

January 8, 2017

How to...A Semi-Complete Guide to Straighten Out the Church Part 1

Straighten Out Doctrine –

Titus: Chapter 1

"To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure."

Titus 1:15

A. Titus, a young pastor...

1. Titus was a Gentile companion of Paul in his church planting missionary journeys. Titus was a close, trusted partner with Paul.

"But I had no peace of mind because my dear brother Titus hadn't yet arrived with a report from you. So I said good-bye and went on to Macedonia to find him." 2 Corinthians 2:13 NLT

"We have been greatly encouraged by this. In addition to our own encouragement, we were especially delighted to see how happy Titus was about the way all of you welcomed him and set his mind at ease. I had told him how proud I was of you—and you didn't disappoint me. I have always told you the truth, and now my boasting to Titus has also proved true! Now he cares for you more than ever when he remembers the way all of you obeyed him and welcomed him with such fear and deep respect."

2 Corinthians 7:13-15 NLT

"But thank God! He has given Titus the same enthusiasm for you that I have. Titus welcomed our request that he visit you again. In fact, he himself was very eager to go and see you."

2 Corinthians 8:16-17 NLT

"If anyone asks about Titus, say that he is my partner who works with me to help you. And the brothers with him have been sent by the churches, and they bring honor to Christ." 2 Corinthians 8:23

2. Written around AD 63 and most likely in Corinth.
3. The church at Crete was probably started by visiting Jews at Pentecost.

"(both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans, and Arabs. And we all hear these people speaking in our own languages about the wonderful things God has done!" Acts 2:11

4. Crete was an island notorious for its untruthfulness and immorality. ("To act the Cretan" meant "To play the liar.")

"One of Crete's own prophets has said it: 'Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons.'" Titus 1:12

B. Straighten out doctrine...

"Such people claim they know God, but they deny him by the way they live. They are detestable and disobedient, worthless for doing anything good." 1:16

1. Our beliefs must be biblical.
2. Our beliefs must be supported by all of Scripture.
3. Our beliefs must be shown by our lifestyles.
4. Our beliefs must be seen by how we are governed.

C. We believe that leaders need to live a holy life and must be...

"An elder must live a blameless life." Vs 6

1. Of good character and integrity.
2. Faithful to their families.
3. Disciplined personally.
4. Hospitable to others.
5. Believers of their message.

"He must have a strong belief in the trustworthy message he was taught; then he will be able to encourage others with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong." Vs 9

D. We believe there are destructive patterns to avoid...

1. Guard your conversations; avoiding useless talk and deception of others.
2. Guard your listening as well as your conversations. Both are destructive.
3. Protect your heart and mind.
4. Do not be afraid to confront and protect the body of Christ as there are spiritual lives of whole families that are being destroyed!

"There are six things the LORD hates—no, seven things he detests: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the innocent, a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, a false witness who pours out lies, a person who sows discord in a family." Proverbs 6:16-19

Coming next week:

January 15 - Straighten Out Groups –Titus Chapter 2

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all me." Titus 2:11

January 22 - Straighten Out Lives -Chapter 3

"But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy." Titus 3:4-5a

January 29 - Straighten Out Your View -Philemon

"Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me." Philemon 1:11

5 Dangers of the Church Cartel

He was shocked.

The pastor was leading change in the church. The church was growing and vibrant. But a couple of weak staff members didn't like the direction and expected accountability. They teamed with the known church bully and went before the personnel committee. They presented their perspectives.

The pastor never was asked his perspective. He could have fought the weak personnel committee and likely won. But he didn't want to tear apart a church he loved.

He resigned.

For the sake of the church he loved, he resigned.

He was yet another victim of the church cartel.

A church cartel is an alliance of bullies, bully-followers, carnal Christians, and even non-Christians in the church. Its ultimate goal is to get its way. It feeds off of selfish power.

We don't like to talk about church cartels. After all, it's not the Christian thing to do. But they exist in too many churches. And if they are not exposed, they will continue to wreak havoc.

Here are five of the very dangerous realities of the church cartel:

When a cartel is allowed power, the church is already unhealthy. The cartel is, by its definition, self-centered and power-driven. A church is already very sick if members remain silent and do not confront this evil directly.

A church cartel leaves carnages of wounded and dying people. If you have any doubts about this danger, please see my post on "[Autopsy of a Deceased Pastor](#)." See the comments. See the pain and questions and defeat the cartel leaves behind.

Church cartels drive away healthy leaders. Some of these leaders are driven away by the cartel. Others leave on their own accord because they want to be in a joyous and healthy church. Their departure exacerbates the problems in these churches.

Church cartels cause church leaders to work from a posture of fear. Instead of moving forward in faith, church leaders often spend more time worrying about how their decisions will impact the cartel. These leaders know the cartel will come after them if they go contrary to the carnal group's wishes.

We are told in Scripture to manifest the fruit of the Spirit; the church cartel causes the church to do just the opposite. Galatians 5:22-23 is clear about the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control. Church cartels bring hate, discord, anxiety, impatience, evil, fear, brutality, and chaos. Churches that have cartels usually know they are present. They know who the bully is. They know who the bully followers are. They see them. They hear them. And they often fear them.

Courageous leaders must confront and stop church cartels. If no one is willing, the church is already on a path toward decline and death.

Written by Thom Rainer