

TITUS

(Pastoral advice on running a church)

“Living in an evil society”

“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:” (Titus 2:1)

Background

- C1 = Choosing elders**
- C2 = Christian behaviour**
- C3 = Civil obedience**
Good works
Doctrine

Our interest is aroused, that in **only two** of Paul’s books, **Timothy** and **Titus**, he gives them instructions on what to look for in an **elder**.

The state of play is that Paul has been released from his house arrest of two years while at Rome. He writes some instructions for Timothy and Titus on how to pick elders for the churches, with **Timothy** in charge at **Ephesus** and **Titus** at **Crete**.

Now to you and me, it would seem totally obvious that elders should (licence has been taken with the following)

1. Have only one wife
2. Have children who aren’t robbing houses and throwing stones
3. Not be an angry man (who wants a Pastor you’ll be frightened of)
4. Not a drunk
5. Not have a drunk wife
6. Not a young bloke who could be pushed around
7. Not be a brawler and street fighter
8. Not betting at the racetrack most week-ends coveting more money (Titus 1:5-7; 1Tim 3:1-8).

It seems a strange set of qualifications till you realise that the churches at Ephesus and Crete were the equivalent of early American towns in the wild, wild West (as depicted on TV) – being full of booze, prostitutes, brawling and gambling, and every vice in between.

Ephesus was the city of the great harlot Diana with lots of temple prostitution (Acts 19:28). If you go on a modern day trip there, there are statues for sale, of all shapes and sizes, emphasizing male genitalia. Oh yes, they were very proud of that then and still are today. It was, and is, a thoroughly evil city with all the attendant sins and evils.

Now similarly, **Crete** was the centre of an ancient and powerful civilization with a very, very, very bad moral reputation. The highest mountain in Crete, Mt Ida, is famous for being the legendary birth-place of the Greek god Zeus. Similarly, Crete is where all the myths and legends of all the gods that came down from heaven. But here’s the thing – **they were not legends, they were actually real**. Wow! Yes, these were the sons of God that co-habitated with women (Gen 6:2) whose offspring were giants (Gen 6:4).

Date	Trips	Books & Authors
32		The cross
37		Matthew (Matthew)
42		James (James)
45-48	1 ST Trip	
50		Galatians (Paul)
50-53	2 ND Trip	1&2 Thessalonians (Paul)
50-60		1,2,3 John (John) John (John)
54-58	3 RD Trip	1 & 2 Corinthians (Paul) Romans (Paul)
58		Mark (Mark)
59-60		Luke (Luke)
60-61		1&2 Peter (Peter)
61-63	Prison #1	Ephesians (Paul) Philippians (Paul) Colossians (Paul) Philemon (Paul)
63		Acts (Luke)
64-66		Titus (Paul) 1Timothy (Paul) Jude (Jude)
66-68	Prison #2	2 Timothy (Paul) Hebrews (Paul)
80-90		Revelation (John)

Matthew	Jesus the Son of man
Mark	Jesus the Son of man
Luke	Jesus the Son of man
John	Jesus is God
Acts	Early church & Paul’s trips
Romans (Paul)	God’s law & righteousness
1 Corinthians (Paul)	Carnal church disorder
2 Corinthians (Paul)	Paul’s ministry
Galatians (Paul)	Bewitched by Judaizers
Ephesians (Paul)	Unity with one church
Philippians (Paul)	Vain glory & servanthood
Colossians (Paul)	Gnostic heresy
1 Thessalonians (Paul)	Persecution & rapture
2 Thessalonians (Paul)	Rapture & disorderly walking
1Timothy (Paul)	Church care, pastoral advice
2 Timothy (Paul)	Church care, pastoral advice
Titus (Paul)	Church care, pastoral advice
Philemon (Paul)	Imputed righteousness
Hebrews (Paul)	Messiah to Saviour
James	Temptations & patience
1 Peter	Persecuted believers & hope
2 Peter	Knowledge & false teachers
1 John	Fellowship & antichrists
2 John	Many antichrists
3 John	Rebellion against authority
Jude	God’s wrath on ungodly men
Revelation	Future events

Crete was a small island of a thousand cities, crammed full of shiftless drunks, evil fornicating beasts and lazy, heavy indolent gluttons (slow bellies Titus 1:12) often all rolled into one. We can now see, that just raising the bar a little with a few basic qualifications, would certainly be a bonus in choosing elders, from a population that didn't have much going for it.

Now these gods from heaven came and went at will, and the people just took it as a natural thing that the 'gods are come down to us in the form of men' (Acts 14:11). Why do you think the modern newspapers of the world would makes us think it was a fantasy belonging to another time of make-believe? Correct, so we wouldn't believe the Bible. Similar to Noah's flood.

This is why Paul would write to them, via Titus, that they were to look for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our saviour Jesus Christ out of heaven (Titus 2:13), not the appearances of these other gods.

Chapter 1 Choosing elders

Paul reminds them that truth and godliness (v1) is something they maybe lacking considering the evils that are trying to intrude into the church, as discussed above. These other gods coming out of heaven were giving foundation to the lie that they would have eternal life, but Paul says the opposite (v2).

He then outlines elder qualifications (v5-9) and a not so flattering description of the populace (v10-16). We must remember that 30 years earlier, Jews from Crete were at Pentecost and had returned to establish the church. Now of course over time, they were slipping back into Jewish traditions (v14) and needed a 'good kick up the pants' to get them back on line (v13). Like a lot of churches today, they didn't know how bad they had become (v16).

Chapter 2 Christian behaviour in an evil world

So Paul runs through a few basic characteristics that aged men and women should have (v1-4) and like today, for young women, looking after their husbands is a lost art (v4-5). Young men are urged to be sober minded, which you can't be if you are stoned or drunk all the time (v6), while servants are exhorted not to keep pinching things from their master's house hoping he won't miss the items (v9-10). All are told to stop swearing and telling lies (v8).

Paul ends on a positive note on living righteously and godly in an evil world (v12), looking for Christ and the rapture (v13) and speaking firmly and authoritatively - zealous with good works (v14-15).

Chapter 3 Civil obedience Good works & doctrine

Reminding them of their being renewed by the Holy Ghost (v5), Paul wants them to be law abiding citizens, as a contrast to the society around them (v1-3). To those of Jewish heritage, who had been at Pentecost, and indeed, their descendants, he urges them to stop dwelling on the things of Moses (v9) and they are warned that if they persist with this nonsense they will be out on their ear (v10).

He finishes up asking Titus to bring **Zenas** the **lawyer** (always good to have one around especially with the on-going prospect of tangling with civil authorities), and **Apollos** (he needed a **bold**, strong and **fervent** man around him for a bit of encouragement Acts 18:24-26) (v13).

Furthermore, Titus was to make sure they would be looked after as well (v13).

To those in the faith, he esteems highly (salutes) and sends his love asking God that his grace be with them all (v15).

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