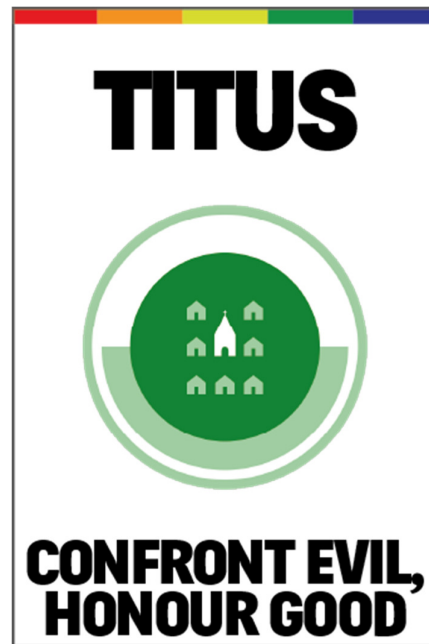




BIBLE IN A YEAR 2020



Summary

Paul writes to Titus giving him instructions about how to reform the house churches in Crete. His basic theme is confront the evil and corruption in society and honour the good in society.

Owen Lynch

Wednesday June 17

Confront evil, honour good

Every day we're reading or listening to part of the Bible together and sharing thoughts with you. Today it's Owen Lynch:

What did I like about today's reading?

So here's a whole letter in one day! It's pretty short though which I like!

Quick background - Crete (apart from having azure blue skies and white sandy beaches) is like Heathrow airport - a strategic hub in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea where most people travelling across the Roman Empire will stop off (remember they went by boat not plane then). So Paul was super keen to establish new churches there, which he did years before this letter.

Cretans had a reputation for dishonesty. One of the Greek words for being a liar was Kretizo or Cretan! Their main cultural influence was their god Zeus who had a reputation for seducing women and lying to get his own way!

Paul wants to be really clear - God who is revealed by Jesus is not a liar (see 1:2) - he is faithful, honest and full of integrity.

It seems from this letter that the leaders of the house churches are rather more like Zeus than Jesus. So Paul does two things, he tells Titus to appoint new leaders and confront the corrupt ones.

We must understand that "churches" in Crete were households of about 20-30 people not institutions. So the leader of each church was usually the grand-parents or parents of each home, multi-generational families lived together, along with their employees and slaves and together they would have a family business.

Paul urges them all to allow the love of God in Jesus to shape their ethics and behaviour - to reject what is corrupt but retain what is good about Cretan ethics and culture.

I love that - confront corruption and evil and embrace and honour what is good. Sounds like a principle for living well.

What did it show me about Father God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit?

It shows us that Jesus gave himself to redeem all humanity from corruption and evil (2:14). As I reflect on recent protests against racism, I have been dismayed by the endemic nature of racism in our society, both historically and currently. I am encouraged that Jesus is progressively redeeming this corruption not just in our institutions but also in every single person.

What am I going to do differently as a result?

I will try to embrace that principle to confront corruption and evil, firstly in myself, but also in society, and honour all that is good in our society.

Who am I going to share this with?

I will share this with the wider staff team next week in our thought for the day.