

Week of October 1 - 7

More Do's and Don'ts of Christian Living (Ephesians 4:1-6:24)

Paul discusses the unique abilities God gives to Christians and asks, "Why does God give us special abilities?" He says God equips his people so they will be equipped to do better work for him, building up the church to a position of strength and maturity until we all believe alike about our salvation and Jesus. Then we will no longer be like children, forever changing our minds about what we believe because someone told us something different or has cleverly lied to us and made the lie sound like the truth. Instead, we will lovingly follow the truth at all times and become more and more like Christ, Who is the Head of the church. The whole body is fitted together perfectly, and each part helps the other parts, so the entire body is healthy, growing, and full of love.

Then Paul provides a list of how a Christian should live:

- Live and act like you have been chosen for wonderful blessings
- Be humble and gentle
- Be patient with each other
- Make allowance for each other's faults
- Be led by the Holy Spirit and be at peace with one another
- Don't live as the unsaved do, blinded and confused
- Throw off your old evil nature which was rotten, full of lust and sham
- Be a new and different person, holy and good.
- Stop lying to each other; tell the truth
- Don't nurse your grudge, but get over it quickly
- Stop stealing and do some honest work
- Don't grieve the Holy Spirit
- Stop being mean, bad-tempered, and angry
- Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another
- Follow God's example in everything you do
- Be full of love for others
- No sex sin, impurity, or greed is allowed
- No dirty stories, foul talk, and coarse jokes are proper
- Be thankful for God's goodness
- Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins
- Don't even associate with such people
- Do only what is good and right and true
- Learn what pleases the Lord
- Take no part in the worthless pleasures of evil and darkness.
- Don't be fools; be wise, making the most of every opportunity for doing good.
- Don't act thoughtlessly, but find out what the Lord wants you to do
- Talk with each other about the Lord, singing psalms, hymns, and sacred songs
- Don't drink too much wine, but be filled with the Holy Spirit and controlled by Him
- Talk with each other about the Lord

- Wives, submit to your husbands' leadership, honoring Christ
- Husbands, show love to your wives as Christ showed love to the church, dying for her
- Children, obey your parents, honoring them
- Parents, don't keep scolding and nagging your children, making them angry and resentful
- Slaves, obey your masters, eager to give them your absolute best
- Slave owners, treat your slaves right, not threatening them
- Put on all of God's armor so you can withstand the strategies and tricks of Satan
 - The strong belt of truth
 - The breastplate of righteousness
 - Shoes that speed you on as you preach the Gospel
 - The shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows aimed at you by Satan
 - The helmet of salvation
 - The sword of the Holy Spirit, which is the Word of God
- Pray all the time for anything in line with the Holy Spirit's will
- Pray for all Christians everywhere, and for Paul

Summary of Titus

Titus is one of the three pastoral epistles along with 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy written by Paul to Titus and describes elders and bishops' requirements and duties.

Titus wasn't mentioned in Acts but was noted in Galatians, where Paul wrote of his trip to Jerusalem with Barnabas, accompanied by Titus. He was then sent to Corinth, where he successfully reconciled the Christians there with Paul. Titus was later left on the island of Crete to help organize the churches, and later met back with Paul in Nicopolis. Later, he went to Dalmatia and served as the first bishop of Crete. He was buried in Crete, but his Head was later removed and sent to Venice during the invasion of Crete by the Saracens in 832 and was enshrined in St Mark's Basilica in Venice.

Titus' Task in Crete (Titus 1:1-16)

In the Spring, Crete is covered with crickets that make the noise, "cretete." The island is windy, sandy, smelly because of the fish, but alive with prostitution and drunkenness' Paul is training Titus to be a leader in the churches setting things in order where they are lacking and to ordain elders.

He says, "Titus, I left you there at Crete so you could do whatever was needed to help strengthen each of the churches, and I asked you to appoint pastors in every city who would follow the instructions I gave you. The men you choose must be well thought of for their lives; they must have only one wife, and their children must love the Lord and not have a reputation for being wild or disobedient to their parents. They must be men of blameless lives, and they must not be proud or impatient. They can't be drunkards or fighters or greedy for money. They must enjoy having guests in their homes and must love all that is good. They must be sensible men and fair. They must be clean-minded and levelheaded. Their belief in the truth they have been taught must be strong and steadfast, so they'll be able to teach it to others and show those who disagree with them where they are wrong.

“There are many who refuse to obey, and this is especially true among those who say that all Christians must obey the Jewish laws. But this is foolish talk and blinds people to the truth, and it must be stopped. Already whole families have been turned away from the grace of God. Such teachers are only after your money. One of their men, a prophet from Crete, has said about them, “These men of Crete are all liars. They are like lazy animals, living only to satisfy their stomachs.” Please speak to the Christians there as sternly as you can to make them strong in the faith and stop them from listening to Jewish folk tales and the demands of men who have turned their backs on the truth.

“They claim they know God, but from seeing the way they act, one knows they don't. They are rotten and disobedient, worthless so far as doing anything good is concerned.

Paul is clarifying that anyone can claim to be a believer, but he can deny God with his actions. They may think they are saved and teach the truth, but their actions deny God even though they claim otherwise. Their actions prove what is true, but Christians show what they truly believe by what they do.

What Titus is to Teach (Titus 2:1-15)

Paul encourages Titus to teach what is scriptural. He gives examples of how believers should behave, including being self-controlled. He says, “that the free gift of eternal life is now being offered to everyone and God wants us to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures and to live good, God-fearing lives day after day, looking forward to that wonderful time we've been expecting when the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ shall be seen.”