

The Purpose Of Good Leaders

Titus 1

Context Of Titus:

- Titus the preacher and receiver of the letter
 - Worker with Paul (cf. 2 Cor. 8.23) and close companion (Titus 1.4)
 - There are numerous references to him in Galatians (cf. 2.1-3) and 2 Corinthians (7.6; 8.16–23; 12.18) and elsewhere showing his willingness to follow Paul's instructions and continue to spread the Gospel
 - The book of Titus also mentions that Paul left Titus in Crete to help the congregation, which is the subject of this letter. Titus is in Crete to strengthen the church.
- Crete the location of the letter
 - Paul briefly visits Crete in Acts 27.7–9
 - From what we know of Crete, it wasn't a very moral place
 - We don't even have to go beyond scripture to illustrate this. In 1.12 Paul quotes from a fellow Cretan saying, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."
 - There was strength, courage, and love shown on the part of Paul and Titus to recognize the sinfulness of these people and still choose to be amongst them showing the light of God
- The church in Crete
 - In addition to being part of an immoral community, there were problems with false teachers (possible Judaizing Christians) and a general conversation about the problem of purity that comes up in several places throughout the book

Introduction Titus 1.1–4:

- Paul starts by referring to himself as a bond servant of God, which is similar to how he starts 1 Timothy. These two books have some similarities in how they open, potentially showing that Paul is instructing them on how they should be leaving as preachers of the word.
 - A bond-servant is someone completely devoted to the one they serve. Paul is showing that his life as someone living of Christ is a complete and total commitment
- Paul is also stressing the importance of faith and knowledge
 - Faith that God is giving instructions towards eternal life and will be true to his promises
 - Knowledge of those promises and His word
- Paul also refers to Titus as his true child with a common faith. Illustrating that the two of them have a common mission together in service to God.

The Need For Elders Titus 1.5–9:

- Paul tells us that Titus is left in Crete to establish leaders in every church.
 - This is part of how Paul will accomplish the goal he sets for himself in the introduction to this book. Having proper leaders is how the church will remain faithful to the word.
- Elders as leaders of the local congregation are mentioned in multiple places in the New Testament
 - Acts 14.23 (Paul and Barnabas were appointing elders in congregations; Acts 20.17 (Paul meets with the elders in Ephesus); James 5.14 (seems to imply that congregations had elders).
 - Three passages talk about the qualifications of elders. In addition to Titus 1, we have 1 Timothy 3.1–7 and 1 Peter 5.1–5.

- Looking at all the passages that mention elders, we start to see some similarities. There are some things that are set, experienced Christians that are fathers and husbands who have control of their household. The passages in Timothy and Titus present lists to us, where the passage in 1 Peter portrays more of the attitude elders should have when leading.
- It is important to realize that there is no one set check list, or series of qualifications, that makes someone qualified to be an elder. An elder is also not someone who is perfect and sinless, they too are growing. Rather, Paul is telling us the types of things that a strong Christian and potential leader should have to be good in their role.
- In 1 Peter we also see an example of the type of leadership these elders should have. They are not to force or beat people into submission, but rather guide, shepherd, and lead by example the congregation they are instructed with.

Why Strong Leaders Titus 1.10–16:

- After listing the qualifications, Paul then shows why it is important to have these men with these qualities amongst the congregation.
- The congregation is in the world, and elders help shield them from that. To provide sound doctrine, defend it, and fight against falsehoods.
- We also see that some of the problems were coming from inside the church, meaning that the elders were to correct and discipline them

Application:

- The church needs to cultivate good leaders, ideally growing towards elders, but in the absence of elders, the individual Christian still has the responsibility to step up, and the congregation still needs to come together to serve.
- We need to strive for purity, obedience, and knowledge because we too live in Crete.