

## How to Grow Up Spiritually Titus 1:9-16

### Introduction:

1. Why did Paul write this book to Titus? Because he wanted Titus to remain on the island of Crete and get the local churches up and going and functioning properly. vs. 5
2. Paul knew they needed godly leadership in these churches so he told Titus to ordain elders in the churches. He even told Titus what to look for when looking for leaders. vs. 6-8
3. As we have been studying this, we have seen that these characteristics are simply the marks of spiritual maturity. Paul says, "Titus, you need some grown-up believers in these leadership positions, and here's what to look for."
4. But here's the question - how do we grow up in our spiritual walk? How do we become mature in our faith? There is a great phrase in verse 13 that typifies spiritual maturity.
  - The phrase is "*sound in the faith.*"
  - The word "sound" means "spiritually healthy, whole, and mature." **Illustration:** The doctor says, "Your heart condition is very sound."
5. How do we become sound in the faith? How do we grow up spiritually? Verse 9 has the answer for us. There are three keys.

### We must have:

#### An intake of God's Word.

1. As Titus was looking for mature believers to lead the churches, Paul told him to look for those who were "*holding fast the faithful word.*"
    - "Hold fast" means that they have a firm grip on God's Word. There is a steady intake of God's Word.
  2. The Bible is the Christian's spiritual food. **1 Peter 2:2**
    - True spiritual growth will not take place apart from a steady diet of God's Word.
    - There are believers who have been saved for years, yet are still baby Christians. Why is this? They are not hungering and desiring God's Word (it's not a priority).
  3. There were religious teachers on this island who were supposedly teaching people about God, but they were **not** giving them God's Word, rightly divided. vs. 9-11
    - They were doing a lot of talking (vain talkers), but Paul says they were teaching things which they ought not.
  4. In verse 14 Paul revealed what they were teaching.
    - Jewish fables - religious stories designed to get your faith to rest in human experience. They were storytellers.
    - Commandments of men - human-based, religious traditions and rules
  5. These false teachers had a lucrative, religious machine operating. vs. 11
    - People love to feel religious and they love to hear warm and fuzzy stories. This is why they were able to subvert whole houses. This sounds like America today.
- 2 Timothy 4:3-4**
- Churches all over town are meeting to perform religious ceremonies and hear motivational stories and talks that are peppered with a little Scripture.
6. You will not grow up spiritually this way. This is why Paul said their "*mouths must be stopped*" and these false teachers must be rebuked by mature believers who know the Word.

### **A teachable spirit to learn God's Word.**

1. In verse 9 notice the phrase, "...as he hath been taught..."
2. Why were these men sound in the faith? Because they had been **taught** God's Word.
  - You can take in God's Word, but that doesn't mean that you have digested it, learned it, and understood it. There needs to be some learning taking place. **2 Timothy 3:14**
3. People can sit in church week after week and never grow. Why is this? Because they do not have ears to hear. Jesus said, "*If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.*" **Mark 7:16**
  - Ladies, have you ever said to your husband, "I'm talking, but you're not listening?"
4. A great example of this is found in **Hebrews 5:12**.
  - Why did they have to be taught **again**? Obviously, they didn't get it the first time.
  - Why didn't they get it? Verse 11 says they were dull of hearing. The word "dull" means that they were spiritually lazy (just entertain me - I don't want to have to think - let me do a few mindless religious rites and feel good about myself).
5. This was indicative of the culture at Crete. vs. 12 (They liked to sit around and tell tales.)
  - The false teachers had catered to the culture, giving people what they wanted. Instead of steak, potatoes, and vegetables, they were giving them cotton candy.
  - People were eating it up, the religious teachers were bringing in the bucks but people were not truly growing spiritually. vs. 16 (Surveys have showed that there is little difference today in lifestyle between Christians and non-Christians.)
  - We have more mega-churches than ever before, but culture hasn't gotten any godlier. Why is this? Because churches have catered to the culture.
6. Stories and church tradition do not change people. Truth that has been digested and learned changes people.

### **The daily use of God's Word.**

1. There is a purpose and reason behind studying and learning God's Word. Paul says in verse 9 "*...that he may be able...*" In context, these mature believers would be able to take what they learned and use it to confound these false teachers and protect believers.
  - What is sound doctrine? It is spiritual truth from God's Word.
2. Here's the point: the intake of spiritual truth is to be **used**. You take what you have learned and apply that truth to the details of your life. **Hebrews 5:14**
  - **Titus 1:1** - the intake of truth should lead to godliness (thinking and acting like Christ).
  - **1 Timothy 4:7** - exercise thyself unto godliness (take the truth you've learned and practice it (exercise it) in your daily life learn it on Sunday, practice it on Monday).
3. There are people who know God's Word, but they refuse to apply it to the details of their life. This results in a prideful, puffed up attitude, but not spiritual growth.

### **In Conclusion:**

1. As you apply God's Word to the details of your life, you begin to view all things through spiritual eyes. vs. 15
  - He didn't say all **actions** are pure, but all **things**. **1 Timothy 6:17**
  - Things can either be used in a pure way or be corrupted.
2. It's the truth of God (taken in, learned, and used) that purifies our thinking to allow us to view things and use things correctly.
3. Are you growing spiritually? If not, isn't it time? God's truth can change your life and the entire way you look at life.