

**Xenos Christian Fellowship**  
**Christian Ministry 2**  
**Week 5 – Epistles Inductive Study, Part 1**

Editors' note:

- *Italics (lower case or ALL CAPS) show what students should write in their student outline.*
- **Bold (including bold italics and bold ALL CAPS) shows what appears in the student outline.**
- Regular text is used for lecture notes; ALL CAPS are used for emphasis.

**What is an epistle?**

- *A letter*

When we read an epistle, we're reading someone else's mail! The New Testament Epistles were written by Apostles (e.g. Paul, Peter, John) to individuals (e.g. Timothy, Titus) and to churches in various towns (e.g. Colossae, Philippi) and regions (Galatians). Despite the personal nature the Epistles, they are God's word, just like the rest of scripture (1 Cor. 14:37,38; 2 Pet. 3:15,16).

- **An "occasional document"** – *a document written to address the specific situation, questions & needs of an individual or group.*

Letter writing is usually prompted by a specific *occasion*—circumstances arising in the lives of the recipients or the author. The epistles often contain clues that help us understand what prompted the author to write his letter.

e.g. Paul's letter to the Galatians was prompted by the damaging effect of false teaching on the churches of Galatia. People in these churches were being led into doctrinal error by Judaizers who were insisting that certain Jewish practices were still binding on Christians. See 1:6,7 and 5:7-10.

**Good question to ask: What occasion prompted the writing of this letter?** Knowing the occasion helps the reader understand features of an epistle that may not make sense in isolation.

e.g. The strong language in Galatians ("I fear for you that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.") only makes sense when we understand the circumstances surrounding the letter.

**Studying the Epistles**

**The basic unit of study in the epistles is a paragraph.** The original letters didn't have paragraph divisions. They were added later. And different translations use different paragraph breakdowns. But if you read the epistles, you can see that they are a series of thoughts/commands, expressed in paragraphs, that work together to make an overall argument.

In order to correctly interpret and apply a paragraph in an epistle, you must study *the* paragraph itself and the book that contains it. In other words, you have to understand the details in the paragraph AND how the paragraph fits into the book as a whole. Both steps are necessary. If you were from outer space, and you landed your spaceship on one of the greens of a golf

course, you could do a very careful analysis of the type of grass used on the green, the soil beneath it, the burm around the green, the surrounding bunkers, the hole, the flag, and so on. You might even be able to tell that the green is periodically struck by small spherical objects that leave deep impressions in the grass.

This detailed study would be useful, but incomplete. To really understand what a golf green is, you would need to survey the entire golf course. That would help you grasp how a green is the final destination for a golf ball being struck from the tee box. Without that “big picture” you couldn’t fully appreciate the function of different parts of the green (e.g. protective bunkers, the flag, the cup).

We want you to do the same thing with paragraphs in the epistle. We want you to carefully study the paragraph itself and everything in it. But we also want you to understand the book that contains the paragraph. This will help you better understand the content of the paragraph.

To help you reach these two objectives, we will show you how to perform an “Epistle Overview” and a “Paragraph Study.” These simple inductive study techniques will yield rich insights into the passage you are studying.

## Epistle Overview

**What are we trying to learn?** An epistle overview will help you grasp the big picture. You will learn...

- *The flow of thought in the book.*
- *The historical situation* – what was happening in the life of the author and his audience that provoked him to write the letter.
- *The general theme(s) of the letter.*
- *Why the letter was written.*

The overview will not provide deeper insight into a particular doctrine, nor will it reveal how to apply an individual passage to your own life. But it will give you the background needed to understand individual paragraphs.

Doing an overview takes some time, but it is very easy to do. If you can master this technique alone, your understanding of the epistles will grow enormously.

**1. Paragraph titles:** Read the book all the way through, writing down titles for each paragraph. This reveals the general thought development of the book. Titles should meet the following requirements:

- **The titles should be short.** No sentences are allowed. Long titles obscure the flow of thought in the book. A phrase of a few words is the maximum length.
- **The titles should cover most of the significant content in the paragraph.** Keep revising your title until it covers as much content in the paragraph as possible without being too long.
- **Decide how you will determine where the paragraph divisions belong.** Paragraph divisions are not inspired and vary from translation to translation. In group study, in order to avoid chaos, we suggest that everyone use the same version of the Bible. You may find that there are better ways to divide some paragraphs. Feel free to discuss where the divisions should be and why.

**2. Information about the author, audience, and 3rd parties:** The author is the person who wrote the letter. The audience is the individual or group of people that the letter is written to. Key third parties are PEOPLE (not God, angels, Satan, etc.) that the author mentions more than once in his letter. These can be groups (e.g. false teachers) or individuals (e.g. Euodia and Syntyche in Phil. 4; Hymenaeus and Alexander in 1 Timothy 1).

Draw three or more columns on a sheet of paper – one for the author, one for the audience, and one or more for key third parties. Read through the book again and record your observations about each person or group in the appropriate column. Each observation should be referenced with the chapter and verse. If you have a hunch but aren't sure if it's right, write it down anyhow and mark your observation with an asterisk. Be thorough—every bit of information matters.

**3. Summary of the historical situation:** When you are finished filling out each column, draw on the observations you have made and write a one paragraph summary of each person or group in your chart. Observations marked with an asterisk should be stated tentatively (e.g. “Paul may have...”). Now you have a better understanding of what was happening to the author and his audience when the letter was written. This will help you more accurately interpret the details of the paragraph you are about to study.

**4. Major themes:** Look closely at your paragraph titles, skim the letter again, and review your observations. Do you see any repeated ideas, words, and themes?

**5. Author's purpose for writing the letter:** Record your conclusions about the author's reason(s) for writing the book.

## Philemon Overview

Let's try this technique with the book of Philemon. It's just 25 verses long, so we should be able to do this together in class.

### 1. Paragraph titles

**Vs. 1-3:** *Greetings.*

**Vs. 4-7:** *Paul's gratitude and prayer for Philemon.*

**Vs. 8-16:** *Paul's plea for Onesimus.*

**Vs. 17-20:** *Paul will do anything to restore Onesimus.*

**V. 21:** *Paul is confident in Philemon's response.*

**Vs. 22-24:** *Practical considerations.*

**V. 25:** *Farewell.*

### 2. Information about the author, audience and 3rd parties

- **Author:** *Paul.*
- **Audience:** *Philemon.* Paul also addressed Apphia and Archippus, but he was primarily writing to Philemon.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> parties:** The primary 3rd party in this book is a slave named *Onesimus.*

<b>Paragraph Titles</b>	<b>Author: Paul</b>	<b>Audience: Philemon</b>	<b>3rd Party: Onesimus</b>
<b>vs. 1-3:</b> Greeting	<b>v. 1:</b> prisoner; with Timothy	<b>v. 1:</b> Christian worker <b>v. 2:</b> Accompanied by Apphia (wife?) & Archippus; has house church (wealthy?)	
<b>vs. 4-7:</b> Paul's gratitude & prayer for Philemon	<b>v. 4:</b> prays for Philemon <b>v. 7:</b> is encouraged & comforted by Philemon's ministry	<b>vs. 5,7:</b> faithful to Christ & loving to Christians	
<b>vs. 8-16:</b> Paul's plea for Onesimus	<b>v. 8:</b> has authority* <b>v. 9:</b> aged <b>vs. 9,10,13:</b> imprisoned for the cause of Christ <b>v. 10:</b> converted Onesimus while imprisoned <b>v. 10</b> ("child"), 12 ("my heart"), 16 ("beloved brother"): loves Onesimus <b>v. 12:</b> sent Onesimus back to Philemon <b>vs. 11,13:</b> has been helped by Onesimus <b>v. 14:</b> respects Philemon's decision about Onesimus	<b>v. 11:</b> was dissatisfied with Onesimus' performance for him <b>v. 14:</b> has authority to decide Onesimus' fate <b>v. 16:</b> owns Onesimus as a slave; wealthy*	<b>v. 10:</b> was with Paul when he was imprisoned & converted by Paul in that setting <b>v. 11:</b> was useless to Philemon, but has become useful to Paul & Philemon (implies substantial growth) <b>v. 12:</b> has been sent to Philemon by Paul <b>v. 13:</b> has ministered to Paul <b>v. 15:</b> was parted from Philemon for a while <b>v. 16:</b> Philemon's slave; now a Christian; Philemon's brother "in the flesh" (???)
<b>vs. 17-20:</b> Paul will do anything to restore Onesimus	<b>v. 17:</b> views Philemon as a partner <b>v. 19:</b> has financial means*; led Philemon to Christ	<b>v. 17:</b> partner of Paul <b>v. 18:</b> was wronged financially by Onesimus* <b>v. 19:</b> converted by Paul*	<b>v. 18:</b> wronged/stolen from pH*
<b>vs. 21:</b> Paul's confidence in Philemon's response		<b>v. 21:</b> has been responsive to Paul's leadership in the past; takes initiative to do what is right*	
<b>vs. 22-24:</b> Practical considerations	<b>v. 22:</b> hopes to be released soon; plans to visit Philemon <b>v. 23:</b> accompanied by many people; Epaphras is imprisoned with him—others aren't	<b>v. 22:</b> praying for Paul's release*; has lodging means	
<b>vs. 25:</b> Farewell			

### 3. Summary of the historical situation

Paul	Philemon	Onesimus
Paul is a Christian leader, now imprisoned for his faith in Christ. While imprisoned, he has converted Onesimus, who is a slave owned by Philemon, a fellow Christian worker who Paul knows and respects. He has sent Onesimus back to Philemon with this letter, hoping that Philemon will forgive Onesimus and be reconciled to him. Though imprisoned, Paul has financial means. He hopes to be released soon and visit Philemon.	Philemon is a wealthy Christian worker who owns slaves & hosts a church in his house. He has a reputation as a loving and faithful Christian worker. He owns Onesimus, who has evidently run away, possibly with Philemon's money or goods. Philemon was converted (directly or indirectly) by Paul and recognizes Paul's leadership	Onesimus is a slave owned by Philemon. He evidently ran away, possibly stealing Philemon's money or goods. As a runaway, he somehow made contact with Paul who led him to Christ. As a result of his conversion, he has been transformed from "useless" to a "useful" person. He has been very helpful to Paul. He is evidently the courier of this letter.

### 4. Major themes

Theme	References
Authority to order vs. appeal to the truth	vs. 8, 9, 10, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21—Paul has the authority to order Philemon to accept Onesimus, but appeals to Philemon to do the right thing.
From useless slave to useful brother in Christ	vs. 11, 13, 15, 16—Onesimus is now useful as a Christian.

### 5. Author's purpose for writing the letter

To persuade Philemon to forgive Onesimus and accept him back as a brother and fellow-worker.

### Titus: Inductive Overview

You were asked to do an overview of Titus for your homework. Let's review it together.

#### 1. Paragraph Titles

1:1-4 *Greeting*

1:5-9 *Set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city*

1:10-16 *Silence/reprove the rebellious men/false teachers*

2:1-15 *Call for action consistent with sound doctrine motivated by grace*

3:1-11 *Remind them to engage in good deeds motivated by grace*

3:12-15 *Farewell*

## 2. Information about the author, audience and 3rd parties

Author: Paul	Audience: Titus	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party #1: Cretan churches	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party #2: false teachers/rebellious men
<p>1:1 – A bond-servant of God, and an apostle            1:3 – Message was given to him by God            1:4 – Has affection for Titus.            1:5 – Was previously with Titus in Crete.* Left Titus there to "set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city."</p>	<p>1:4 – Was younger than Paul or led to Christ by Paul.            1:5 – Was left in Crete to set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city.            Implies that he is a seasoned worker.*            Under Paul's authority.</p>	<p>1:5 – Multiple churches in various cities. In a chaotic state ("set in order what remains").*</p>	<p>1:10 – Rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers. Some are Jewish.            1:11 – Upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach. Motivated by monetary gain.            1:13 – Teaching things that are not sound.            1:14 – Into to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth.            1:15 – Mind and conscience is defiled.            1:16 – They profess to know God, but by their deeds are evil.</p>
	<p>2:6,7 – Probably a young man.*            2:15 – May be having difficulty asserting his authority or he's in an extremely difficult situation.*</p>	<p>2:2-10 – There are a variety of people in the church including older men, older women, younger wives and husbands, children, and bondslaves. Maybe no slaveowners.*            2:5,9,15; 3:1 Calls to respect or submit to various authorities suggest that the Cretans are unruly and have a problem with authority.*</p>	<p>2:8 – The "opponent" is prone to accusing Paul and Titus.*</p>

Author: Paul	Audience: Titus	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party #1: Cretan churches	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party #2: false teachers/rebellious men
<p>3:3 – Recognizes his own sinful past in context of God's grace.</p> <p>3:12,13 – Plans to stay the winter in Nicapolis. Surrounded by a team of people who carry letters and assist with his ministry.</p> <p>Zenas and Apollos probably carried this letter to Titus. Plans to send Artemas or Tychicus to Titus.</p> <p>Wants Titus to visit him.</p> <p>3:15 – Has others with him that greet Titus.</p>		<p>3:1 – “Remind them” means they’ve been taught before to submit.</p> <div data-bbox="846 310 1377 709" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>3:9-11 – May refer to the false teachers mentioned in 1:10-16 (compare 3:9 with 1:14 and 3:11 with 1:16), or to people inside the churches or both.* They are into foolish controversies, genealogies, strife and disputes about the Law that are unprofitable and worthless. They are factious, perverted, sinful and condemn themselves.</p> </div> <p>3:14 – “Our people must learn to...” implies that they may have been slow to take action to help others in need.</p>	

### 3. Summary of the historical situation

**Paul** – Paul is God's servant and an apostle. God entrusted him with proclaiming his word. Paul probably led Titus to Christ and worked with him to start churches in Crete. He left Titus there to set the churches in order. He wants Titus to meet opposition, speak the truth with confidence, and urge the Cretans to engage in good deeds. Paul has freedom of mobility—he plans to spend the winter in Nicopolis. He is currently in contact with Artemas and Tychicus and plans to send them to Titus. Paul is also with other believers who know Titus. Zenas and Apollos carried this letter to Titus. Titus – Titus knows Paul and was led to the Lord by him. Paul left Titus in Crete to set in order what remained of the churches on that island. He was under Paul's authority and a seasoned Christian worker. Titus may have had difficulty asserting his authority—Paul urged him to oppose people in the church who we're leading others astray. Titus was a young man, but nevertheless a seasoned Christian worker

**Cretan Churches** – There were churches in multiple cities on Crete that lacked defined, competent leadership. The churches were relatively new and were in disorder. The churches were made up of a wide range of people - young and old, slave and free. They were opposed and adversely influenced by false teachers and rebellious men. They seemed to have an issue with respecting Titus and other authorities. Some of them were factious and others were lazy.

**Rebellious Men** – The churches on Crete were plagued by rebellious men who were empty talkers and deceivers. Some of them were from the Jewish party of the circumcision. They taught falsehoods that upset families in the Cretan churches and often did so for monetary gain. They were caught up in Jewish myths and human tradition. Their mind and conscience was defiled and they didn't know God. Instead,

they were inclined to form factions. They often engaged in foolish controversies that were of no benefit to anyone.

#### 4. Major themes

Themes	References
<i>Importance of sound doctrine</i>	1:1,2,9-11; 2:1,8,10;3:9
<i>Importance of personal character</i>	1:6-8,15,16; 2:2-10,14; 3:1,2,8,14
<i>Importance of authority and submission</i>	1:5 – Paul directs Titus to appoint elders to set the churches in order. 2:5 – Younger women subject to their husbands 2:9 – Bondslaves subject to their own masters 2:15 – Titus should speak, exhort, reprove with all authority 3:1 – Christians subject to rulers, to authorities

#### 5. Author's purpose for writing the letter

*To encourage and instruct Titus to "set in order what remains" in the churches of Crete.*

#### Paragraph Study

Now that we're armed with a fuller understanding of the book as a whole, we're ready to take a closer look at specific paragraphs in Titus. Here are the steps we recommend taking in a thorough paragraph study:

##### 1. Main point

**The main point is the heart of your paragraph. It is the action the author is trying to get his readers to take, or the main truth he is trying to communicate. There are several clues in a paragraph that tip readers off to the presence of main point.**

##### Clues:

- **Imperative statements (commands).**
- **Words that signal transition or conclusion: thus, so, therefore.**
- **Overarching, controlling idea.**
- **Independent clauses expressing a complete thought.**

**Ask this question to zero in on the main point: WHAT does the author want his reader(s) to do? If there is no clear command, you can ask WHAT main truth is the author trying to communicate?**

##### 2. HOW and WHY

**After you have identified the main point, ask the following questions:**

**HOW should the main point be carried out?**

## **WHY should the main point be carried out?**

**When the main point of a paragraph is a truth, not a command (e.g. Eph. 2:1-3, 4-10), these questions may be helpful: HOW is this main point illustrated or explained? WHY is the main point true?**

Answering HOW and WHY questions will help you understand how the author supports his main point.

### **3. Language**

**Use a concordance and an expository dictionary to study the meaning of confusing words and phrases.** Bible software has made it much easier to do this.

### **4. Historical references**

**Are there any references to locations (e.g. “Crete” in Tit. 1), cultural customs (e.g. “head coverings” in 1 Cor. 11), or other historical references (e.g. “dividing wall” in Eph. 2)? What do these historical references mean? It may be useful to consult a good commentary for historical information.**

### **5. Related Old Testament passages**

**Sometimes your paragraph will directly quote or allude to a passage or event in the Old Testament. Take note when this happens and use the cross references in a study Bible to learn what you can about the Old Testament passage or event in question.**

### **6. Theology**

**What truths about the nature of God, sin, man, Satan, salvation, the church, or the Christian life (leadership, service, suffering, etc.) does this paragraph teach?**

### **7. Relationship to the overall letter**

**Review the main theme(s) and the author’s purpose for writing the book from your Epistle overview. How is the main point of your paragraph related to the main theme(s) and the author’s purpose for writing?**

### **8. Application**

**The questions below will clarify how you and the people around you should respond to the author’s main point.**

**WHO was the author originally commanding to act on the main point of this paragraph (an individual, the church, enemies of the gospel)?**

**WHO most needs to act on the main point today? Who else does it apply to?**

**What values in our culture might make someone reluctant to act on the main point?**

**What are the consequences of failing to act on the main point?**

**What would happen if someone acted on the main point, but ignored HOW they should do it, or WHY they should do it?**

**What are the benefits of acting on the main point?**

**Why might God be calling your attention to this passage at this time in your life?**

**If the main point is a truth instead of a command, try these questions:**

**When (in what situations/settings) is it important to remember this truth?**

**What cultural values today make it difficult for people to accept this truth?**

**What will happen if we ignore this truth?**

**What are the benefits of knowing this truth?**

**What actions/behaviors are consistent with this truth?**

### **Practice finding the main point**

Over the years, we've found that finding the main point is one of the most challenging parts of an inductive study for students. Let's practice locating the main point with increasingly more complicated paragraphs. Remember the clues: imperative statements (commands), words that signal transition or conclusion: thus, so, therefore, an overarching/ controlling idea, independent clauses expressing a complete thought.

**"Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest." - Mark Twain**

**Main point:** *Always do right.*

**Supporting points:**

**Why?** *This will gratify some people.*

**Why?** *This will astonish the rest.*

**(James 5:7-8) Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. 8 You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.**

**Main point:** *Be patient. (v. 7)*

**Supporting points:**

**How?** *Until the Lord comes.*

**How?** *Like a farmer waiting for his crops to come in.*

**Why?** *Because the Lord's coming is near.*

**(Colossians 4:2-4) Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; 3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for**

**the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; 4 in order that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.**

**Main point:** *Devote yourselves to prayer (v. 2).*

**Supporting points:**

**How?** *Keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving. (v. 2)*

**How?** *Praying that God may open up a door for the word. (v. 3)*

**Why?** *So that I may make it clear. (v. 4)*

**(2 Tim 1:5-7) For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well. 6 For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.**

**Main point:** *Kindle afresh the gift of God within you (v. 6).* Notice that the main point is not at the beginning of the paragraph.

**Supporting points:**

**Why?** *Because Paul is reminded of Timothy's sincere faith, as well as that of his grandmother and mother. (Vs. 5)*

**Why?** *Because God did not give us a spirit of timidity... (v. 7)*

Notice that Paul also gives us more information about the gift he is referring to. Which gift? The one that is in you through the laying on of my hands. (Vs. 6)

The main point won't always be the first sentence. Sometimes it will be buried in the middle (as in the last example) or even near the end of the paragraph.

## **Paragraph Study: Titus 1:5-9**

### **1. Main point**

The main command in this paragraph is to “set in order what remains AND appoint elders in every city.” Since the bulk of the paragraph is related to the idea of “appointing elders,” we will use the second part of the command for our main point.

**WHAT does the author want his reader(s) to do?** *Appoint elders in every city (1:5).*

Paul wrote to Titus to get him to set in order the churches on Crete. Appointing elders who meet the criteria in this paragraph is the first of many ways to do that.

## 2. HOW and WHY

**HOW should the main point be carried out?** Paul focuses on the kinds of elders Titus should appoint:

*Those who are above reproach in family matters (1:6).*  
*Those who are above reproach as God's steward (1:7-8).*  
*Those who hold fast to the word (1:9).*

**WHY should the main point be carried out?**

*To set in order what remains (1:6).* Apparently the churches in Crete were in a state of disorder. Appointing godly leaders would help restore order.

## 3. Language

The words ELDER (presbuteros) and OVERSEER (episkopos) are used synonymously and refer to the same office/leadership role in the church. "Elder" points to their relative spiritual maturity (who he is). "Overseer" points to their function (what he does).

ABOVE REPROACH (anegkletos) is repeated twice (vs. 6,7). This describes someone who cannot be called into account because of their exemplary lifestyle.

Some folks may not be familiar with the term DISSIPATION (v. 6). Paul uses the term SENSIBLE frequently in Titus and may also be a good word to study.

## 4. Historical references

Crete is an island in the Mediterranean Ocean south east of Greece. In ancient times Crete had a very bad reputation. The islanders were known for having low morals, being lazy, and greedy. The verb "to Cretanize" in Greek literature meant to lie.

## 5. Old Testament passages

There are no references or allusions to Old Testament passages or events in this paragraph.

## 6. Theology

This passage doesn't tell us much about God himself, or sin, Satan, the path to salvation, and other main concerns in theology. But we do learn a little about the church, namely that *the church should be in good order with established leadership, and that Church leaders should have exemplary character and sound working knowledge of scripture.*

## 7. Relationship to the letter as a whole

How does Titus 1:5-9 relate to the main themes of this letter or to Paul's purpose for writing to Titus? *Appointing elders is one of many ways that Titus can set in order the churches on Crete. Instead of anarchy, there will be a clear chain of command. The people Titus puts in charge will help to restore order.*

## 8. Application

The questions below will clarify how you and the people around you should respond to the author's main point.

**WHO was the author originally commanding to act on the main point of this paragraph (an individual, the church, enemies of the gospel)?**

*Paul was telling Titus to appoint elders in every church.*

**WHO most needs to act on the main point today? Who else does it apply to?**

*People who are in a position to appoint elders. This could be an existing leader in the church or a congregation who votes for an elder.*

**What values in our culture might make someone reluctant to act on the main point?**

*Some movements (e.g. house church movement) are aversive to any kind of church leadership hierarchy. But the Bible affirms that the local church needs good leaders, and that these leaders play an important role in bringing order to the church.*

**What are the consequences of failing to act on the main point?**

*Churches that don't have established leaders can fall into chaos and possibly lapse into false doctrine.*

**What would happen if someone acted on the main point, but ignored HOW they should do it, or WHY they should do it?**

*In the church today, we find many elderships consisting of those who have been successful in the world, but have very little knowledge of doctrine (and in many cases, lacking character). As a result, churches may take a wrong turn in their ministry.*

**What are the benefits of acting on the main point?**

*When the church is led by elders with good character who hold fast to the truth, people are cared for and taught well. This brings order and stability to the church.*

**Why might God be calling your attention to this passage at this time in your life?**

### Memory Verses

**None this week. There will be a quiz next week.**

### Assignment

**Do a paragraph study on Titus 1:10-16 based on the method above. Write your answers on the assignment sheet we have provided. This assignment must be turned in at the beginning of our next lecture. For your benefit, this assignment must be turned in to complete this course.**