture reference.
- **Green**: keywords.
- **Red**: repeated words.
- **Pink**: imperatives.
- **Blue**: main idea.

Sermon preparation worksheet

Passage: Titus 1:10-16 **Preaching Audience:** Benoni Baptist Church

1. How has the author organised this passage? a) Sections, b) Strategies, c) Emphasis.

- a) 1) The outward danger of a false teacher (Titus 1:10-14)
 - i) The problem: There are many deceptive teachers (Titus 1:10)
 - ii) The first response: Titus must silence them or their lies will cause destruction (Titus 1:11-13a)
 - iii) The second response: Titus must rebuke them for the sake of sound belief (Titus 1:13b-14)
- 2) The inward corruption of a defiled heart (Titus 1:15-16)
 - i) The principle: Inward defilement is evidenced by outward depravity (Titus 1:15)
 - ii) The evidence: Their work contradicts their profession because they are unfit (Titus 1:16)
- b) I identified the text type as discourse. I used grammatical analysis, noting the repeated imperatives (silence, rebuke), The γάρ clauses providing support and explanation. I identified the logical flow. Paul moves from external threat (what false teachers do) to internal condition (why they do it). There is a contrast between sound (Titus 1:13) and defiled (Titus 1:15). Faith (Titus 1:13) and truth rejected (Titus 1:14).
- c) The outward danger of false teachers flows from their inward corruption.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage? a) Literary, b) Historical, c) Cultural, d) Biblical.

- a) In Titus 1:5-9, Paul establishes elder qualifications. Elders must hold the trustworthy message, encouraging by sound doctrine and refuting opposition. In Titus 1:10-16, Paul explains why. False teachers are undermining households (Titus 1:11) and spreading Jewish myths (Titus 1:14). This matters because, a church's vitality in the face of false teaching depends on leadership that can contend for the sake of the gospel.
- b) Paul established churches on Crete, leaving Titus to complete the work of appointing leaders. Crete had a reputation for moral laxity. Without established leadership, churches were vulnerable to false teachers who ruined whole households. This matters because, Titus must appoint elders quickly to provide doctrinal stability, silencing false teachers before they destabilised the newly formed congregations.
- c) Paul quotes Epimenides (Titus 1:12), highlighting the moral corruption of Cretans generally to expose the false teachers specifically. This matters because, Paul is exposing their conduct and character. The Jewish myths and commands of people (Titus 1:14) likely refer to Jewish traditions and purity regulations that were being taught as requirements for salvation. This matters because, the gospel itself was being attacked.
- d) There are no direct citations in Titus 1:10-16. Titus 1:10 alludes to Acts 15:1 and Galatians 2:12. This is in reference to the Jerusalem Council and the ongoing controversy over Gentile inclusion. This matters because, the dangers of false teachers had become a recurring theme later in the New Testament.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

Titus must confront false teachers because their outward rebellion reveals inward corruption that undermines the gospel.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ? a) Connection, b) Function, c) Significance.

- a) False teachers aren't merely intellectually challenged, they're inwardly corrupted (Titus 1:15). This is the universal condition since the fall (Romans 3:10-12). The gospel declares Christ gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession (Titus 2:14). His death and resurrection cleanses defiled consciences (Hebrews 9:14; 10:22), giving us a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26-27).
- b) This gospel connection explains the danger of the false teaching. We're defiled by nature. And cannot purify ourselves. It provides the solution. The only remedy is the gospel's power to purify our lives and transform our hearts.
- c) For Christians, you may struggle with ongoing sin, and feel unworthy, but the gospel declares that in Christ, you are pure. Your sins have been forgiven, and your conscience is cleansed. Fight sin in the confident knowledge that Christ's blood has cleansed you and His Spirit empowers you. For non-Christians, be confronted by your true condition. Your problem is not bad behaviour but a defiled heart. No amount of religious activity can fix this. Only Christ can cleanse you. Come to the One who can purify your conscience and give you a new heart.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

The gospel purifies corrupt hearts that false teaching cannot cleanse.

6. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Title, b) Outline.

- a) Dead Man Talking
- b) 1) The outward danger of a false teacher (Titus 1:10-14)
- 2) The inward corruption of a defiled heart (Titus 1:15-16)
- 3) The purifying power of a risen Saviour

7. What applications will you make? a) Christians, b) non-Christians.

- a) Christians, confidently live a transformed life in light of your purified state because of Christ's finished work. Do this by actively fighting sin, not to earn God's approval, but as an act of joyful gratitude and empowered obedience, resting in the finished work of Christ and relying on the Spirit's power to make your conduct match your pure standing in Him.
- b) Non-Christians, realise your hopeless estate, understanding that your attempts at goodness cannot purify a heart defiled by sin. Turn from self-reliance and religious efforts and turning to Christ alone, who through His death and resurrection can cleanse your conscience and give you a new heart.

On my sermon preparation sheet, these are the questions and an explanation:

1. How has the author organised this passage?

- a) An outline: The author's organization (or structure) is a way of talking about the shape or form of a biblical passage. Beneath the surface of each passage is an underlying arrangement of material and a logic that the author has used to organize the passage. And each part of the passage has a role to play in that structure.
- b) Tools: Identify the text type (Discourse traces argument flow, conjunctions, and grammatical subordination, narrative tracks scene changes, plot development, and character contrasts, and poetry notes stanzas, parallelism, shifts in speaker, or imagery changes), and any grammatical tools used to identify the structure.
- c) The emphasis: The structure will reveal an emphasis that the author is making.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?

- a) Literary context: How do the passage that comes before and the passage that comes after relate to your passage?
- b) Historical context: The historical situation or circumstances experienced by the first audience at the time when the book was written.
- c) Cultural context: The setting in the daily life of the people/characters in the book and how that will have been understood by the first audience. This is distinct from historical context in that it does not relate to a particular audience in a particular place at a particular time, but the details of life that the people/characters in the text had in common. Anything that requires extra-biblical knowledge should be treated skeptically.
- d) Biblical context: Is the author citing or alluding to some previously written Biblical passage? What connections could the author have reasonably expected his first audience to make.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

The author's main point is a way of talking about the aim of a passage as a whole. It can be descriptive or prescriptive. It is not simply a summary statement. But rather, it is the idea of which the author is trying to persuade his audience. As you work on articulating the author's argument, please keep in mind that it needs to be specific enough to the passage that it clearly comes from the particular passage (and not any other passage), it is for the first audience, it should be one single sentence that is both short and clear, and captures the argument of the passage.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

What part of the gospel (the death and resurrection of Christ) is in view? Every part of the Bible, every passage of Scripture, in some way relates to the gospel of Jesus Christ. What parts of the passage connect to the gospel? The connection must be legitimate and textually driven.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

6. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Sermon outline, b) Sermon title.

7. What applications will you make? a) To believers, b) To unbelievers.

The main point of a sermon is the fundamental statement of what you, as a speaker today, are trying to convince your audience today. It will certainly be intimately related to the author's main point for his original audience and it will consider the gospel connection. It should be well reasoned and, perhaps, articulated as the result of proof (so depending on premises and building arguments).

On my sermon preparation sheet, this is how questions relate to one another:

- 1 a) should be driven by the text.
- 1 c) should be driven from the outline in 1 a).
- 2) should be directly relevant to 1 c).
- 3) cannot be disconnected from 1 c), and should be clarified by 2).
- 4) must be found in the text.
- 5) cannot be disconnected from 3), and should be driven by 4).
- 6) should flow from 5).
- 7) should structurally relate to 1 a), and make the argument in 5), and show relationship to 6).