

TITUS: ADDRESSING WEAK CHURCHES IN DETERIORATING CULTURES
Part IV: The Need For Church Leaders To Assert Responsibly Reverent Living
(Titus 2:11-15)

I. Introduction

- A. In morally declining cultures, people in the church may tend to excuse their acting in deceitful, abusive or uncontrolled behavior as unavoidable evils due to their backgrounds.
- B. Paul noted Church leaders were to assert reverential living in contrast to this tendency (as follows):

II. The Need For Church Leaders To Assert Responsibly Reverent Living, Titus 2:11-15.

- A. After having shown how Church leaders were to teach men, women and slaves how they were to relate in their respective roles in Titus 2:1-10, Paul declared that God's grace *required* such conduct, Tit. 2:11.
- B. This led to Paul's teaching how God's *grace* made it **necessary** for even saved Cretans to live **reverently**:
 - 1. Specifically, God's **unmerited favor** has appeared not only to the Jew, but to the "unclean" Gentile -- even to **all** men, and that includes the culturally-decadent **Cretans**, Titus 2:11 in view of Titus 1:12.
 - 2. This **unmerited favor** literally "child-rears" (*paideuouosa*) believers, or **re-rears** them **culturally**, 12a.
 - 3. Thus, God's grace should impress saved **CRETANS**, like the **saved JEW**, to be re-reared (opposite errant cultures) to repudiate irreverence for God and human institutions He sanctions, Titus 2:12a; 3:1.
 - 4. God's grace should impress justified **Cretans** and **Jews** to be re-reared (opposite errant cultures) to repudiate the lusts of the world -- the lusts of the flesh, of the eyes and of pride, 2:12b; 1 Jn. 2:15-16.
 - 5. God's grace should impress saved **Cretans** and **Jews** to be re-reared (opposite decadent cultures) to live self-controlled, righteous lives of respect for God and human relationships, Tit. 2:12c,d with 1:12.
 - 6. God's grace should impress justified people in all cultures to be re-reared (opposite decadent cultures) to live reverent lives as they anticipate a blessed, **holy** destiny of gaining heaven's glory, Titus 2:13.
 - 7. God's grace should impress justified people in all cultures to be re-reared (opposite decadent cultures) to live eager to do good works, for their Savior gave Himself on the cross to redeem them from all cultural lawlessness and laziness, Titus 2:14.
- C. This information was critically important, so Paul told Titus to assert it with all authority, letting no one in the Church make him back away from his authority on the subject, Titus 2:15. This assertion of authority would reinforce the call for reverence for God and God's institutions, beginning with a "child-rearing" influence for God's people to begin adjusting to God's culture opposite the culture of the decadent world.

Lesson: Regardless how decadent is one's background, since Christ's salvation is designed to save him FROM such decadence unto reverent living, God STILL EXPECTS him to arrive at a healthy reverence for God and God's sanctioned human institutions. Hence, THOUGH they must do so with great PATIENCE (cf. 2 Tim. 4:2), Church leaders are to allow for NO excuse for EVERYONE in the Church NOT to come to rely on the Holy Spirit to overcome deceitful, abusive or uncontrolled behavior that disrespects God or God-ordained institutions of church, government, business, home & marriage.

Application: (1) Though there may be a tendency in the decadent culture around us to offer EXCUSES for deceitful, abusive and even uncontrolled behavior in BELIEVERS due to their BACKGROUNDS, (a) Church leaders must NOT allow such excuses to be credible, (b) but authoritatively assert the need for reverence for God and God's institutions: ((a)) They must recall that Christ's salvation was designed SPECIFICALLY to SAVE people from such deceitful, abusive and uncontrolled thinking and actions unto reverence for God, reverence for the institutions of the church, government, marriage, family and business realms. ((b)) They must recall that Christ's salvation was designed to SAVE people from unproductive lives to live EAGER to perform GOOD WORKS in abundance! ((c)) Granted, such Church leaders must be PATIENT with all men, but all the while promote the need for their hearers to shift away from irreverent living in deceit, abuse and uncontrolled actions to reverent, productive living, cf. 2 Timothy 4:2. (2) If the Church leader(s) over us authoritatively promote these things, we must take their actions as a divine calling, and heed their urgings as GOD'S will FOR us, Titus 2:15.