



“Leading Difficult People”

Titus 1

Lesson 8

In A Nutshell

Not all people are easily led. This lesson will challenge you to commit yourself to support leaders even when they need to deal with difficult people. Local churches need the stabilizing strength of people whose commitment to truth is stronger than their feelings for people.

To The Testimony!

The Authority Required For Dealing With Difficult People

- Titus 1:1
- Matthew 23:11
1. Paul does not spend as much time on himself in the introduction of Titus as he did in the first chapter of 1 Timothy. But he does use his salutation to state a few things about himself. What two labels does Paul use for himself in verse 1? Think about what the labels mean. How are they different?

- Titus 1:1-4
2. Paul speaks of God's eternal plan for the salvation of sinners when he describes his ministry. His servitude and apostleship were utilized for the faith of God's elect. What did Paul's leadership have to do with the promise of eternal life made by God "before the world began" (vv. 2-3)? What does this say about the way people should have responded to Paul's leadership?

From The Honeycomb

v. 3, *preaching (kerugma)*

"proclamation or announcement by herald"

This is a word which refers especially to giving the gospel to the lost. Here is a list of verses where we find this word used elsewhere in the New Testament. After each verse, write a note about what that verse teaches us about "preaching" to the lost world around us.

Matt. 12:41:

1 Cor. 1:21:

1 Cor. 2:4:

1 Cor. 15:14:

2 Tim. 4:17:

The Character Required For Dealing With Difficult People

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| Titus
1:5-8 | 3. The purpose of Titus' ministry in Crete was to ordain elders (bishops/overseers/pastors, v. 7) in every city. These leaders should have a godly character, and this character is described by Paul with another list of qualifications in verses 6-8. Which qualification or characteristic is repeated here? Why would Paul emphasize this qualification when dealing with difficult people? |
| 2 Samuel
12:13-14 | |
| Ps. 15:4 | |
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The Method Required For Dealing With Difficult Leaders

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| Titus
1:9-11 | 4. A popular topic among apostate Baptists has been "intellectual freedom." Some conservatives in denominations like the Southern Baptist Convention continue to support the ministries of false teachers at their seminaries because they claim that Baptists have always held to "intellectual freedom." Traditional distinctives, like the separation between church and state and soul liberty, have been misconstrued to mean that each |
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individual has a right, an “intellectual freedom,” to believe and teach what he wants. (Jump ahead to *Real Life?* for an illustration of this view in action.) What do verses 9-11 teach about the pseudo-Baptist idea called “intellectual freedom?”

From The Honeycomb

What is a *gainsayer*” (Titus 1:9; *antilego*)

Look up the other usage of this word, and define the term *gainsayer*.

Acts 13:45, “But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and _____ those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.”

Acts 28:19, “But when the Jews _____ it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar.”

Acts 28:22, “But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is _____.”

Titus 2:9, “Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not _____.”

Titus 1:12 5. Paul moves on from the false teachers, with whom godly leaders must deal, to another set of difficult people, the Cretans themselves. Here he is not focusing on false teachers but on those who might “give heed” to this false teaching. How does Paul describe Cretan society in the first century? Would this be a fair characterization of American society today? Why or why not?

Psalm 26

Titus
1:13-14

6. How must godly leaders deal with people like the people of Crete?

2 Chron.
17:7

Jer.
1:10

Titus
1:15-16

7. In verse 15 Paul refers to the Jewish teaching that some foods were unclean and some were clean. Here he describes those who follow that teaching as defiled and unbelieving. He describes their mind, conscience, words (profession), and works. With regard to which of these four aspects of behavior do these people appear to be righteous and faithful? How can we recognize someone who is defiled and unbelieving? What should be our criteria for evaluating people the way Paul did?

Matthew
7:20-23

Real Life?

Rick worked with Joe, a member of a Southern Baptist church in town. Joe had joined the company about a year ago, and Rick was happy to have another Christian he could work with. For five years he had worked the shipping/receiving docks of Trucking Inc. without much sympathy from his co-workers. They knew he was a Christian and did not want much to do with him. Rick will never forget how happy he was when Joe actually tried to witness to him in the back of a trailer they were off-loading together.

One Monday morning Joe looked a little down. When Rick asked if everything were OK, Joe assured him it was. Joe was troubled, though, by something his pastor told him yesterday. Joe had heard that one of the Christian colleges his church supported had hired a man who believed in evolution rather than creation. Joe's daughter, Barbara, attended the school, and Joe's concern was more than academic. He thought his pastor would be able to help, but to Joe's dismay, the pastor said he did not see a problem with the school. He said that Baptists believe in soul liberty and intellectual freedom. He assured Joe that evolution was wrong, but then told Joe that, as Baptists, we recognize the individual right of someone to believe in evolution. According to Joe's pastor, Baptists have always held this view.

Rick was also a Baptist. He attended Grace Baptist Church, an independent church where they had just finished this lesson in Sunday School. He understood Joe's concern for his daughter and opened his Bible to Titus 1. What do you think Rick shared with his friend Joe? (See question 4)