



Small Group Guide: Titus 1.5-9

Open with Prayer

What comes to mind when you hear the phrase "above reproach"? How would you define it in your own words?

Discussion Questions:

1. **Icebreaker/Recap:** What stood out to you most from the sermon—perhaps the rapid 30-year growth from Pentecost to the Cretan church, or the idea that "as leaders go, so goes the church"? Share one takeaway and why it resonated.
2. **Historical Reflection:** The sermon traced church expansion from Pentecost (Acts 2) to Titus's time, fueled by the Great Commission (Matthew 28). How does this story of growth through persecution and disciple-making inspire you about God's work in chaotic times? Can you share an example from your life or our church where "God's plan worked even in chaos"?
3. **Order vs. Disorder:** God is described as a God of order (1 Corinthians 14.33,40), while Satan sows chaos and division. Where have you seen disorder (e.g., in a church, family, or workplace) lead to hurt, as the sermon warned? How can embracing godly order protect people and reflect God's peace in those situations?
4. **Leadership Qualifications:** Titus was tasked with appointing elders who are "above reproach" in three areas: marriage/family (v. 6), character/conduct (vv. 7-8), and sound teaching (v. 9). Which of these qualifications do you think is most challenging in today's culture, and why?
5. **Worldly Flash vs. Godly Standards:** The sermon contrasted worldly traits (like charisma or success) with God's requirement for resolute leaders who rise above reproach. Reflecting on our church's past leader choices, have we ever prioritized "flash" over biblical qualities? How might that have impacted our witness, and what can we learn for the future?

6. **Personal Application:** The sermon encouraged aspiring to elder-like qualities, even if not in leadership (1 Timothy 3.1). In your own life, which area from Titus 1.6-9 (family, character, or doctrine) do you need to grow in to live "above reproach"? How can the group pray for or support you in that?
7. **Forward-Looking Action:** Churches are called to reflect God's holiness, where "any shadow of reproach dims His radiant light." What one practical step can our group take this week to promote order and disciple-making in our church?

Key Takeaways:

1. **Order is God's Non-Negotiable Command: Disorder Hurts, But Order Protects** God demands structure in His church through qualified leaders, as seen in Titus 1.5 and 1 Corinthians 14.33,40. Just as chaos wounded the early churches in Crete and Corinth, ignoring order today leads to pain and division.
2. **Reject Worldly Flash & Seek Leaders Above Reproach:** The world chases superficial traits like charisma or success, but God requires resolute leaders who are "above reproach" (Titus 1.6-7)—trustworthy examples without blame, not perfect saints. This protects the gospel's reputation and ensures imitation of worthy lives (1 Timothy 3.1-2).
3. **Elders Must Excel in Family, Character, and Sound Teaching:** Qualified leaders shine in three areas: faithful marriage/family (v. 6), godly conduct (vv. 7-8), and a solid grip on true doctrine (v. 9). This builds a healthy church that reflects God's light in a watching world.

Practical Applications:

1. **Evaluate and Pray for Your Church Leaders Regularly:** Set aside time each week (e.g., during your quiet time) to pray specifically for your elders and pastors, using Titus 1.6-9 as a guide.
2. **Reject "Flash" in Leadership Choices—Prioritize Biblical Standards:** If you're involved in nominating or voting for church leaders (e.g., in a congregational meeting—sorry a little late, I know), create a simple checklist based on Titus 1.5-9 to focus on character over charisma, success, or popularity.
3. **Cultivate "Above Reproach" Habits in Your Own Life:** Aspire to elder-like qualities by auditing one area weekly: family relationships (v. 6), personal conduct (vv. 7-8), or doctrinal knowledge (v. 9).
4. **Promote Order and Disciple-Making in Your Church Community:** Volunteer to help organize a church event or small group, emphasizing "decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14.40) to prevent chaos (e.g., Our Back to Church Sunday Breakfast, hehe).

Closing Prayer in Prayer