

Xenos Christian Fellowship
Christian Ministry 2
Week 6 – Epistles Inductive Study, Part 2
& Introduction to Inspiration

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.

Paragraph Study: Titus 1:10-16

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.**

WHAT does the author want his reader(s) to do? *Reprove them (the rebellious men) (v. 13).* Paul's statement "they must be silenced (v. 11) is a similar idea. Paul wants Titus to confront the rebellious men who are deceiving and upsetting people in the church.

2. HOW and WHY

HOW should the main point be carried out?

Reprove the rebellious men *SEVERELY*. (v. 13)

WHY should the main point be carried out?

Because they are rebellious, empty talkers, deceivers (v. 10).
Because they are defiled and unbelieving (v. 15).
That they might be sound in the faith (v. 13).

3. Language

Use a concordance and an expository dictionary to study the meaning of confusing words and phrases.

"Sound" (v. 13) is used 4 times in Titus (sound doctrine - 1:9 and 2:1; sound in the faith 1:13 and 2:2, sound in speech 2:8). From the Greek word "hugiano," it means healthy. Paul is using the example of physical health to describe the effect of sound doctrine and faith on the church.

“Reprove” (Gk: elegcho) means to expose, convict, rebuke. In context, the goal is redemptive - “that they may be sound in faith.”

“Severely,” from (Gk: apotomos) suggests an abrupt, curt correction—a pointed, direct refutation of false teaching.

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 Historical references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any references to locations (e.g. “Crete” in Tit. 1), cultural customs (e.g. “head coverings” in 1 Cor. 11), or other historical references (e.g. “dividing wall” in Eph. 2)? What do these historical references mean?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.

The phrase, “those of the circumcision” refers to a group of Jews who visited many of the churches Paul planted. They taught it was necessary for Christians to be circumcised and to observe Jewish food and ceremonial laws (see Gal. 2:12 ff.).

“Cretans” are people who lived on Crete. Cretans had a reputation for being lazy, dishonest, and rebellious.

“The faith” (v. 13) is a phrase that Paul uses repeatedly in the pastoral epistles (1 Tim. 1:2; 3:9; 4:1; 4:6; 5:8; 6:10,21; 2 Tim. 3:8; 4:7; Tit. 1:13; 3:15). It refers to the body of sound doctrine that Paul passed down to Timothy, Titus, and other trusted co-workers (1 Tim. 4:1,6).

The phrase “Jewish myths” refers to the extra-biblical teachings put forward by the rebellious men. They made speculative assertions based on genealogies (see 1 Tim 1:4) and told other fables (1 Tim. 4:7) that drew listeners away from sound doctrine.

“A prophet of their own” is a reference to Epiminedes. He is the author of the quote in the second part of v. 12. Epiminedes lived in the town of Knossos on Crete in the 6th century B.C.

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.

The term “circumcision” comes from the Old Testament. Infant circumcision was a ritual given by God to Abraham and his physical descendents (Gen. 17:9-14) to be a sign that they were God's people.

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?

Leaders should be vigilant to strongly reprove false Christian teachers (v 13).

Leaders should remember that false teachers can sometimes be persuaded to repent (v. 13).

False doctrine is harmful and destructive to those who are influenced by it (v. 15,16).

False teachers can be identified by their unbiblical doctrine (including doctrinal sources) and behavior (v. 15,16)

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?

Setting in order the churches on Crete involves several things, including reproofing/ silencing rebellious men who are false teachers. Doing this is a way to ensure the truth is being taught. This ties in to a main theme in Titus: the importance of sound doctrine.

8. Application

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

Titus.

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

People in leadership positions in the church. They need to prevent the spread of false teaching in their church. Other passages show that all Christians are responsible to correct erroneous teaching when they hear it (1 Cor. 14:29).

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

People today frown upon criticizing someone else's religious beliefs. Doing so is seen as intolerant and arrogant.

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

The church could drift into error and people's lives could be destroyed.

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

If we reprove rebellious people without seeking their restoration, we will lose the opportunity to return them to sound faith. If leaders don't handle false teachers firmly, the false teachers may win the day.

What are the benefits of acting on the main point?

People in the church are protected from being upset and defiled by false teaching.

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

Paragraph Study: Titus 2:1-15

Instructors, ask students to work in pairs and have them perform an inductive paragraph study for Titus 2:1-15. Circulate to check on each group's work, then meet together to discuss results.

1. Main point

WHAT does the author want his reader(s) to do? *Speak things fitting for sound doctrine (v. 1).*

2. HOW and WHY

HOW should the main point be carried out?

Older men are to be . . . (v. 2).

Older women likewise are to be . . . (v. 3).

Encourage the young women to . . . (v. 4).

Likewise urge the younger men to be . . . (v. 4).

Urge bondslaves to be . . . (v. 9).

With all authority, not letting anyone disregard you (v. 15).

WHY should the main point be carried out?

Because good behavior "adorns" the gospel (vs. 5,8,10).

Because the grace of God has appeared... instructing us to deny ungodliness... and live righteously (v. 11).

3. Language

"Fitting" (prepo) to be clearly seen, to resemble. Refers to things that reflect/resemble sound doctrine.

"Sound" is used three times (2:1,2; 2:8). We already discussed what this word means.

"Sensible" (sophroneo) prudent, having sound judgment. Behavior guided by wisdom from the word (2:2,5,6,12).

4. Historical references

"Bondslave" (Greek: doulos) simply means slave. A large portion of the population in the Roman Empire was enslaved. Apparently they were coming to Christ on Crete.

5. Related Old Testament passages

Nothing here of note except a reference in v. 14 to "Christ Jesus." Christ is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word for The Messiah. In many places in the Old Testament, God promises that one day the Messiah will come and save God's people.

6. Theology

Leaders should not only teach sound doctrine, but the behaviors that are consistent with sound doctrine (v. 1).

God delegates his authority to humans in various spheres (job, church, home, etc.) (vs. 2-10).

The grace of God is our means for salvation (v. 11).

Grace instructs us to live righteously (v. 12). It is the motivation for good deeds.

Jesus will return in the future (v.13).

Jesus paid the price to release us from the penalty of our sins (v. 14).

7. Relationship to the letter as a whole

This paragraph continues to explain HOW Titus should "set in order what remains"—appoint good leaders (1:5-9), reprove rebellious men (1:10-16), and here, teach people in the churches to behave in a way that is consistent with sound doctrine (2:1-15). This paragraph also touches on three main themes in Titus: the importance of sound doctrine, personal character, and authority/submission.

8. Application

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

Titus.

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

Leaders in the church. But the paragraph explains how other people in the church should also be teaching (v. 3) and exemplifying behavior (v. 7) that is consistent with sound doctrine.

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

Paul wanted to Titus to teach the Cretans how to live out sound doctrine in their relationships. This meant he had to speak to what happened in their everyday lives. Today this would be seen by many people as intrusive. Some would object and say we should "live and let live." But Paul is calling on Titus to speak into the lives of the people he leads.

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

The church will miss an opportunity to put the doctrine of God in a good light. People in the church will be more likely to live in ways that dishonor God.

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

Paul explained how to teach the things fitting for sound doctrine by giving detailed, practical commands appropriate for different age groups. If we teach sound doctrine, but fail to connect it to the lives of our listeners, they will experience a dry academic exercise that has no real world relevance.

If we fail to explain that grace motivates behavior consistent with sound doctrine, we will cut off our listeners from the power of the gospel and leave them with simply a set of rules to follow. This is legalism.

What are the benefits of acting on the main point?

People in the community will notice and God will be put in a good light.

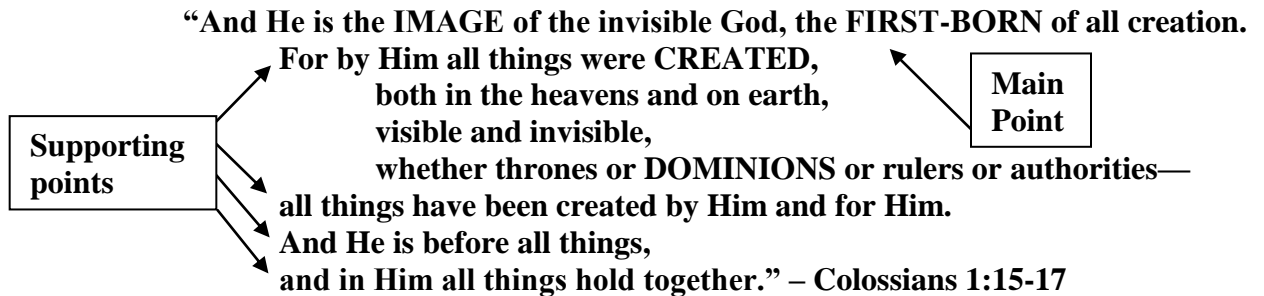
Why might God be calling your attention to this passage at this time in your life?

How to do a Word Study (full text in student outline for reference)

When you are studying a passage, sometimes you will encounter a word that you don't understand. Other times, your reading of a particular passage may contradict what you know is taught in other parts of scripture. In situations like this, the word study steps below will help you understand the meaning of specific words resulting in an accurate interpretation.

1. Select a word to study.

A common mistake when studying words is to study too many. We recommend focusing on words in the main and supporting points that are confusing or that lead to an interpretation that contradicts other passages.



Word	Importance	Reason
“created”	Low	meaning is clear
“image”	High	part of the main point; meaning is unclear
“first-born”	High	part of the main point; is Jesus a created being?
“dominions”	Low	unclear meaning, but not part of the main or supporting points

The word “image” is confusing. Does Paul mean a reflection or an exact representation of God? “Firstborn” seems to imply that Jesus is a created being. But other passages clearly teach he is God (Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:8) and that he existed with God in the beginning (Jn. 1:1-3,14). Both words are also in the main point. Therefore, “image” and “firstborn” are good candidates for a word study.

2. Identify the Greek or Hebrew word that your word is based on.

Let's use the word “strive” in 1 Tim. 4:9-10 as an example.

(1 Timothy 4:9-10) This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance (and for this we labor and STRIVE), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

New Testament passages are translated from Greek, and Old Testament passages are usually translated from Hebrew (a few sections are in Aramaic). Therefore “strive” is translated from a Greek word.

A concordance will help you identify the specific Greek word from which “strive” is translated. *The New American Standard Concordance* lists every English word that appears in the New American Standard Bible AND every verse where specific words occur. Most translations (NASB, NIV, etc.) have their own concordance. We

recommend doing a word study with a New American Standard Bible (NASB) and Concordance. You must use a concordance that is written for the version of the Bible you are using.

A sample entry from the NASB Concordance shows every place in the NASB where “strive” occurs:

Strive

My spirit shall not s with man	Gn 6:3
Did he ever s with Israel, or did	Jg 11:25
He will not always s with us;	Ps 103:9
Those who keep the law s with them	Pr 28:4
“ S to enter by the narrow door;	Lk 13:24
to s together with me in your	Ro 15:30
For it is for this we labor and s ,	1 Tm 4:10

1777
7378
7378
1624
75
4865
75

Concordances assign a reference number to each Hebrew and Greek word in the Bible. Usually italicized numbers denote Greek words and normal font denotes Hebrew words.

Notice that more than one Greek word can be translated as “strive.” Use the reference number next to your verse (in this case, #75 for 1 Tim. 4:10) to identify the Greek or Hebrew word for your verse.

Greek word

transliteration: agonizomai

75. *ἀγωνίζομαι* **agonizomai**, from 73; to contend for a prize, struggle:— competes in the games(1), fight(1), fighting(1), fought(1), laboring earnestly(1), strive(2), striving(1)

range of meaning: different ways agonizomai is translated

number of times agonizomai is translated “striving”

3. Narrow down the range of meaning.

A single word in any language may have a range of possible meanings.

e.g. draw (English)

- ... draw a picture
- ... draw water from a well
- ... draw a conclusion
- ... draw a wagon

e.g. katargeo (Greek)

Rom. 6:6 (NASB) Knowing this, that that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin.

The underlined phrase “done away with” is a translation of a single Greek word, *katargeo*. This word is translated several different ways depending on the context surrounding the verse. Possible meanings are underlined below in the NASB concordance entry for “katargeo.”

καταργέω katargeō; from 2596 and 691; to render inoperative, abolish:—abolished (4), abolishing (1), bring to an end (1), did away (1), do away (1), done away (4), fades away (1), fading (1), fading away (1), nullified (1), nullify (4), passing away (1), released (2), removed (1), render powerless (1), severed (1), use (1).

How do you determine which one of these meanings (“abolished,” “brought to an end,” “done away with,” “fade away,” “nullified,” “released,” “removed,” “rendered powerless,” “severed,” “used”) is the best choice? Looking for clues to the correct meaning of the word in the *context* surrounding your verse.

In the next chapter of Romans, Paul describes the struggle Christians have with their sin nature (7:21-24). He also says in chapter 8, that “if Christ is in us, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive because of righteousness.” This implies that the sin nature/body of sin is still active in the life of a Christian. Verses like Galatians 5:17 also indicate our sin nature is still active.

That makes the NASB translation, “done away with” too strong. Better to pick something like “released,” or “rendered powerless” to allow for the fact that our body of sin is still there.

Introduction to the Inspiration of Scripture

The Bible is the foundation of our faith. Through the Bible, we learn who God is, what he is like, how we were designed, how we have been corrupted by sin, and how God has moved in history to help us. But increasingly, the Bible is coming under attack from WITHIN the church. This statement, made by the leaders of a well known denomination, is typical of what many *Christians* think:

“The Bible is true in passages relating to human salvation, they say, but continue: ‘We should not expect total accuracy from the Bible in other, secular matters.’”

Satan is always trying to undermine our confidence in the trustworthiness of the Bible. If he can get us to move away from the Bible as a source of truth, the door is opened to introduce all kinds of error into the church. We saw this in week 1 when we talked about other sources of authority displacing the Bible as our rule of faith.

Therefore, Christians need learn how to defend the claim that the Bible is God’s word, and that it can be trusted.

(1 Peter 3:15) but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence...

Over the next few weeks, we will argue that God has spoken the words of the Bible (INSPIRATION), and that our Bibles contain the correct set of inspired books (CANONICITY). But before we do that, let’s define a few important terms.

Revelation

To reveal (Greek: apokalypto) is to unveil something that was previously hidden or to bring into view something that was out of sight.

General revelation is *information that God has revealed about himself in nature and within our hearts*. This information is available to anyone.

Special revelation is *additional information about God that he has revealed in the Bible*. Unlike general revelation, special revelation explains how Jesus has provided a way of salvation for us. It also provides information about God, humans, the world (material & spiritual), and the interrelationship of all of these that we could never learn on our own.

Special revelation has come to people in the past through direct encounters with God (e.g. Moses - Exodus 20:1 ff.), visions (e.g. Daniel - Daniel 2:28-30), hearing a word from the Lord (e.g. prophets like Jeremiah – Jer. 1:1,2), and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit (e.g. the 12 disciples – John 14:26).

Over the centuries, many people have claimed that God has given them special revelation. How do we know who to trust? The Bible's claim to be special revelation from God is the most credible claim out there. The 66 books of the Bible are the only authoritative source of special revelation that we have. That's a strong claim to make, and we'll spend the next two weeks defending it.

Unless God had chosen to reveal himself through the Bible, we could not have come to understand what is really true about him.

(1 Cor. 2:9-14) "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And which have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, 13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. 14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

When human beings try to figure out without God's revelation what God is like, the result is speculation. This is the next key term we'd like to define.

Speculation

Definition: *Speculation is what HUMANS think about God, ultimate reality, etc.*

Is it possible for man to figure God out? If we study the way people are and how the physical world operates, will we be able to make sense of it all and figure out how to live our lives? The Bible says that humans, although capable of amazing insights, are unable to come up with an accurate depiction of God on their own.

(Isaiah 55:7-9) “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord. 9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

What are the results of speculation? Other world religions and belief systems (Hinduism, Buddhism, New Age, atheism, optimistic humanism, etc.) are mixtures of natural revelation and man’s futile speculations about God (Rom. 1:18-23).

What about you?

The key difference between revelation and speculation is the origin—revelation is from God; speculation comes from us. Christians have to decide which source of information will guide their life. Sadly, many Christians choose to speculate instead of learning the Word well enough to let it shape their decision making. It’s easy enough to do. When confronted with the challenges of day-to-day life, we often fall back on our wits, on common sense, on what seems right. This is our default approach to a variety of situations:

- How to handle a recent conflict.
- Determining what constitutes a problem and what we should do about it.
- How we should interact with coworkers.
- Where to live and what kind of home to buy.
- What kinds of activities to direct our children to pursue.

Every one of these daily decisions is advised by some source of information. What will it be for you? Will God’s perspective, revealed in the Bible, be a deciding factor? That’s not likely if you’re unsure God has spoken in his Word. Without confidence in the truth of the Bible, whether you consider yourself a Christian or not, you’ll default back to speculation.

Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI)

VPI is another important concept we’ll refer to again and again.

Definition of Verbal (the words are inspired) **Plenary** (all of the Bible is inspired) **Inspiration** (God breathed):

God so moved the human authors of scripture that the resulting product was the Word of God, written totally without error in all that it affirms in the original autographs, in every area including theology, history, geography and science.

Why must the definition include accuracy in things like history, geography and science? Why not just theology?

Because if it can't be trusted in the areas that we can test, why should it be trusted in the areas we can't test?

"Inspiration" does NOT mean:

- *People being emotionally moved by the beauty of creation or the pathos of human life, etc. That is the literary definition of inspiration, but this kind of inspiration has its origin in man, not God.*

- *Dictation in most cases* (cf. 10 commandments), no "automatic handwriting" ("I'll just let God get a few pages done while I sleep.") God worked through human authors in a way that he used their particular style and cultural setting to present his truth.

(2 Tim. 3:16*) All Scripture is *inspired* by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

"Inspiration" = theopneustos: literally "God-breathed."

(2 Pet. 1:20,21*) But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

The message originates from God, whose Spirit "bears them along" as they record it.

There are **two important qualifications to this definition** of inspiration:

- "*in the original autographs*" - Only the original documents were completely without error. It is undeniable that there have been minor copyist errors.

"What good does it do to believe in verbal plenary inspiration if we don't have the autographs?" The number of copies are so plentiful that we can identify most of the errors, and the copyist errors are so minor that they do not affect any major doctrine (YARD BAR analogy – even if the platinum bar at Bureau of Measures & Standards would be lost, we wouldn't be).

"Why didn't God preserve them?" Maybe because he knew the human tendency to worship things like this (2 Kings 18:4).

- "*in all that it affirms*" What the Word "affirms" or "intends" must include these considerations:

Figures of speech – Hyperbole (Luke 14:26); observational language e.g. "sunset"; anthropomorphisms (e.g. God is a door, a vine, hands of God, His wings - Deut. 32).

Precision – Don't insist on modern accuracy levels; sometimes round numbers are used (e.g. mustard seed - Mark 4 says it's the smallest of all seeds when this isn't really true).

Narration does not equal affirmation – Abraham w/ Sarah (lied twice!). Solomon had many wives & concubines.

Literary genres – We need to pay attention to the genre of literature we are reading. Parables, for example, should not be held to reflect actual history. Was there a prodigal son? Did he really run away from his father's house with his portion of the inheritance? Did he really spend all his money on loose living? Exploring the historical details of a parable like this is misguided because parables are FICTIONAL stories designed to illustrate spiritual truths. Narrative accounts of events, however, should be taken as accurate history. This includes narratives describing Adam and Eve, the great flood, Jonah and the whale, etc. Biblical narratives record events that actually occurred in history.

Selective history does not equal errant history – The Bible never claims to be an exhaustive account of what happened. (John 21:25)

Topical arrangement – Sometimes events in the Bible are grouped by topic. Sometimes they are sequential (Matt. 8, 9).

Irregularities of grammar and spelling – Grammar is only description of norms and changes (Paul's run-on sentences - normal then, not now) - punctuation added later.

"Why does it matter that we have a high view of scripture?" (This ties into the assignment)

- Once you reject verbal plenary inspiration, there is no logical stopping place ("*SLIPPERY SLOPE*"). Some do stop at a fairly conservative place, but not because it is irrational to do otherwise.
- *Your view of scripture is closely related to your view of Christ himself.* He has a very high view of scripture (as we will see), so it is impossible to denigrate scripture without denigrating him.
- *Your preaching and evangelism will lack confidence and power unless you trust the truthfulness of God's Word!*

Memory Verses & Assignment

2 Timothy 3:16,17* - All scripture is "God-breathed."

2 Peter 1:20,21* - All scripture has its origin in God rather than in humans.

Assignment

Read chapters 1-5 of *Does Inerrancy Matter* (see handout). Write a one-paragraph summary of each chapter.

Read chapter 4 of *The Case for Christ* (see handout). Write a one-paragraph summary of the chapter.