

**AUGUST 4, 2019**

**LIVING WITH OPPOSITION**

**Titus 1:1-5, 10-16**

One of my seminary professors, Steve Brown, once gave a lecture in class called “Whoppers from the World.” *Whoppers* were thoughts, actions and or behaviors that God allowed the world to drop off on the door step of the church to incite a response. Homosexuality would be an example of this. Yet, in our day the church faces another whopper – unfiltered *toleration*. The world not only tolerates everything but charges the people of God to do the same. Oddly enough, however, in this cultural indoctrination of toleration none, outside of the elect, will tolerate Truth. Paul writes Titus, his son in the faith, (Titus 1:4) and charges him to attack the temptation to toleration by teaching the elect how to Live In Opposition to the teaching and teacher who rebel against the gospel.

**SERVANTS HEARTS (1:1-3)**

This letter begins with Paul re-stating his apostolic authority in order to encourage and guide Titus’ pastoral authority in Crete. Though an apostle, Paul describes himself as a *servant* –bond slave – *of God* (Titus 1:1). Titus is to see all of life as being surrendered to the will and desires of God. Chief among the Lord’s desire is to godliness of His people, the elect. For this to take place Titus will need to nurture as well as protect their faith and knowledge of the truth by reminding them of *the hope eternal life* (Titus 1:2). This hope is no mere wishing for something to take place. The Christian’s hope is rooted in the trustworthy character of God who *cannot lie* (Titus 1:2) and therefore, we are encouraged to live according to His word knowing that all that what he started *before time began* (Titus 1:2) He will certainly finish (See Philippians 1:6). Titus, and all believers, must keep this hope at the forefront of our minds. We must always and only preach, disciple and live according to the Word of our unchanging God (Titus 1:3).

**PURPOSEFUL ACTION (v4-5)**

Paul and Titus had engaged in ministry in Crete but Paul had left Titus behind (Titus 1:5). It is clear that whatever ministry they had in Crete was unfinished. While growth was taking place in Crete they were like most young churches. They needed strong organization, capable leadership and sound teaching to fulfill their calling of discipleship and kingdom expansion. Paul now says why Titus was left behind: to set in order (*set right*) *what was left undone and... to appoint elders in every town* (Titus 1:5). The term elder simply means *pastor*, but it also demands the consistency of godly character. Titus was to establish in every town men who were blameless in life, the home, doctrine and in the community (Titus 1:6-9). To *appoint* means to delegate authority to someone, to put them in charge or to designate someone as a leader. The work of leading God’s people is too much for one person to accomplish. Titus had to delegate his authority to others in various towns who could accomplish the work with him (Titus 1:5; See also 2 Timothy 2:2).

**OPPOSITION ADDRESSED (Titus 1:10-16)**

Having reminded Titus of his servanthood and his responsibility to establish godly leadership Paul now turns to false teachers who were infesting and infecting. A truth to be remembered is that wherever the seed of the Lord is, you will find the seed of Satan seeking to undermine the truth and godliness. At the heart of false teaching and teachers in Crete are rebellion and deception (Titus 1:10). Paul qualifies these two attributes describing them as *liars and lazy gluttons* (Titus 1:12). They have an insatiable appetite for false teaching and whatever they want (Titus 1:11,12) and they are habitual liars (Titus

1:12), incapable of telling the truth. Titus is to rebuke them *sharply* (Titus 1:13), not mildly or with a smile. This impassioned rebuke must should make is very clear to all that false teachers and teaching are rebellion to the Lord and never tolerated in the least. Titus must make the line clear regarding what is to be considered as pure and what is to be understood as defiled (Titus 1:15).