

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Men Who Must Be Silenced, Part 1

Scripture: Titus 1:10-11

Code: 56-10

Titus chapter 1, and the text that we'll be looking at starting today is verses 10 through 16. I want to read it to you and I want you to follow carefully. Titus 1 beginning in verse 10, "For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach, for the sake of sordid gain. One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.' This testimony is true. For this cause reprove them severely that they may be sound in the faith, not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient, and worthless for any good deed."

It's not hard to come up with a title for this particular text. I've chosen the title, "Men who must be silenced," as it indicates in verse 11. And what the text is saying there is they must be gagged. Their voices must be made inaudible. They must be muzzled. They must be restrained from speaking, they must be forbidden to talk.

Paul is saying to Titus this young man who is going to be putting the churches on the island of Crete in order, "In doing this you must muzzle certain men. You've got to deal with them. You've got to deal with false teachers who upset the purposes of God."

This is not unlike Paul's first epistle to Timothy, or even his second for that matter. Go back to chapter 1 of 1 Timothy and see the similar words in verse 3, "I urge you upon my departure from Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus in order that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths, and endless genealogies which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith. But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. For some men straying from these things have turned aside to fruitless discussion, wanting to be teachers of the law even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions."

In other words, Paul says, "Timothy, if you're going to do the work in Ephesus, if you're going to strengthen the church, you too must silence those who teach error." And he says the same thing to Titus.

Part of spiritual leadership is this, silencing people who should not speak. In verse 9 of Titus chapter 1 you remember that elders are to be able to hold fast the faithful Word, they are to be able to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict. And here you find the compelling reason why that is so, because the church is inundated with people who must be silenced.

Now frankly, this is very relevant. I can think of many people in our day that should be gagged, muzzled, forbidden to speak. And I'm talking about not only in the church but even outside the church. I can think of a long list of people who could serve society far better if they were silenced. Our world, by the way, would be a far more tolerable place, a far more enjoyable place, a far safer place if certain people had not spoken. James was profound when he wrote in chapter 3 that the tongue is a fire releasing a fire storm of iniquity setting the whole course of life on fire with the very flames of hell. That little piece of human anatomy is potentially disastrous...the tongue. It is a system of evil in itself, spewing out the filth of a depraved heart, contaminating all of life with hellish lies. The psalmist promises in Psalm 63:11 that the time will come when God stops the mouths of those who speak lies. Psalm 107:42 says the time will come when God will stop the mouths of the unrighteous, He will silence them. He even said to Israel, there's going to come a time...in Ezekiel chapter 16 verse 63...when you're going to be so ashamed that you will never open your mouth any more because of your humiliation. God is going to humiliate you because of what comes out of your mouth.

The time will come when God will shut the mouths of the wicked. Romans chapter 3 says in describing the sinfulness of man that it can be ascertained, the depth of his depravity can, by taking a look at his mouth. His throat is an open grave, verse 13. His tongue keeps deceiving, the poison of asps or snakes is under his lips, his mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. That's why Isaiah classified himself among the human race as a sinner with the words, "I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Nothing is more demonstrative of depravity than the tongue. Nothing more clearly evidences our fallenness than the things we say. And the time will come when God will shut the mouths of sinners.

Some of us have already had our mouths shut. You say, "What do you mean by that?" Romans 3:19 says that God when He brings us to the conviction of sin by understanding His law and our own sinfulness stops our mouths. Stops our mouths from blasphemy, yes...and stops our mouths from silly, foolish, untrue claims to self-righteousness.

There are plenty of people who need their mouths shut. There are plenty of men and women who need to be silenced. The mouths of wicked people have blasphemed God, propagated lies about Him, purveyed iniquity, propagated subtle deceptions and hypocrisies that have set the circle of life on fire and released the demonic flames of hell. Most of what a society is is a result of somebody's words. We could certainly wish that God would silence those who speak in inflammatory ways, those whose tongues, as James said, are full of restless evil and deadly poison.

Now you could come up with a long list, even a contemporary list of people who you would like to silence. It might include some politicians, leaders, world leaders, philosophers, psychologists, comedians, teachers, professors, religious figures, media personalities, journalists, talk-show hosts and audiences, entertainers, writers, musicians, poets and even preachers. Their mouths should be stopped. They should be gagged. They should be muzzled. They should be silenced because of the destructive and deadly poison that comes from between their lips.

One of the means of dealing with irresponsible speech in ancient times was to simply cut the offender's tongue out. Proverbs 10:31 may have that in mind when it warns, "The mouth of the righteous flows with wisdom but the perverted tongue will be cut out." And perhaps there's even an allusion to that in Proverbs 12:19 which says, "A lying tongue is only for a moment, it can be cut out."

God wants people who will speak His Word...His truth. And so do we. And so did Paul. And his instruction to Titus is very, very important. Titus, it isn't enough to teach truth, you've got to silence certain people. When God wanted to use Ezekiel as His mouthpiece, when God wanted to use Ezekiel as His spokesman, His prophet, first He had to silence Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 3:26 and 27 it says, "God spoke and said, I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you will be dumb. But when I speak to you I will open your mouth." God says I'm going to make your tongue cleave to the roof of your mouth, you're going to be dumb. That is to say...I don't want to hear anything from you, I'll open it again when I speak it through you. God wants people who speak His truth.

I suppose you may have prayed that God would silence certain people, I sure have through the years. I suppose I could put together a very long personal list of people I wish God would silence. I wish you would do a supernatural work and cut their tongue out. Then there are times when I think to myself...if He starts cutting tongues, I may get my own cut because he who never offends with the mouth is a perfect man.

But part of the ministry of leadership in the church is to silence certain men. They must be muzzled, gagged, made dumb. And apparently a fairly large group of them existed on the island of Crete in the various cities there and in the churches. And young Titus who is now in Crete and is left with the responsibility according to verse 5 of setting in order what remains and of ordaining elders there, has as one of the formidable tasks for himself and the elders and the churches the silencing of these false teachers because of their deadly and destructive teaching. Obviously this issue described in verses 10 to 16 is one of the compelling reasons why you have to have elders who are qualified by the qualities in verse 9, as I noted. God is not going to supernaturally cut out their tongues. The church can't do that. We can't go around cutting the tongues out of people that we disagree with. God has decided to give them a little bit of space before He silences them physically. But we now have the task of silencing them until God silences them. He may silence them by salvation, making the tongue

of their former life cleave to the roof of their mouth and causing them only to speak His truth, He may silence them in death.

But in the meantime, we must silence them. How we going to do that? Let me suggest three ways. Number one, we silence them by revoking their right to teach or speak. We can silence them by revoking their right to speak. That is to say we give them no platform. We give them no opportunity. We take away the privilege of teaching. Scripture always shows us how God protects His people from the teaching of error. He never desires that they be exposed to it in the name of equal time, or in the name of open mindedness, or in the name of academia and scholarship. We can silence them by giving them no place to speak.

I think Paul was, in effect, saying that to Timothy when he wrote in the first letter chapter 4 verse 7, "Have nothing to do with worldly fables." And in verse 6 he said, "You be constantly being nourished on the words of the faith and the sound doctrine." And at the end of that letter, chapter 6 verse 20, "Guard what has been entrusted to you." That was Scripture, revealed truth. Guard what has been entrusted to you, avoid worldly empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called knowledge which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith. Stay away from that stuff.

Second Timothy 3:13, "Evil men and seducers or imposters will proceed from one level of badness to another." They'll go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. And then he goes on to say..."And you stick to the Scripture which is able to make the man of God adequate, equipped for every good work." That's all you need.

We can silence them by taking away their platform. We don't do that in our day. We put them on radio. We put them on TV. We publish their books. We let them have rallies in our churches. We propagate their tapes.

I was sitting at lunch with a publisher and I said to him, "I want to ask you a question...why in the world would you publish Benny Hinn's book Good Morning, Holy Spirit?" A book that in its original edition before it was fixed had nine members of the trinity and assorted other strange fantasies. "Why would you publish that?"

And his answer, and I quote, was very straight forward, he said, "Oh, we publish everything."

That was it.

There is an obligation on the part of Christianity to give voice to some men and to silence others. And we silence them by taking away their platform.

Secondly, we silence them by overpowering them with truth. We silence them with the truth. Jesus did that and He did it over and over again with the Pharisees and the scribes and the Sadducees. They spewed out their human philosophy and their quasi religious musings and he cut them to shreds with divine truth. In Matthew 22:34 it says, "Jesus silenced the Sadducees." He shut their mouths because they became overpowered with truth.

In other words, when we speak the truth so clear and precise, so apparent and so powerful, those who have been teaching error run to hide in the embarrassment of their ineptitude. That's one way. It's wonderful to see some false teacher get a platform and then to see someone just present overpowering truth and watch that false teacher retreat.

People always ask me why I write controversial books. Well this is one reason. I can't cut the tongue out of false teachers. I can't physically silence them. I can't take away their platform. I don't have any means to do that. But what I can try to do is to overpower their influence by teaching truth so that people who read what they say and read what the Bible says are going to clearly see the error. You can knock the props out from under them by overpowering them with truth and then hopefully watch them retreat. That's a very important thing to do.

Now some people think that that's just beligerence. But it isn't. Even my wife said to me one time not many months ago, "Why do you always write these controversial books?" It was in the middle of some mail barrage, and she said to me, "Why don't you just write a book that everybody likes?" I said, "Are you feeling a little pressure, my dear?" "Yes," she said, "why don't you just write a book that everybody likes?" And basically I said, "I'm trying."

But it doesn't always work out that way. No, the real issue is I'm not...it's not a personal agenda with me, it's not some personal animosity, or jealousy or bitterness or attitude of wanting to harm somebody for his own sake, but it is the tremendous passion that I feel to silence error by overpowering it with truth. That's the point. And that is a very viable means by which we do that. And it seems as though it's so..it's so ubiquitous it proliferates to such a degree that I never run out of issues to deal with.

There's a third way that I think we silence men who must be silenced and that is we silence their speaking by means of holy living...by means of holy living. Divine truth, the truth of God produces holy living. Peter, 1 Peter 2:15 says, "You silence the foolishness of ignorant men by your holy conduct." You see, if you look closely at a false teacher, you're going to find the lack of virtue there. You're going to find that no matter what he says about knowing God and all of that kind of thing, when you get behind the surface that his life is in disarray and filled with sin because error doesn't produce virtue. And if those who teach truth live holy lives, then they silence false teachers.

Listen carefully. If those who teach truth live unholy lives, they contribute the chaos. Because the question is going to come...if you're so right why are you so messed up? If this is the Word of God, why are you the way you are? If I'm preaching the power of God and I'm caught with prostitutes, you're going to have to ask how powerful God is, right? No, I think we silence them by...one, taking away their platform...two, overpowering their error with truth, and...three, by means of holy living and people should be able to look and see false teachers and their followers and by their fruit know that there's no righteousness there and therefore there's no truth there and they should look and see the virtue and holiness and godliness of the church of Jesus Christ that is committed to the truth and say...it's obvious that they have the truth of God, look at their lives.

So, you don't put false teachers on a platform. You don't give them a class in college or seminary. You don't give them a Sunday-school class. You don't give them a Bible study. You don't put them on radio, television or publish their books. You silence them. And policing this problem is really the work of the elders in the church.

I was sitting on a stool one Easter Sunday afternoon a few years back and I was having a conversation with Paul Moyer. They were doing a special Easter television program and the well-known anchor man here in Los Angeles, Paul Moyer and I were conversing and he was talking about Easter. They were doing this special emphasis on Easter Sunday. And it was at the very time when the Bakker scandals were flourishing. And there were a number of other things that had been brought to light in terms of religious charlatanism. And I will never forget what he said to me. He said to me, "John," he said, "I just want to ask you a question. You don't agree with all of this? You don't think it represents what you believe, these kind of scandalous things. Why don't you police your movement?"

And my immediate answer was, which was on camera, "I'm not in charge of it. I can't control it. But what I can police, I must police. You understand that? It may not go beyond the walls of my church or it may. I spend a lot of my time in ministry related to this church but I spend at least an equal amount of my time beyond this church confronting error on other fronts."

I received a phone call last night from Japan...how to cope with trouble in the church. That's not unusual for me to deal with that. We have gained a reputation of being sort of interested in doing a little to help the church police these issues.

So, Paul says to Titus...let's go back to our text..."Look, Titus, you've got to pick men who are godly, you've got to pick men who can handle the Word and then you've got to use those men to come alongside the church and silence the men who need to be silenced."

Now I want to divide these verses into three simple components...the description of these men, the reaction to these men, and the evaluation of these men. These three things will show us why they need to be silenced. This morning we'll look at the description of the men who must be silenced, and it will help us to know, obviously, why they need to be silenced.

First of all, let's look at their proliferation. First point under the description is their proliferation...verse 10, "For there are many..." stop right there.

That just hit me. I wish it had said, "They'll show up now and then," or "There are a few," or "Watch out, you might get one." But it doesn't. It says there are many.

And the "for" there connects it into verse 9...the reason you have to be able to refute those who contradict and do it ably and capably is because there are so many of them. And it seems as though every false teacher has got his own twist and his own nuance. And you've got to deal with him on his own level. The standard of verse 9 is necessary because of the abundance of false teachers. The "for" there doesn't limit the need for qualified leaders just to situations where there are false teachers but it certainly ties in very well. There are many, numbers of them to be muzzled. They are a force all over the island of Crete, he's saying. They're all over the place. The church obviously needed help, I mean, they didn't even have spiritual leadership yet and there were a lot of things that were out of joint and out of sync and needed to be put in order. But one thing had already happened in that young church and that was the proliferation of false teachers. They're just everywhere.

And as always, there's an abundant supply of these liars with an abundant supply of lies and I can just tell you, folks, I spend hours and hours and days and months and years of my life sorting through error. It's just endless. You just get one issue dealt with and you've got to deal with another one. And that means studying and examining, comparing with Scripture. They're everywhere. And they associate with the church. They get close to the church, they get in the church.

First Timothy 4, Paul says, "In later times some will fall away from the faith, they'll pay attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons by means of the hypocrisy of liars seered in their own consciences with a branding iron." These liars are going to come, they're going to teach demon doctrine that's empowered by seducing demonic spirits and people are going to buy into it.

In 2 Peter chapter 2, "False prophets also arose among the people just as there will also be false prophets among you. They will secretly bring in destructive heresies, deny the Master who bought them, bring swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, not a few but many, many teachers and many who follow. And because of them the way of truth will be maligned. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words." They're everywhere.

The New Testament characterizes these men who attach themselves to the church as destructive to the faith, cruel, deceitful, covetous, ungodly, proud, ignorant, hateful, unprofitable, vain and at all costs they are to be silenced. At the end of Romans as Paul closes that great doctrinal letter, he says, "I urge you, brethren," verse 17 of chapter 16, "keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned. And turn away from them for such men are slaves, not of our Lord Jesus Christ but of their own appetites and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting." Be aware, after all I've told you doctrinally that some people are going to come in and try to teach something else.

To the Galatians he says, "Let them be accursed if they fool with the gospel." Peter says they are headed for destruction. Their judgment isn't sleeping very long. There are many of them. That's their proliferation.

Look at the second aspect of this description...their behavior. They are described as rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers. Rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, that describes really their behavior. Their behavior, first of all, is rebellious. That is to say they are unruly and they are out of control. The church can't control them. They don't respond to spiritual authority. They don't respond to the control of the elders. They don't even respond to the control of the Scripture or the Holy Spirit, God Himself. Here they are, professing Christians, somehow identified with the church, associating with Christianity, refusing to submit to the authority of the church, to the authority of the Scripture, to the authority of leaders, spiritual leaders. False teachers want to associate with the church but they never want to come under its authority.

You've watched, haven't you? When some of these false teachers get caught in their sin and the church tries to act authoritatively toward them, they bolt that authority. They don't want anything to do with that. They don't want to submit to that. They don't want to acquiesce to that. They function in independence from God, from the Word of God and from the church of God and its spiritual authority. They want to be independent. They want to be on their own. They don't want to answer to anybody for what they teach. So inevitably they have an independent church or an independent ministry usually with their own name associated with it. They just simply call it whoever they are and that's the authority. Very often the only board they have is made up of their family, or some cronies in their association and it would never be representative of historic biblical theology because they wouldn't want to be accountable to that.

We have an independent church. You say, "Well aren't we in a similar situation?" Not really because I am accountable every day of my life to the authority of the elders of this church, a group of thirty-plus men who understand that Scripture. I'm accountable to a seminary faculty who sit here and listen to me preach, who read my books before they're ever published, who interact with me on issues, a faculty at the Master's College, much the same, close friends. Beyond that I was ordained by a group called "The Independent Fundamental Churches of America," the IFCA. They have

hundreds of churches across America. There is a council of people. I have to sign a doctrinal statement. I have to ascribe to that doctrinal statement. When I was ordained, I'll never forget it, I had to go through so many hoops I couldn't believe it. It was a long, drawn-out process, it was very good and that's why it's much like the process we now use here in our church. I'm still a member of the IFCA and glad to be because I want accountability to that great group and to their very, very, very comprehensive doctrinal statement. But when I went in to the IFCA they grilled me. We had private sessions and it all came to a culmination after many private sessions and a public meeting with about 300 to 350 pastors and they were given the privilege of asking me anything they wanted to ask me.

And, you know, they've all got their own pet little deal and I don't remember all about it, I remember it was a grueling experience that went on for hours. I do remember one guy stood up and asked me please to name all of the preexilic, exilic and postexilic prophets and give their dates. And I knew...somebody told me he was going to ask it, so I knew it, but if you ask it tonight, I'm not answering you.

But I went through that gruel...listen, a few years ago the IFCA had some questions about what I believed. And I flew to Philadelphia and I went before another six or seven hundred people in an auditorium and they asked me questions and a panel was sitting there with all these questions to check on my doctrine. And afterwards, I went out into a small room with an executive committee and they...they asked me more questions about my theology. You see, people who teach error bolt from authority. They don't want accountability, they don't want responsibility, they don't want to submit, they are rebellious men...verse 10 says. They're under nobody's control.

Secondly, he says they are empty talkers. Shakespeare said it this way, "They're full of sound and fury signifying nothing." They are smooth and they are fluent and they are persuasive. And listen, if they're not you never heard of them. They are smooth and persuasive and fluent and they have nothing to say, absolutely nothing. It's like sucking in flavored air to listen to them. Their talk accomplishes nothing, they are empty-headed and their talk is nonsense. It is unbiblical fantasy. It is the musings of their own warped imaginations and not the truth of God. The sad part of it is Christian bookstores are full of that stuff.

The third thing he says about them is they're deceivers, literally mind deceivers. They deceive the mind. They make the mind that people think this is truth when it isn't. They are seducers of people's minds. And there are always going to be people who want to have their ears tickled, 2 Timothy 4, and they're going to want teachers like that who tickle their ears and tell them fancy imaginative things, tell them fantasies and wonderful mystical things that things that make them feel good. So that's their behavior. They are rebels who have nothing to say and yet they use their nonsense to deceive people.

These behaviors mark all false teachers. But in Crete there was a special group of them made up of Jews. Now we're starting to hone in on the specifics of what was going on in Crete. At the end of verse 10 he says, "Especially those of the circumcision." That term "the circumcision" tells us these were Jews. The word "especially" can have the sense of "in other words," or "most specifically what I'm talking about is the circumcision." And what that tells us was there were some Jews there who were the primary articulators of this heresy. In fact, the circumcision, quote/unquote, could just be a synonym for Jews. But probably in the light of Galatians chapter 2 verses 7 through 12 it has reference to what Paul there called the "circumcision party" which would be a sect that sort of got its way into Christianity and said, "Yes we're Christians and we believe Jesus is the Messiah but you can't know God unless you have been circumcised and you have maintained the Mosaic ceremonial law." That's the circumcision party. These Jews were teaching the rebellious non-sensical deceptive stuff that we associate with Judaizers who say, "Well yes, it's fine to believe in Christ but we've got this other stuff that you have to follow and we don't care what the church says we reject that," there's that rebelliousness again, "we have this inside information, this stuff about keeping all the Mosaic Laws and being physically circumcised as a requirement for salvation," and with that nonsense they were deceiving people in Crete. They needed to be silenced.

Verse 16, they profess to know God. Obviously they were connecting with the church and saying, "We belong, we know God." They were probably saying, "We know God a lot better than you do because we're circumcised and we keep the Mosaic Law and ceremonies." There would almost be a sort of gnostic tone to this statement in verse 16, they're feeling themselves elevated above everybody else and having some mystical knowledge of God which certainly would also be associated with verse 14, the Jewish myths that they had concocted, the allegories and mythical fantastic things that they conceived to be represented by Old Testament teaching. They thought they had ascended to another sort of gnostic Judaistic level and they knew God in a higher way than anybody else because they had been circumcised and they had the secret interpretations of the Old Testament and they had concocted all these commandments and rules and they were abiding by them and keeping all the ceremonial laws. And they were saying to Christians, "You only believe in Christ, you're on a very low level, you don't know God until you ascend to the level we're on," our esoteric mystical level which also involved very physical things like circumcision and ritual.

We don't know the exact form of this heresy. There's really no need to know it. We just need to know it was heresy. And at its heart it was putting confidence in myths and human commandments rather than in Christ and believing that circumcision and the keeping of certain rituals and ceremonies could save.

No doubt they had gained access to the pulpits. They were what Philip Keller called in his little book, "predators in the pulpit," there to chew up the sheep. They had gained access to the teaching platforms and they had found opportunity to propagate and deceive with their nonsense.

But it wasn't so much in the pulpits that they were doing their damage as it was in the private place, look at verse 11, and move to their effect. We see their proliferation, their behavior, their effect, verse 11, "Who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families."

Why do false teachers go after you in isolation? Because they want to pull you apart from the church. They want to isolate you. If a false teacher comes into your Sunday-school class and gives his stuff, immediately after the class somebody is going to come if you're confused and help you to see the truth. If a false teacher comes into your school, the other professors say in your seminary who know the Word of God are going to point out where he made his errors. But if they can get you in your house where there's nobody else to help you, that's, you see, why the cults even want to come in and do a private Bible study with you, they want to cut you off and isolate you from the source of your strength, the body of Christ. They pick on families.

In 2 Timothy 3 look at verse 6, it says, "False teachers enter into households, and literally creep into households, and captivate weak women weighed down with sins and led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." They take advantage of women. They take advantage of women who have guilt, who have problems they can't solve, they can't resolve and they come into the household to do that. They attack at the point of vulnerability.

You say, "Well how does that relate to today?" I'll tell you how, radio, television, books, magazines, pamphlets that get you in an isolated environment. There are people who sit in front of the television and suck up error without any ability to discern or any help.

In 2 Timothy 2:14 Paul says, "Remind them of these things and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers." The overthrow, katastrophe, the catastrophe of ruining people with error. Verse 16, "Avoid this worldly empty talk, it just leads to asebeia, ungodliness, not godliness." And verse 18, "What it does...the end of the verse...is upset the faith of some." This false teaching comes in and just overturns, upsets families, ruins people's confidence in Scripture in the church, in their pastor. Unstable souls, Peter says, 2 Peter 3:16, are devastated by this kind of stuff. Peter talks about, 2 Peter 2:18, people just escaping, just emerging from error moving toward truth get hit by these people. And there they are, penetrating the private place to propagate their error.

He says in the same verse, verse 11, as to their effect, "They are upsetting whole families by teaching things they shouldn't teach." They have no right to teach them. They say they're the truth of God and they're not. They misrepresent God's Word. It's so common today. In my book on Charismatic Chaos have large sections confronting those today...some of those today who misrepresent God's Word...who misrepresent God and Christ as to His nature and work. By doing all of this they have the effect of producing confusion, doubt, chaos, upsetting whole families, turning them topsy-turvy in

chaos and confusion.

Then Paul mentions their motive, and we'll stop there. Their proliferation, there are many. Their behavior is described very clearly as rebellious, nonsense and deception. Their effect is to upset whole families because they teach what they shouldn't teach. And their motive, end of verse 11, "For the sake of sordid gain." We talked about that, didn't we, back in verse 7. Elders are not to be fond of sordid gain, false teachers are. That leads me to say that whatever the elders are by quality in verses 6 through 9 is exactly the opposite the false teacher. If the elder is above reproach, obviously the false teachers aren't. If elders are to be one-woman men, false teachers are not one-woman men, obviously. They have no moral control. Error doesn't help them control themselves. True elders have children who believe and are not accused of dissipation or rebellion in contrast to the children of false teachers.

True pastors and elders are above reproach as God's stewards, they are not self-willed, not quick tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain. On the other hand, false teachers are self-willed, quick tempered, addicted to wine, pugnacious and they love money. They are not hospitable, they don't love what is good, they are not sensible, they are not righteous, they're not devout and they're not self-controlled and they don't handle the Word right. There's the contrast. And I think it's that contrast is sort of all inherent in that statement in verse 11 that they do what they do for the sake of sordid gain. They're the opposite of God's chosen leaders. They're in it for the money. False teachers are all in it for the money, except for a few fanatical derranged lunatics, false teachers will quit doing what they do when the money runs out. That's what they're in it for. If there's no money, there's no point in doing it. It's all designed to pander their own appetites, to feed them money.

In 1 Timothy, that's why Paul in giving the qualifications there to Timothy of one who serves in the church in a leadership role says, "You're not to be...you're to be free from the love of money and godliness a means of great gain," chapter 6 verse 6, "when accompanied by contentment." First Peter 5:2 says, "We don't do what we do for filthy lucre." False teachers do. They're in it for the money. That's the whole purpose of it.

We have to silence these people. We have to silence them by taking away their platform. Don't put them on the radio. Don't put them on television. Don't print their books. We have to silence them. The church has got to wake up to this. We've got to silence them because they proliferate. They're all over everywhere and in their proliferation their...their inherently wicked nature has a negative effect on people...it overturns, upsets, creates chaos, doubt, confusion in the church. And don't we know they do it for money?

Well, there's more to be said about the description of them and that has to do with their character. And we'll see that next time.

Father, we come to You this morning very much aware of the importance of this text. We know the day in which we live is loaded with these people. And it seems as though with media being the way it is in our age, their access to people is even greater than ever. Maybe at one time in history people might run in to a few false teachers, and now we can almost not prevent running into a myriad of them. They're thrust at us. Lord, help those who are in spiritual leadership to realize that part of the responsibility that we have is to silence these who speak error. Lord, give us the wisdom in the church. Raise up leaders in the media, the Christian media who are wise and discerning and who will silence those who speak error and give voice to those who speak for you. Help us in the church to understand our responsibility, even in our local church to defend our precious flock from the predators. Help us to know that we must watch and warn for greivous wolves intend to come in not sparing the flock. And even of our ourselves, perverse men will rise up and lead astray. Father, give us the passion for truth that leads us to accept the challenge to silence certain men and keep Your church committed, keep our church committed to Your truth. In the Savior's name. Amen.

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