

**\*\*READ THE TEXT\*\***

**INTRO-**

*Introductory Illustration*

- **Maybe you’ve met these unwelcome guests before:**
  - **Mr. pride.** - Mr Pride has been in the neighborhood for a long time. His middle name is Mr Self-willed. He pursues his desires and believes they are the best.
  - **Mr. unsubmitive** - Mr Unsubmitive has been a grief to many because of his unwillingness to heartfully and joyfully follow the lead of those in authority. He is a sort of perpetually disgruntled guy who seems to walk around with little joy & with a constant chip on his shoulder.
  - **Mr. quarreler** - Mr Quarreler comes from the land of lust because he loves to follow his heart and his desires and his ambitions. And when he doesn’t get his way, when he’s not heard, and when things don’t go according to his liking, he’s slow to hear, quick to speak, and quick to anger and quick to argue.
  - **Mr. complainer** - Mr Complainer has a few close friends – Mr Dathan and Abiram (Num 16) – and they have a record of complaining. They live in perpetual discontented attitudes and nothing seems to please them or make them happy. They have expectations that no one can meet or live up to their liking.
  - **Mr. jealous** – Mr Jealous is the attender who wants to be first and loves the power, the prestige and the position of authority. He demands that he be honored and respected and chosen and selected. He thinks he’s the best and God’s greatest gift to the church.
  - **Mr. negative.** – Mr Negative comes from the Land of Unhappiness because HE and those who associate with him seem to live in PERPETUAL UNHAPPINESS.
- Let’s be sobered by this: God *\*hates\** division **\*AND\*** God hates the *person* who spreads strife among brothers (Prov 6.19). Earlier, God says: “This ‘worthless person’ is a wicked man who with perversity in his heart continually devises evil and spreads strife” (Prov 6.14).
  - What does God do? God opened the earth & swallowed up these divisive ones and engulfed these rebels (Num 16) and brought a fire that blazed up their families and consumed them (Ps 106.18!) ***This kind of division/factions without confession brings destruction!***

*Background to Titus 3*

- 3:8 - a theme verse: **PREACH BOLDLY & APPLY SPECIFICALLY**
  - v.8 - we must PURSUE the application of the Word
  - v.9 - we must AVOID foolish discussions leading away from Truth —and speaking of such strife, disputes, and foolish discussion, we learn how to handle those who do such things in the Church (vv.10-11)...
- So, to maintain the truth of the gospel, church leaders must deal properly with factious people.
- And that’s Paul’s concern as he closes the letter. He charges Titus as to what he should DO (=preach) in v.8, what he must avoid (v.9) and now how to handle factious/divisive ones (v.10).

**THESIS — *From Titus 3.10-11 - God gives us very clear instructions on how to handle divisive people in the church.***

God passionately cares that His church is PURE >> so we must take decisive, quick, swift and obedient action to ALL factions and divisions.

PROMOTE unity (John 17.23 - we are to be perfected in unity so that all may know that the Father sent the Son). WE must preserve unity of the Spirit (Eph 4.3) & put on LOVE which is the perfect bond of unity. (Col 3.14).

**The main point:**  
**we must carefully & quickly REJECT divisiveness (v.10-11)!**

## I. WHAT IS A DIVISIVE ONE? (10)

- The *\*danger\** of the divisive one.
- We’ve gotta be able to identify this so that we can appropriately and quickly take action.

### A. The definition

1. NASB has “Factious” man; KJV: Divisive; ESV: a person who stirs up division”; CEV: “troublemakers”; WNT: Anyone who will not be taught.
2. The word for a “divisive” man is Gal 5.20 - factions - deeds of the flesh.
  - a) with dissensions, divisions, disputes, outbursts of anger, etc.
  - b) This is the man in Jude who causes division: he’s worldly minded & devoid of the Spirit.
3. Romans 16:17 calls him one who stirs up division. > not just a theological *heretic* but a *relational divider*.

### B. Let us be warned of the “Divisive, factious, troublemakers” --> *The most dangerous people at church are NOT the outright heretics:*

- gospel-eclipsing man. > gospel doesn’t shine in his heart.
- the critical man. (James 1.20-21) > cutting//not affirming.
- The unteachable man (usually a twin to Mr Diotrephes in 3 John 9-10)
- the joy-robbing man > seems to find the negative; no joy, pleasantness
- the time-wasting man > this guy sucks up time w/ lots of nothing.
- the non-attending man > stirs conflict thru irregular attendance
- the disgruntled-accusing man > the disappointment led to accusations.

### C. These are thorns, disrupters, conflict starters. *Beware!*

## II. HOW TO HANDLE A DIVISIVE ONE? (10b)

- The *\*discipline\** of the divisive one. This is the fast-track to church discipline. This is the highway to reproof. This is quick acceleration!
- We see *warning* signs all around us! [construction; road closure; prescription; chemicals]
  - Ex 19.21 - Moses was to WARN the people
  - Ezek 3.17-18 - you shall WARN them
  - Luke 12.5 - Jesus said: I will warn you WHOM to fear...
  - Luke 16.28 - I have 5 brothers, that he may WARN them

### A. The steps & the process & the format:

1. Warn him *ONCE & then TWICE*. - the key word is: warn = “*admonish*” (nouthetic), warn, show the error and the dangerous path and the correct way to go.
2. Reject him decisively!

B. Paul Tautges, a biblical counselor, so wisely says: “**Because** of potential harm to the sheep, church shepherds must take SWIFT AND FIRM ACTION with factious men (who are actually wolves in sheep’s clothing), thus escalating their action beyond the slower, more methodical process outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 for other sins.” **HE’S RIGHT!**

- Why take such QUICK and DECISIVE action? 2 main reasons: (1) there’s an immediate *threat* to the unity of the Church body; and (2) there’s a sin which could bring great *harm and shame* to the name of Christ & His gospel in the community. In such cases, the process moves much quicker.

### III. **WHY TAKE ACTION WITH A DIVISIVE ONE? (I I)**

- The *\*deception/destructiveness\** of the divisive one.
  - Pastor Gene Getz once commented on this and said: it’s like Paul says: “TITUS, take radical surgery, emergency surgery! >> this must be stopped. NOW. Don’t procrastinate.
- 1. 1 Cor 1.10 - there be no divisions among you
- 2. 1 Cor 12.25 - there must be no DIVISION in the body, but that the members have the same care for one another.
- 3. Jude 19 - these are the ones who cause divisions — worldly minded, devoid of the Spirit

#### A. Why take action?? >> **Because we know 3 things:**

1. he is **perverted** [other translations: warped, corrupt, twisted, subverted \*twisted by sin\*] > he is corrupted, changed for the worse, a tearing-up-creature.
2. he is **sinning** -- to miss the mark. he thinks he represents the truth and what is right, but he actually has wandered off the path and he is missing the mark entirely.
3. he is **self-condemned** -- he knows what he is doing is hurtful and harmful. He knows that when he gossips, slanders. NET: conscious of it himself >> he’s condemned by his own sinful doings.
  - a) they claim to know God but deny him (Titus 1.16) > and he’s self-condemned b/c he’s without excuse, passing judgment on himself.

#### B. 5 reasons WHY WE MUST DO CHURCH DISCIPLINE

1. For the Good of the Person Disciplined.
2. For the Good of the Other Christians, as They See the Danger of Sin.
3. For the Health of the Church as a Whole.
4. For the Corporate Witness of the Church
5. For the Glory of God, as We Reflect His Holiness.

### CONCL-

#### *Concluding Illustration*

- Why all this? Romans 16:17-20 & 25-27
- **Thomas Brooks writes in his Precious Remedies against Satan’s devices in ways that we can REPULSE Satan’s attacks of division in the church body:** here are a few:

- Spend more time focusing on evidence of grace in others than you do pondering their sins & weaknesses & shortcomings.
- Consider that spiritual safety comes thru spiritual unity.
  - Meditate on God’s many commands that we diligently love one another.
  - Consider your peaceful God!
  - Count the cost of disunity
  - Be the first to seek peace & reconciliation (initiate & be proactive)
  - Judge yourself *more than* you judge others.
  - Pursue humility.
- We serve the Prince of Peace & we are wedded together by the Spirit of peace!
  - So let’s preserve the unity of the saints -- for the joy of the elect, for the witness to the lost, and for the magnification of our Christ. Amen.