



Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



Episode 170 - Reading Someone Else's Mail

(Titus)

Paul's main purpose in writing to Titus was to instruct him how to organize the leadership for the church on the Mediterranean island of Crete, and to teach the Christians there how to live out their faith. To live a Christian life we rely on God's power to enable us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions. The word translated "renounce" means to deny or cut ourselves off from these sinful desires.

- What does our battle against worldly passion look like in the different stages of our lives (youth, middle-age, senior years, single, married, parents, etc.)?

To be betrayed by someone is a bitter experience, and God demands our total allegiance in this respect. God said, "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God" (see Exodus 20:5). And Jesus said, "If anyone would follow Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matthew 16:24b).

- Discuss what is really happening when someone is betraying someone else (consider Judas Iscariot).
- What is going on when you deny yourself and your sinful, worldly passions?
- Why is it important to distance ourselves from our sinful desires with God's help?

Working while We Wait

Early Christians expected Jesus to return in their lifetimes. As a result they were confused about what they should do while they were waiting. Paul instructed Titus to urge believers to share the news of God's coming judgment and His gracious rescue through His Son Jesus Christ our Savior.

- What role do our good deeds play in our Christian witness to our families and the people around us?
- Discuss what it means to be "zealous, deeply committed" to doing good deeds.

Preventing Splits in Our Congregations

Our sinful nature runs deep, and some people love quarreling, debating and controversies.

- What experiences have you had with divisive people?
- How do you decide which controversies are worth having and which are stupid, unprofitable and futile?
- Paul instructed Titus to avoid factious people, after admonishing them once or twice. How can church leaders and members prevent someone from disturbing and dividing a congregation with phone calls, letters, e-mails and texts, if you are avoiding them?