

True and False Shepherds

Titus 1:1-16 (ESV) / May 7, 2022

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, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began 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;

To Titus,

- my true child in a common faith:

Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

- **Titus attends the Jerusalem Council as an example of God's grace**

Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain. **But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek.** (Gal 2:1-3)

But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, **"Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."** And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. (Acts 15:1-2, ESV)

- **Titus delivers a "difficult" letter to the church in Corinth (Unknown letter)**

Did I take advantage of you through any of those whom I sent to you? **I urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him.** Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not act in the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps? (2 Cor 12:14-18)

- **Titus refreshes Paul after presenting the "difficult" letter**

For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within. **But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more. For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it—**though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. (2 Corinthians 7:5-9, ESV)

- **Titus returns to Corinth with the letter (2 Corinthians) to collect and deliver the offering for the poor in Jerusalem**

But thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same earnest care I have for you.

For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest he is going to you of his own accord. With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel.

And not only that, but **he has been appointed** by the churches to travel with us as we carry out this act of grace that is being ministered by us, for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our good will. We take this course so that no one should blame us about this generous gift that is being administered by us, for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man.

And with them we are sending our brother whom we have often tested and found earnest in many matters, but who is now more earnest than ever because of his great confidence in you.

As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for your benefit. And as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ. So give proof before the churches of your love and of our boasting about you to these men. (2 Cor 8:16-24, ESV)

HOW TO CHOOSE TRUE SPIRITUAL SHEPHERDS

(1:5-9)

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— (1:5)

1. Family Integrity (1:6-7a)

- 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.
- For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach.

2. Negative Character Behaviors (1:7b)

- He must not be arrogant or
- quick-tempered or
- a drunkard or
- violent or
- greedy for gain,

3. Positive Character Behaviors (1:8)

- but hospitable,
- a lover of good,
- self-controlled,
- upright,
- holy, and
- disciplined.

4. Committed to Teaching Truth (1:9)

- 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.

HOW TO COMBAT FALSE SPIRITUAL WOLVES

(1:10-16)

1. Deceptive Behaviors (1:10)

- For there are many who are insubordinate,
- empty talkers and
- deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party.

2. Destructive Influences (1:11)

- They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach.

3. Ungodly Character (1:12-13a)

- One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil,

beasts, lazy gluttons." This testimony is true.

4. Egregious Teaching Errors (1:13b-16)

- Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.
- 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.
- They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.