



# TITUS

G O D ' S H O U S E H O L D











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**CHRISTIAN POLITICAL WITNESS**  
**IN AN AGE OF TOTALITARIAN TERROR**  
**AND DYSFUNCTIONAL DEMOCRACIES**

# **JESUS** **AND** **THE** **POWERS**



**N.T. WRIGHT &**  
**MICHAEL F. BIRD**






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On the one hand, there were some churches in the diocese that were proudly Reformed in their preaching. These churches were steadfastly committed to the authority of Scripture, savored the doctrines of grace, and faithfully proclaimed the message of the cross. For in that message, they rightly saw the heart of the gospel: the atonement, justification by faith, and Jesus giving himself as a sacrifice for us.





They loved Paul's epistles, but found it harder to discern the same package in the Gospels. It was almost as if Jesus, his kingdom-message and healings, were just the warm-up to Paul's letters. In fact, as long as Jesus was born of a virgin and died on the cross, he could have lived in Swansea or New Jersey for all it mattered, and in any period of history. Jesus was just a divine prop for Paul's message of the cross. What that had to do with the kingdom was a bit of a mystery.






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GOD'S HOUSEHOLD



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On the other hand, other churches in the diocese were committed to Jesus' kingdom as a message and way of life. For them, discipleship meant the imitation of Jesus, living out the parables of Jesus, praying for the sick, cultivating compassion and assisting those in poverty. As they read the Gospels, they saw Jesus as a pioneer of social justice, to the point where some even thought that it was such a shame he was crucified so young, because he was on quite a roll.



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Such churches were very comfortable with the Gospels, but struggled with the Pauline epistles and the letter to the Hebrews. Surely Jesus was a champion of the marginalized and oppressed, and that's where the Church should be now. The fixation on his crucifixion, death and paying our moral debts all sounded too macabre or medieval to them.





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GOD'S HOUSEHOLD



## == TITUS 2:1-8 ==

But you [Titus], speak what accords with sound teaching. Older men are to be temperate, above reproach, self-controlled, sound in faith, love, endurance. Older women likewise are to be priestlike in their behavior, not slanderous or enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good...



## == TITUS 2:1-8 ==

so that they can advise the younger women to love their husbands and their children, to be self-controlled, pure, doing good work in the home, submissive to their own husbands, so that the word of God might not be blasphemed.



# == TITUS 2:1-8 ==

Likewise, exhort the young men to be self-controlled in all things, showing yourself to be an example of good deeds, incorrupt and serious in teaching, sound in speech that is beyond reproach, so that the one opposed will be shamed, having nothing base to say about you.



# == TITUS 2:11-14 ==

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.





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**The key to these letters is this:**

**Their chief subject is the organization of Christian ministry in such a way that combats the false teaching Timothy and Titus are told to confront. They will be able to do that, in part, by establishing the leadership and community standards that we find primarily in 1 Timothy and Titus.**






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GOD'S HOUSEHOLD





Paul says the gospel is powerful enough to transform someone into a new creation who then becomes an agent of change within culture, whether you live on the island of Crete or in urban Portland, Oregon. You don't need to retreat from culture or wage a culture war to do this. In fact, don't do that, nor should you assimilate the worldly values of our day, which look a whole lot like the Cretans.





Rather, the grace of God can train (literally, “educate”) you on how to live out Spirit-empowered faithfulness to the teachings and ethics of Jesus within the world. And as you live out this counter-cultural gospel in reliance on the Spirit, you’ll declare God’s goodness and grace to your family, neighbors, co-workers, friends, communities, and the whole world! You’ll be doing redemptive theology for the outsider, showing them the beauty of the message about our saving God.



**The key to these letters is this:**

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