

# ***The Crucial Role of Spiritual Leaders***

*Three things spiritual leaders equip us to do – Titus 1:1-5a*

**Key Idea:** God places spiritual leaders over us so that we can experience the sort of personal transformation that ultimately shapes a culture. This involves three things:

## **1. WE GROW – God places leaders over us so we will experience progressive spiritual transformation. Titus 1:1**

- A. The end goal is godliness: *“truth, which is according to godliness.”*
  - 1. What godliness (and ungodliness) meant in Greek culture and in Paul’s theology.
  - 2. How godliness applies to us as disciples.
  - 3. To get there we need three things...
- B. First, we need good leadership: *“Paul, a servant of God and an apostle”*.
  - 1. Notice grace-truth concept. This is humble but empowered leadership.
  - 2. Notice that it begins with humility. Other biblical figures were called servants of God.
- C. Second, we need the strengthening of faith & knowledge: *“faith...and knowledge of the truth.”*
  - 1. Faith and reason are not opposed; they go together.
  - 2. We need leaders to give us biblical content, and challenge us to trust God more.
- D. Third, we need insight into the majesty of God: *“[faith] of the elect.”*
  - 1. Most versions say *chosen*; the Greek word is *elect*. God picked us out beforehand.
  - 2. Our response to this should be a sense of honor. *Illus: parents adopting a child.*

## **2. WE SPEAK – God places leaders over us so we can share our story and point the way to Jesus. Titus 1:2-3**

- A. Our story is a story of hope. (**Definition:** Hope is expectation with desire.) 1:2
  - 1. The content of our hope is eternal life, both quantity *then* and quality *now*.
  - 2. The effect of our hope is that our core longings and purpose are fulfilled.
  - 3. The confidence that stems from this hope is rooted in God’s character and his word.
- B. Our story is crystallized in a proclamation. 2:3a
  - 1. It’s called *the* proclamation, suggesting a specific message. Lk. 24:46-47
  - 2. There are foreshadowings in the OT, but fully realized in the New. 1 Cor. 15:1-5
  - 3. Question: Do we need a more robust gospel?
- C. Our story is a stewardship to be shared: *“entrusted according to the commandment”* (2:3b see also, Mt. 28:18-20; John 20:21).

## **3. WE SERVE – God places leaders over us to stir us to action with the right motives. Titus 1:4-5a**

- A. Paul stirs Titus to action through love: *“true child...grace and peace.”*
  - 1. We have to understand who Titus was and what Titus did.
  - 2. Paul motivates Titus by granting fatherly love and blessing.
  - 3. We need leaders in our lives who encourage us with familial tenderness.
- B. Paul stirs Titus to action by reminding him of the community nature of faith: *“common faith.”*
  - 1. There are sociological similarities to the faith that cut across cultural lines.
  - 2. Titus needed to remember this as he ministers in a challenging culture.
- C. Paul stirs Titus to action by entrusting him with a challenging task: *“I left you on Crete.”*
  - 1. Crete was a small island with an illustrious history & with city-state rivalry.
  - 2. Crete had a culture based on gaining advantage through lying. (See Constable, 1:2.)

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3. Crete was currently dealing with false teachers who damaged the cause of Christ.