

Introduction: External Righteousness

- The human religious impulse has always led people to seek ways to achieve some sense of _____.
- In the OT, God provided through the Law the means by which sin could be atoned for (_____) and defilement removed (ritual _____).
- These external means, even those commanded by God, could never deal with the root problem of sin because it is an internal matter of the _____.

Key Point: Through Christ, God has accomplished once and for all what external rituals could not. There remains, however, a _____ impulse within sinful man to seek a righteous standing through external means.

Addressing False Teaching

Titus 1:13b-14—Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, ¹⁴ not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.

- **The response of Titus to the false teaching must match the *seriousness* of the threat.**

"sharply"—ἀποτόμως (*apotomōs*)—Abruptly. Sharply, severely, curtly.

⇒ Titus must not delay, but must _____ and _____ address these teachers and those who have embraced them.

- **The goal of the rebuke is that those who have been deceived might turn from their *error*.**

"that they might be sound in the faith"—ὑγιαίνω (*hygiainō*)

⇒ In order to be sound in the faith, a person must embrace 'healthy' _____.

"not devoting themselves"—προσέχω (*prosechō*)—(figuratively) to hold the mind towards, i.e. pay attention to, be cautious about, apply oneself to, adhere to.

⇒ The specific error had its basis in _____ tradition.

"Jewish myths"

"the commands of people"

Isa. 29:13-14—¹³ And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men, ¹⁴ therefore, behold, I will again do wonderful things with this people, with wonder upon wonder; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish..."

Key Point: Titus must set an _____ for the leaders in the churches of Crete by rebuking the opponents of the true Gospel and seeking to restore those who have fallen away through instruction in sound doctrine.

The Impotence of a False Gospel

Titus 1:15-16—¹⁵ To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. ¹⁶ They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

- **The false teaching seems to have been specifically related to the concepts of '*purity*' and '*defilement*'.**

⇒ Paul draws a _____ between those who are 'pure' and those who are 'defiled.'

The 'Pure'

The 'Defiled'

- **Nothing is pure for the ‘defiled’ because they do not understand the true Gospel and have not received its *benefits*.**
“minds” *“consciences”*
 ⇒ The emphasis is on the internal _____ of these unbelievers. (*defiled*)
- **Although these people claim to be rightly related to God, their *way of life* shows that this is not the case.**
“deny”—ἀρνέομαι (*arneomai*)—To disclaim association with a pers. or event, deny, repudiate, disown
“their works”
 ⇒ Their denial of the _____ of the work of Christ is a denial of God Himself.
- **Their *works*, which they believe make them pure, actually render them unfit for the true work of God.**
“detestable” *“disobedient”*

Key Point: Although they emphasized external purity in their teaching, their reliance on their _____ was a rejection of the person and work of Jesus Christ and therefore they remained defiled.

Concluding Thoughts

1. **There is a human tendency to seek to _____ ourselves based on external works.**

_____ →

⇒ The problem is that what defiles us originates within us!

Matt. 15:17-20—¹⁷ Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? ¹⁸ But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”

2. **It is only through the work of Jesus Christ that we are _____ from the defilement of sin.**

Titus 3:4-7—⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

3. **Just as legalism is insufficient for our justification, it is so as well for our _____.**

⇒ Our works do not alter our righteous _____ before God in Christ.

Rom. 3:21-24—²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

⇒ Our _____ to the commands of God comes not through our own power, but through the power of Christ in us.

Rom. 6:17-18—¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

4. **Being made righteous before God and cleansed of our defilement renders us _____ for the work of God.**

Questions for Reflection:

1. In what ways do those of the surrounding culture seek some kind of ‘righteous’ standing?
2. In what ways am I prone to be legalistic in my Christian life? (What things that I do or don’t do give me a ‘sense’ of righteousness? To whom am I prone to compare myself?)