The Need for Godly Elders

Titus 1:10–16

THE TRUTH THAT PROTECTS THE FLOCK

FMBC Evening Bible Study | Rev. Dr. Carlos D. Williams, Pastor | Rev. James Taylor II, Facilitator | November 11, 2026

WHY LEADERSHIP MATTERS

The Shepherd & the Flock

- Sheep can wander, follow blindly, and compete within the flock.
- Shepherds lead, feed, correct, and protect.
- The church needs godly pastors to guard against false teaching.

ACTS 20:28–30

Guarding Against Wolves

- Overseers must watch themselves and the flock.
- False teachers may arise from outside or within the church.
- The Word of God is the shepherd’s means of defense.

NEW TESTAMENT LEADERSHIP

The Many Functions of Elders

- Teach and preach sound doctrine (1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:9).
- Lead by example, pray, and care for the church.
- Shepherd the flock by feeding and protecting believers.

See Acts 6:4; 15:22; 1 Pet. 5:3; Heb. 13:7; Jas. 5:14; 1 Thess. 5:12.

HOLD FAST TO THE WORD

Why Titus 1:9 Matters

- Elders must hold firmly to the trustworthy message.
- Sound doctrine equips them to exhort believers.
- The same truth equips them to refute opposition.

TITUS 1:10–16

The Crisis in Crete

- False teaching was disrupting entire households.
- Profession and practice were not aligned.
- The church needed leaders who would correct and protect.

TITUS 1:10–12, 14–16

Profile of False Teachers

- Conduct — insubordinate, empty talkers, deceivers.
- Contamination — upsetting households for dishonest gain.
- Character and content — corrupt living and distorted teaching.

TITUS 1:10

Their Conduct

- Insubordinate: unwilling to submit to authority.
- Empty talkers: impressive words without substance.
- Deceivers: misleading people and distorting Scripture.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:17–24

Style Is Not Substance

- Eloquent speech cannot replace the message of the cross.
- Sound preaching is Christ-centered and cross-centered.
- The power rests in the gospel, not performance.

TITUS 1:10

The Circumcision Party

- Some teachers treated circumcision as necessary for salvation.
- This introduced works as a condition of receiving salvation.
- Salvation is by grace through faith, not works (Eph. 2:8–9).

TITUS 1:11

Contaminating Households

- False teaching reached into families and homes.
- Entire households were being upset or overturned.
- The teachers pursued dishonest financial gain.

1 TIMOTHY 5:17; 1 CORINTHIANS 9:14

Ministry & Money

- Scripture affirms appropriate support for gospel ministers.
- Financial support is not permission for manipulation.
- Godly leaders do not exploit people for profit.

TITUS 1:12–13

Character Matters

- Paul cites a Cretan description of lying and uncontrolled appetite.
- The lesson connects false doctrine with corrupt conduct.
- A teacher’s life must be examined alongside the message.

The quotation is part of Paul’s critique in this passage, not a description to apply indiscriminately to all Cretans.

TITUS 1:14

The Content of Their Message

- Jewish myths were treated as authoritative truth.
- Human commandments displaced sound teaching.
- Legalistic requirements obscured the gospel of grace.

TITUS 1:15

External Religion, Internal Corruption

- Ritual purity cannot substitute for a clean heart.
- Paul describes defiled minds and consciences.
- Jesus locates moral defilement within the heart (Mark 7:14–23).

TITUS 1:16A

Profession Versus Practice

- They professed to know God.
- Their actions contradicted that profession.
- Genuine belief should be reflected in good works.

TITUS 1:16B

The Verdict on False Teaching

- Detestable: morally repugnant conduct.
- Disobedient: resistant to the truth.
- Unfit for good work: failing the test of authentic faith.

TITUS 1:11, 13

The Practice of Godly Elders

- Stop the spread of destructive false teaching.
- Refute error using sound doctrine.
- Rebuke sharply with the goal of sound faith.

TITUS 1:13; 3:9

Rebuke With Purpose

- Correction must be clear and courageous.
- Avoid fruitless controversies and quarrels.
- The aim is repentance, restoration, and soundness in faith.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16–17

The Sufficiency of the Word

- Scripture teaches, reproves, corrects, and trains.
- The Word equips God’s people for every good work.
- God’s truth both exposes error and points toward restoration.

ROMANS 1:16

The Gospel Has the Power

- The law reveals our need; Christ provides salvation.
- The gospel proclaims Christ’s life, death, and resurrection.
- The power to save belongs to God, not the preacher.

DISCUSSION & APPLICATION

Our Response

- How can believers recognize teaching that lacks substance?
- What does it look like to correct error with truth and love?
- How can the church support leaders who faithfully guard the flock?