

BALANCED BIBLICAL MINISTRY – A Study of Ephesians 4:15; Titus 1:9-13

The theme of our online ministry outreach from the very outset has involved an emphasis upon speaking God's truth with an attitude of love to those who are in need of learning it and living it. In Ephesians 4:15, the apostle Paul stresses the importance of such a balance in ministering to others. But that symmetry between truth and love must be applied to the specific need of the moment for the edification of the individual in question. At times this will require a gentle touch. On other occasions, a stronger hand may be needed. This is why there is no contradiction between what Paul encourages us to do in Ephesians 4:15 and his admonition in Titus 1:9-13 –

“ . . . holding fast the faithful word which is accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain. One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, ‘Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.’ This testimony is true. For this reason REPROVE THEM SEVERELY (emphasis added) so that they may be sound in the faith . . .”

In these five verses, Paul amplifies upon the need for a balanced Biblical ministry. This is made especially clear in v9, as well as v13. In Titus 1:9, the chief skillset of a spiritual leader is presented as a both/and responsibility: “so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.” Paul isn't encouraging spiritual leaders to be good at debating. Instead, they must be so thoroughly conversant with sound doctrine that they can effectively counteract the insidious and undermining influence of false teachers.

Titus 1:13 also serves as an additional point of practical application to v9. The context (v12), reveals what Titus was up against in ministering to those believers on the isle of Crete. Paul doesn't hesitate to admonish Titus in doing what would be necessary in bringing those new converts to spiritual maturity in Christ. Namely, “severely reproofing” their sinful behavior, as well as their obvious lack of character; with that severe reproof serving a positive spiritual purpose: “so that they may be sound in the faith.” Therefore, Ephesians 4:15 as well as Titus 1:9-13, provide us with a complete picture of a balanced Biblical ministry, in perfect harmony with the New Testament's teaching in regard to Christian discipleship.

Those of us who are taking a stand against the corruption of last-days apostates within American Evangelical Christianity, face an equally difficult challenge. Thirty years of political pied piper indoctrination can't be overcome overnight. It will require the “severe reproof” spoken of by Paul, if any victims of this trend are to be restored to that positive spiritual condition of being “sound in the faith.” Sound doctrine, when expressed as severe reproof, will often produce opposition, either in the form of false teaching, sinful behavior or a stubborn unwillingness to repent of the error of one's way. This is why our online ministry is currently seeking to expose the falsehoods of Dominion Theology, by maintaining the balance expressed in Titus 1:9b. Rather than directly confronting the proponents of this heresy and engaging in an endless debate which resolves nothing, our goal involves presenting a positive, Biblically-based survey of the Kingdom of God on earth: past, present and future. In so doing, we can fulfill the both/and purpose of Titus 1:9b: exhorting in sound doctrine and refuting the Dominionists who are contradicting it. We will continue to do our very best in preserving such a balance in everything we teach.

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