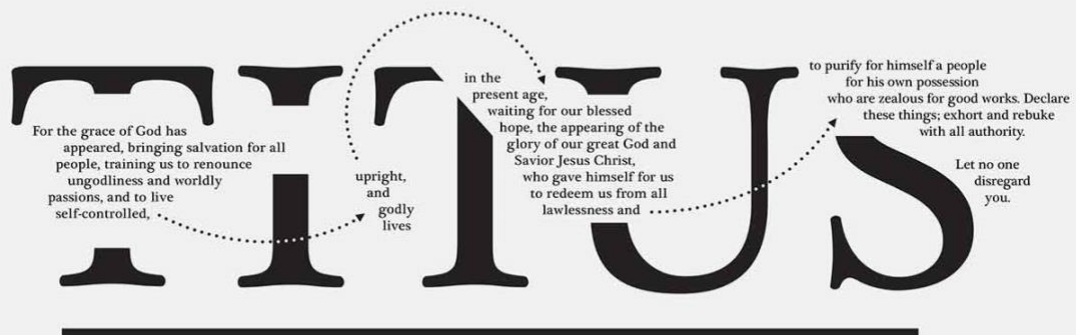




Swartz *FBC* Leader Discussion Guide



SCRIPTURE: Titus 1:5-16

SERIES: Titus

TITLE: The Healthy Church Blueprint

BIG IDEA: Paul shows Titus God's blueprint for healthy churches in plural, healthy, truth-centered, leadership and how that model applies in Crete.

SUMMARY

John Stott helps us understand what is happening in this text in his commentary:

"Paul gives two reasons why he had *left Titus in Crete*. The first was that he *might straighten out what was left unfinished*. Paul has mixed his metaphors, since one straightens out what is crooked, whereas what is unfinished needs rather to be completed. The English versions reflect this uncertainty. *According to the rsv Titus was 'to amend what was defective'*, and according to the *reb 'to deal with outstanding matters.'* In particular, and secondly, because this was evidently the chief unfinished business, Paul had left Titus in Crete *to appoint elders in every town, as I*, writes Paul, using the *egō* of apostolic authority, *directed you* (5b). For the main way to regulate and consolidate the life of the church is to secure for it a gifted and conscientious pastoral oversight.

Verses 6–16 set in dramatic contrast the true elders Titus is to appoint (6–9) and the false teachers whom the elders are to silence (10–16). The apostle paints a graphic picture of each group."¹

¹ John R. W. Stott, [*Guard the Truth: The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus*](#), The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 173.

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⁵This 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—

⁶if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife,^[a] and his children are believers^[a] and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷For an overseer,^[a] as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound^[a] doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

¹⁰For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party.^[a] ¹¹They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. ¹²One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." ¹³This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, ¹⁴not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth. ¹⁵To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. ¹⁶They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

1. GOD'S PLAN FOR CHURCH HEALTH IS PLURALITY IN LEADERSHIP.

- Why do you think Paul instructs Titus to appoint elders and not just one leader in the churches?
- How does plurality help guard from error and promote health?
- What are the things that needed to be “put into order” in Crete?
- What evidence of God's care for the church do you see in this text?

Application Question: Are we making the church more, or less healthy?

2. HEALTHY CHURCHES REQUIRE HEALTHY LEADERSHIP.

- Why is healthy leadership among all leaders so vital to church health?
- In what ways are all believers called to be leaders?
- Why is it important to note that these qualifications are to reflect character and fruit rather than perfection?
- What does this text reveal about the importance of Scripture and its function in our lives?

Application Question: Are we submitting ourselves to the instruction of the Word?

3. HEALTHY CHURCHES HAVE ONE AGENDA – THE TRUTH.

- Why are the things Paul is addressing so dangerous in the church?
- In what ways does Paul show Titus the needs of those in the wrong?
 - How does he seek to help those being deceived AND those who are being deceivers?
- How can rebuke be a grace instead of a punishment?
- What does it look like for a church to have the truth as it's only agenda?
 - What agendas tend to creep up that can take attention away from the true focus of the church?

Application Question: Is your agenda the truth?