

# 8/9/20 - Titus 1:10-16 - "The Task of Spiritual Physicians"

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[ 0 : 00 ] Father, thank you for your word today. We know that this is not just man's opinion. We know that this is not just a bunch of scratches that are upon a paper, black and white ink, but Father, these are living and breathing words. These are instructions for our lives, in our organization, of how we assemble in the church. Father, help us to look upon your word and to bring to life what you are calling us to respond, how you're calling us to respond in this assembly. Help us to grow. Help us to mature in our faith and let this word be a guide for that maturity. And we pray this in Jesus' precious and his holy and mighty name. Amen. The sermon title, obviously, is the task of spiritual physicians. And just as a physician ought to diligently detect, identify, and confront the illness in another, so a pastor ought to diligently detect, identify, and confront the sin of one another. This is the message in hard reality in the passage today that we reach. We are getting a glimpse of what Paul means within his literary context in verse 5.

This is why I left you, Titus, in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order and appoint elders in every town as I directed you. The means of doing this is through the appointment of elders to defend sound doctrine, to confront, to detect, identify, and to confront just as any physician does with an illness or disease. Anything other than sound doctrine divides. It misleads and destroys not only the one who is proclaiming the false doctrine, but it also is a toxin which spreads and attaches to its victims, just like any contagious illness that a physician is trying to diagnose and identify.

But church, I want us to think for a moment, is this a problem today? Is this truly a problem? Is this a problem like in our area? If people sort of represent Jesus and are raising their banners, and they got Jesus all over everything, isn't that good enough? Right? If they call upon unity of people, let's all just be friends, and don't worry, yeah, I know that the Bible says that, but let's just unite, unite, and in so doing compromising the doctrine we find in Scripture. Aren't we called? Isn't that our aim?

Is unity? Maybe this was a problem in Crete. Maybe this is detached from today. Well, I want to look at several passages in the New Testament. As the New Testament is our guide, which is a fulfillment of what the Old Testament prophets have prophesied and look forward to the cross. And the New Testament is an expression of that faith in the cross. And so what we have is a continuation through Jesus's words. I want to take a look. Matthew 7. Put it up on the screen for a moment. Jesus said this is a problem. He said, beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. Jesus also says in Mark 13, it'll be up on the screen as well. I'm going to go pretty quick through all these verses. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But be on guard. I have told you all things beforehand.

Jesus Christ's words. We also see the Apostle Paul in Acts 20. He says, I know that after my departure, fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

[ 4 : 38 ] And from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things to draw away the disciples after them. Paul also instructs Timothy, similarly in 2 Timothy chapter 3. But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit. Think about that verse. Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, of holiness, but denying its power in how they live. Avoid such people. The Apostle Peter says in 2 Peter 2, 1 through 3, but false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, but who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality.

And because of them, the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed, they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. You can't forget the Apostle John in his letters. In 1 John 4, 1, it says, Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God. For many false prophets have gone out into the world. And also continuing to 2 John 1, for many deceivers have gone out into the world. Those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, such a one is the deceiver and the Antichrist. And then finally and lastly in Jude 17 through 19, it says, But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

They said to you, In the last time there will be scoffers following their ungodly passions. It is these who cause divisions. Worldly people devoid of the spirits.

The passage we find ourselves in today brings to us a normal means of the role of elders within the church. There is no excusable motive in false teaching, even if the person false teaching seems as if they are good people. There is no excuse. This passage in particular doesn't really paint a very bright, luminous picture of mankind at all, does it? It's pretty dark. It's very gray about humanity.

It really reveals the dark potential within every human being to stray from the word of the Lord. So I want to meet very personal today. I'm going to split this up into three sections. I want to meet these folks who were in error and how Titus was instructed to handle the situation. And let me tell you, this situation in particular is quite a daunting task, just as any confrontation often is.

[ 8 : 51 ] However, out of the obedience to the Lord, the elders are called to diagnose, just as a physician, to diagnose, to expose, and to confront. So let's look at section one in verse 10.

It's titled, The Fallen Tendencies of Man, Mankind. The Fallen Tendencies of Mankind. We're going to be specifically looking at verse 10 through 13. It says, For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers, and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons. This testimony is true.

So looking at last week, if you can remember and recall the passage last week, even in your Bibles, kind of look behind a little bit in verse 5, you see the qualifications being laid out specifically for an elder, relating to who he is, not necessarily what he does, but what makes up his DNA. We spoke about last week how the family never lies. You want to know the real character of an elder leading the church. Look at his family and how much they like hot chocolate. And the family never lies. You can hide things from people often, but what happens behind closed doors often cannot lie. So not only does Paul give an exhaustive list last week in verse 5 through verse 9 of those who are fit or unfit for the office of elder, but he has provided a clear and concise description of the attitude and actions of those deceived. So sort of playing upon how Paul is continuing in his speech, he gives specifically the qualities of the qualifications of an elder. Well, today we have the qualifications of a false teacher.

Isn't that interesting? And we see here the qualifications, and these false teachers are known as divisive people. In verse 10, it says, for there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers, and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. So we know that there are many who will be led astray, many who will deceive. These people are, their qualifications are number one of insubordinates.

So also meaning rebellious. These people are rebellious. They're independent. They're kind of detached from the organization, the system. They are disposed to or engaged in deficiency to established authority.

[ 11 : 59 ] They defy authority. They are, if there's any Star Wars fans in the room with us, we know that these people can be understood as Star Wars related rogues. They are, they operate against authority. They operate independently and rebellious. They are also empty talkers in this passage. Someone whose talk is not for the sake of building up, but senseless. It's empty. It's babble. It's worthless. This is often known as cotton candy preachers. If you can imagine a big old bag of cotton candy, man, that bag looks like it's worth 10 bucks. But you start digging into that cotton candy, you start, you're like, wow, where'd that go?

Because there's no substance in it. Cotton candy preachers is what it's called. It's people that lack substance. It looks as if there is some sort of show, but there's no substance. And these people, these qualifications of divisive people, they are deceivers. Someone who leads you to believe something that is not true. People motivated with a counter agenda in the back of their minds.

And we see that there is a number of these types of people. Being the task of Paul calling Titus to a plurality of elders. Remember how elders is plural in the passage? We know that at times this is useful when there is more than one person deceived to have a plurality in that diagnosing and confrontation.

And we see that also that these people were even part of the circumcision party. Isn't that interesting? Something interesting that Paul is communicating in this passage along with the plurality of elders and plurality of deceivers is that these people fit qualifications of those who claim to be blameless.

These qualifications of people who are deceiving fit the qualifications who are blameless, who are godly, who are supposed to be holy, the circumcision party in that context.

[ 14 : 19 ] Quite a deception, right? People are deceivers. And we see the effect of these deceivers in this passage. In verse 11, they must be silenced since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. This verse literally is saying that these types of people need to be muzzled. They must be silenced because they are teaching contrary to the motive and the context of the written word of God, of what it means to be a Christian, and all sorts of other plethora of compromises of sound doctrine. Daniel Aiken comments on this passage that these types of people, they are spiritual seducers.

Spiritual seducers. Disguising their personal ambition and agenda and theological agenda in the trappings of religious piety and prosperity. Literally, Daniel Aiken goes on to say that they capture people with theological pornography. It captures their interest. They are bought in.

They are spiritually seduced into what they're teaching and what they stand for. That they're able to grab people away from the word of God and to listen to them instead. It's the, quote, Jesus plus theology. Jesus and works. It's not faith alone. It's Jesus plus a couple other things. We see this with the circumcision party. And today we see it in a plethora of ideals. Jesus plus works, signs and wonders.

We see Jesus plus giving a thousand dollars in the offering to be saved. We see this often in various other religions in different shapes and forms. It's the Jesus plus theology. But church, we know that to add to Christ is to actually subtract from Christ. Right? Meaning that a man-centered theology is a perfumed corpse. That's all it is. Man-centered theology is a perfumed corpse that marginalizes Christ-centered theology that you find in the word of God. And we see in verse 11 that this is, they must be silenced.

They must be muzzled because they're disturbing whole families. I mean, how this was ruining the families in Crete, disrupting the unity of the church.

[ 17 : 04 ] These people promoting their agenda, having secretive talks, and deceiving many. R.C. Sproul actually commented on this passage, and he said that these false teachers' activity, referring to churches maybe meeting in homes, private homes, which call for a better organization, a better structure that has a plurality of elders, that has that accountability.

Because both kind of say the same thing in this passage. Because regardless in how you kind of look at this, there is a consistent point in all false teaching. And I know this very true from even just 10 years ago, a personal experience I went through. False teaching begins in isolation.

Isolation. Isolation and lack of accountability is the fertile soil that breeds false teaching and leads people astray. When people detach and are insubordinate, that rebel from various different beliefs and groups, that is the fertile soil that breeds false teaching and leads people astray.

And we see that their aim is gain. Their aim is gain in verse 11. That's their motive. It's not devotion to the Lord. Their aim is to gain. It's a devotion to self. It's personal, selfish gain that they're looking for. Their agenda is to profit from others. Whether that profit is a gain of money or just gain of recognition. Profiting from your status in society. Gaining followers.

They don't care about anything else except what they can profit from others. And this is the fact. False teachers capitalize upon less established people in their faith. False teachers go after the weaker, immature ones in their faith. That is so true. This is due to their ability to persuade people who are immature in their faith with just enough truth to kind of hook you and then pull you in their direction. Just enough truth to deceive the immature in their faith. But what is clear in this is that the devotion of these divisive people may claim obedience to Christ, but their lives and actions actually contradict their claim. And we're going to get more into that in verse 15 through 16.

[ 19 : 46 ] And then last part of this section is we have a character witness and testimony. As we look at in section 1, the fallen tendencies of mankind. We see one, Paul says, one of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons. This testimony is true.

One important and often overlooked witness with false teachers is that their bend toward an error usually is a series of small compromises and a historic record that says, there's some red flags with these people. Beware. And it's calling in the testimony of some others.

Small series of compromises over a long period of time. It's not always a quick decline overnight. Sometimes it is. You wake up and you have a dream of some prophet Joseph Smith saying, forget everything written in there. This is the true testimony of the Lord. The church is corrupt.

Follow this pattern and way, which might sound crazy, but that is basically a belief that exists out there. And Paul brings up the character witness and someone reputable within the Cretan island, who also testifies, why are you even surprised about these people? Cretans are always, have always been liars. They've always been evil beasts. They've always been lazy gluttons. They always have habitual tendencies of being liars, acting as harmful animals, as this passage literally communicates, and always feed and feast at the expense of others. They're in it for themselves.

Church, these types of people are identified based upon a similar objective fact, not a matter of subjective opinion that, well, they're nice people. No. This is objective fact, and what comes out of their mouth must be muzzled.

[ 21 : 47 ] And so after such a vivid picture, welcome to mankind, church. How about that? This is humanity.

After such a vivid picture painted of the depravity and sinful tendencies of mankind, Paul calls upon the church elders to deal with this situation. Should be a walk in the park, right?

Especially when they're nice people. Let's look at section two in this passage. Elders called to confront. I'll get my papers out of the way here. Elders called to confront.

And the passage continues. 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 the truth. Elders are called to confront these people.

At times in leadership, the tendency of man is to respond to an error with an error, because while there's depravity on this side of blatant false doctrine and deception, divisive people, we also have on this side elders who are actually called to this, who actually also suffer from a sinful, the sinful condition of man. And sometimes they respond to an error with an error.

[ 23 : 26 ] Meaning it's easier to maybe compromise. Maybe we'll just let this situation go. We'll compromise rather than confront. Maybe we could just minimize the effects of the situation.

We could just brush it under the rug and just let everyone just be friends. And we could all just gather in Crete as a united church and we're going to represent Christ, even though there is no unity.

It is a peace illusion. It's an illusion of peace. Because any peace that is achieved, when sound doctrine is compromised, is a peace illusion.

And so we see in this passage that very thing. Elders are not to fall for this illusion of peace. We are to take it head on to achieve real peace.

For the elder, boldness is required and they're responsible to provide accountability. All of this must be motivated by hospitality, by a love of good.

[ 24 : 33 ] Remember verse 5 through 9. They must approach the situation being upright. They must be holy. They must be disciplined. The weapon that an elder must wield against the deceiver is to confront them with the truth of the gospel.

Look at this in verse 13. We see, rebuke them sharply. There's nothing more sharp and precise than the truth of Scripture.

It is known as a double-edged sword. No matter which way you swing it, it's going to cut to the core. It is always sharp. Rebuke them sharply.

Meaning, rebuke them with the Word of God. Not just with your perspective, which may be a truth to you, but looking at the Word of God. Weighing the Word of God and letting that rest upon the evidence.

And this is not saying that elders are supposed to be bullies walking around the church, picking out every little biblical discrepancy and saying, you know, walking around with that ruler, just like the, you know, those movies back when it was okay to smack students in the classroom.

[ 25 : 46 ] Walking around with your ruler stick and just smacking people who are out of line. The elders are not called to be bullies and walk the aisles, making sure everyone's being good and faithful Bible readers.

But there's something that I learned very early in ministry and something that a fellow mentor of mine has helped me with, is knowing wisdom in these situations of confrontation.

Because wisdom is crucial in being an elder. If confrontation is prone to occur, if there's no other, if you're looking at a situation, you know that you're going to have to address it, because a certain level of biblical doctrine is being compromised, and sin is spreading.

If confrontation is prone to occur, it takes wisdom to know what to confront, and then not only what to confront, but when to confront it.

That is wisdom, being an elder. And often, we see men in leadership just kind of hungry for stirring up controversy, sort of just boxers.

[ 26 : 55 ] It's like the Muhammad Ali of church elders, that they're just always in it for a fight. They want to battle whether to use the KJV or use the ESV. They go around and fight these wars, and they're not hills we're called to die on.

And nor were they hills to die on in Crete. And look at this. The passage continues, and this is vital, church.

This is vital. The passage continues in verse 13. It doesn't just stop with, rebuke them sharply, and then turn around and go the other way. Let them find a box of tissues and cry about it, about that rebuke.

No, they are to rebuke them sharply. Look, in your own Bibles, rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in faith. The outcome of this rebuke is not to destroy people, but to build them up.

It's made out of love for others who are in error. This verse states a valid point. Rebuke them, but also correct them in it. If they accept the correction or not, that is between them and God.

[ 28 : 06 ] Circumstantially speaking of what was occurring in Crete, it was a doctrine and devotion problem. Their devotion was to bring divisive heresies, to cause sin to spread within the Cretan churches.

Their devotion was off because their doctrine was off. They didn't quite wrap their heads around the truth of Scripture.

And we also see that they were devoting themselves to Jewish myths in verse 14, and commands of people. John MacArthur says externalism.

This Jewish myth is referring to externalism and unscriptural laws. And traditions that both Isaiah and Jesus Christ railed against.

It's that Jesus plus theology, as he comments on this. And we also see that they're obeying the commands of people. That instead of God's word being the source of their doctrine, it's man's word instead.

[ 29 : 13 ] God's word isn't the measuring stick, but man's command is the measuring stick. And our aim is to find that line.

Because Scripture does have a balanced line in Scripture. You see in the Bible, you see a line of sound doctrine. It is our job, as all Christians, and especially elders, heralding the message and proclaiming the message of the Bible, to not take away anything, to fall below that line of sound doctrine, and it's not to add anything to that sound doctrine.

We must all find that fine line in Scripture, which is what we weigh. It's not based on Jewish myths. It's not the commands of people and ideas that people may have, of their latest revelation that they had in their prayer closets.

Oh, this would be great. Okay, what's the Bible say about that? So we also see in this passage, as we come to the end, in verse 15 and 16, we see in section 3, discernment of words and works.

Verse 15 concludes in this chapter, 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.

[ 30 : 39 ] They profess to know God, but they deny Him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work. Verse 15 sort of has a interesting little proverb in it, to the pure all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure.

A similar saying is this, putting perfume on a corpse. It may look good. It may sound good. But there is no life.

And it is cotton candy preaching. It's cotton candy truth. It is all show, no substance. And actually, it's unhealthy for you, just as cotton candy is.

There's an interesting relationship in this passage, which Paul brings upon the mind and the conscience, simply stating that the conscience informs the mind. The conscience of every person is that center in our minds, which can dictate right from wrong.

Truth from a lie. And so the conscience of man is centered in all that we do and how our lives are guided according to the Word of God.

[ 32 : 01 ] When we read the Word of God, we are informing our conscience. We're not just filling our minds with facts. We're informing to know truth from a lie, yes from no, according to Scripture.

Scripture. The Word of God informs our conscience, which helps to cleanse our minds, what we think. So knowing right from wrong comes from the conscience.

It is also true. Acknowledging truth from a lie also stems from the conscience. So what do we do with these people who are deceived, who profess to know God but deny Him by their works?

We must pray for the conscience of those who are in deception. We must pray for the conscience of those who are deceived. Rebuke them sharply so that they may be sound in the faith.

Correct them. Instruct them. Seeing like, like point out that there is a cliff warning that the direction that they're heading is actually going to lead them to death and a cliff.

[ 33 : 07 ] And saying, stop. This is the way according to the Bible. And whether they choose that or not is up to them and their conscience. And so you pray for those types of people.

Without a conscience to convict their mind, it's sort of a meaningless. Confrontation. You ever have a debate with somebody that's just undebatable? It's their way or the highway, no matter what you bring to the table.

Husbands, don't look at your wives. This is not that type of debate over where to put the shoes or why your towel is on the bed or why you can't hang up your towel.

You know, the little things that we have. Having a confrontation with somebody that just, it's their way or the highway. You've got to pray for their conscience.

You need to pick up upon those types of people that it's just, there's no way of convincing them it's up to their conscience to cleanse their minds. Maybe this is the call of an elder.

[ 34 : 12 ] To rebuke them sharply. Meaning to penetrate the deceiver's conscience sharply with the word of God. God. Not with your little apologetic debating forums and knowledge that you've had in all these theology classes and knowing how to win an argument.

You need to win a conscience for God. Not in arguments. Paul makes this connection clear in this passage. For those deceived in error, there are some times where there's no hope of restoration in these people.

You kind of just let them go. Meaning they unashamedly promote falsehoods and victimize themselves whenever they are confronted.

Like, woe is me! You evil person! You evil elder! They literally have convinced themselves at that point to believe their own lie. They are themselves deceived.

This happens quite often. Yes, our minds can often become defiled. We are all sinners. We all fall short of the glory of God. Even the most upright elder can have a defiled mind at times which the Word of God must inform and cleanse that.

[ 35 : 25 ] But the defiled mind needs a pure conscience. That's the difference. A pure conscience comes through the power of the Holy Spirit regardless of the most convincing efforts you can make to restore someone else.

You can win an argument, but can you win a conscience for the Lord? John MacArthur also states that when a person is pure in heart and mind, his relating heart and the conscience, his perspectives on all things are pure and that inner purity produces outer purity.

You'll see something exposed based on what's going on on the inside, on their conscience. Those who are utterly deceived, who do not receive correction from the Word of God, turn out to have a profession of faith which is completely void.

Those who have a defiled mind and a defiled conscience that don't know right from wrong, they believe their own lie, that these types of people are completely dead just as a corpse.

We see in verse 16 this dead profession. Their profession in Jesus becomes something known as detestable. They're disgusting to God. They're detestable.

[ 36 : 37 ] This is also translated as abominable. They're disobedient. Similar to the word insubordinate. They don't comply to the commands of those in authority.

They're rebellious. They also don't obey the commands of the Lord himself. And they're also in this passage in verse 16, they're unfit for any good work.

They're literally meaning that they're worthless in value. They can't even do good even if they wanted to do good because their conscience is defiled. And so church, I present to you the calling of an elder.

Easy, right? As ministers of the gospel, an elder is called to the ministry of not only reconciliation, but also rebuke.

They're not only called to comfort, but also to confront. It's a balance, which hopefully by God's faithfulness and goodness and kindness, we get better and make progress in this, even in this own church that we have here.

[ 37 : 46 ] So as we come to a close today, we see that how often it's difficult to sort of see those episodes of ER.

You guys ever see those shows on TLC or something known as ER. I don't know if they're airing that anymore. But those shows where they show the incision happening in people's skin, there's nothing that will make me want to barf quicker than that.



And the times when they're opening up that heart, opening up the chest cavity, and the doctor's in there just playing around. like, how do people choose this profession? I'm, too bad Patrick's not here, so I can, one of the deacons here has a, he does all that type of work at UPMC.

But how difficult it is for some of us, hearing the chuckles, hearing the giggles, looking at your faces as I'm telling these stories, I can tell that it's very, very difficult to sometimes see what needs to take place for those who are sometimes critically ill as their heart is failing.

How it's hard and very difficult to approach that and confront that. But just as any surgeon cuts away disease and infectious tissue that threatens the health of the body, so an elder must cut away toxic teaching and cut away toxic people that are spreading sin within the gathering.

[ 39 : 22 ] this process is not easy the least bit but it is essential. It is a calling of an elder. It is. It is also the most loving, almost the most loving thing that an elder can ever do.

For not only those who are deceived, to be corrected, to be rebuked sharply so that they may be sound in the faith, it's not only loving them very well and very tough, they call that tough love, but also it's loving every person in Crete that Paul is calling Titus to care well for.

Heart. But it's, this is true love, church. To love someone to the point of pointing out their error in hope of their spiritual recovery and vitality, hopefully in that continued relationship, maybe in a relationship to come.

meaning that a short season of confrontation is sometimes needed in the church to produce a long-lasting season of peace, real peace, not the facade of peace, a peace illusion.

And church, you might be like, well, what do you want us to do, Bren? You want us to be elders? What do you, what's the point today? What is the point that you're trying to make? I want you to see, because God has called us all in the realm and responsibility to defend sound doctrine ourselves.

[ 40 : 54 ] That what you see an elder do, you must also be aiming towards that just as we talked about last week. That the aim of an elder shouldn't just be something that you say, oh, well, I'm not qualified for that, but you should be striving to be upright.

You should be striving to be lovers of good. Church, you play a vital role in those seasons of confrontation as well.

No, your role is not to gather up stones on the front yard and bring those deceivers out here, bring those people who are acting bad out, and we'll give them one.

It's not your job to go out to the trees and the woods and start to put a lynch together to get rid of the people who are not acting in accordance with God's words.

No. You have a vital role in those seasons of confrontation, but it's a balance of being firm with the word of God and also grace, and not incorporating compromise the least bit.

[ 42 : 00 ] There is no compromise in sound doctrine, church. When the integrity of the gospel, when gospel issues are at stake, or when the unity or the doctrine of the church is at stake, this is always a fight worth engaging.

If wisdom is knowing which battle to fight, and then also when to fight that battle, when it's a gospel issue, or when the unity of the church, or the doctrine of the church is at stake, it is always a fight worth engaging.

This is the charge of not only elders, but Christians all together. Guess what? The Lord Jesus has given you guys a sword in your hand too, just along with the elders.

He's given you a shield. He's preparing you for battle. It's not just the job of, yeah, here, let me talk, I'll bring it to thy elder. He'll help you with this one. Yeah, we're here to support you, but you have weapons in your hand, and the biggest weapon right here, known as the word of God, to win consciences, not win arguments.

Be on guard with us as we shepherd you. Be on guard with us as we shepherd you. Don't fall for a Christ-plus theology. Don't fall for spiritual seducers that lurk around the boundary lines of the church that are kind of just waiting for moments to just prowl upon you like a little cub or a lion.

[ 43 : 34 ] Don't fall for it. Don't fall for theological pornography. Don't fall for cotton candy preachers or cotton candy messages or doctrine.

It looks enticing, but man, it's got no substance, and trust me, it's not healthy to eat that. It may look good. It may sound good. It might have a little bit of truth, but it is a dead-end road.

This was Titus' circumstance in Crete. Let's not forget the existence of similar circumstances in our own lives and relationships today. This is for us today, church.

Let's be on guard. Let's pray. Let's pray. Thank you.