

ALL AUTHORITY

“These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.” (Titus 2:15)

When hearing the words “all authority” our minds probably focus on Christ Who said that “all authority in heaven and earth” had been given unto Him (Matt. 28:18). Now we are probing a passage commanding Titus to “teach”, “encourage” and “rebuke” with “all authority”. Obviously this command to Titus is not in conflict with the words of Christ, but it is still worthy of our serious consideration.

For those students of the Greek language it is important to note that two different words are used in the above passages. Jesus was given all “exousia” and Titus was to use all “epitage”. “Exousia” comes from the impersonal verb “exesti” which means “it is lawful”. “Epitage” comes from “epitasso” (Literally “epi” upon, and “tasso” to order). Whatever the difference may be, it cannot be denied that Titus was to do something both authoritative and bold. The word “epitage” is found seven times in the Scriptures. In the KJV it is translated 6 times as “command” and once as “authority”. Titus was to be crystal clear and unequivocal in teaching “these things”.

But what are “these things”?

No! They are not the things that denominations divide over. No! They are not the things that find their way into denominational creeds and sectarian confessions. The “sound doctrine” that Titus was to teach involves common sense that is above controversy. In fact, the word “sound” in Titus comes from “hugiano” which is the basis of our English word “hygiene”. What Titus was to teach with such clarity was actually “healthy” and “wholesome”.

- Older men are to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith love and endurance (Titus 2:2). Anybody want to break away and start a new denomination over this?
- Older women are to be reverent, and not slanderers or alcoholics. Further, they are to teach the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self controlled and pure, busy at home, kind, and subject to their own husbands (Titus 2:3 - 5). Have you ever seen this incorporated into a new creed or catechism?
- Young men are to self controlled and Titus was to be a good example to them in integrity, seriousness, and soundness of speech (Titus 2:6 - 8).
- Slaves were to be respectful and subject to their masters. They were not to steal and demonstrate that they could be fully trusted (Titus 2:9 - 10).
- All believers are to say “no” to ungodliness and worldly passions. We are to live upright and godly lives as we wait for the return of our blessed Savior (Titus. 2:11 - 14)
- Then Titus was told: **“These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.” (Titus 2:15)**

Unfortunately, many throughout Christian history, have been dogmatic and authoritative about doctrines that are not “hygienic and wholesome”. In fact, it is absolutely diabolical when the children of God divide over gifts that our Heavenly Father gave to unite us. Here are a few embarrassing examples.

- God gives His Holy Spirit to promote harmony and love - but we divide over the Holy Spirit.
- God commanded one baptism to unite a fractured world - but we divide over baptism
- God gave us the Lord’s Supper that we being many might be One Body - but we divide over the Lord’s Supper,.
- God promised that the devil would be bound for a thousand years - this good news ought to unite us, but instead it has become a major source of controversy and division.
- God gave us His Holy Word that it might be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path, but we argue and debate about almost every verse in the Bible.

Yes Titus! You are to teach certain truth with all authority. That truth, however, is to be wholesome and without controversy.