

**June 19**

**Scriptures:** Read Titus 1

**Key Verse:** “They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.” (Titus 1:16)

## **Overview**

As pointed out in the introduction, the Pastoral Epistles were concerned about establishing and defending a sound Christian orthodoxy in the developing churches of Asia Minor. Even as Christianity spread, heresies (or false teachings) were spreading, just like weeds encroaching on a freshly ploughed and planted garden. In this chapter, Paul encourages Titus to “silence” the false teachers (v. 11).

A significant factor in the false teaching encroaching upon the Cretan church was the division of creation into spirit and matter — with spirit seen as pure, and matter seen as evil. To these teachers, anything material was evil. Thus they had a low view of creation, everything material being corrupt — that’s why Paul refers to them as “those who [themselves] are corrupted” and to whom “nothing is pure” (v. 15b). But Paul sets the record straight: “to the pure, all things are pure” (v. 15a); that is, purity is a function of mind and conscience. Material things are morally neutral. In other words, there’s nothing intrinsically wrong with a match — it’s what you do with it. You can start a fire in your fireplace and enjoy its soothing heat, or you can torch an apartment building and destroy human lives. Darkness is the domain of the soul.

This is why Paul says that verbal Christianity is essentially hollow. It’s what you do that tells the story of faith or unfaith (v.16). God doesn’t need our “vote” (He can, after all, make the trees and rocks cry out His praise). What He does honour is our obedient action as we submit to the law of Christ’s love.

## **Prayer**

Father, we long to profess You this day, not only in our words but in our every action. As we look daily into Your Word with open and obedient hearts, bless us with an ever-increasing knowledge of Your absolute goodness and love towards us.