

## **TITUS Part 5: Holiness; To the Pure, All Things Are Pure: Pure vs. Defiled. Chapter 1:15-16. (3/4/2017)**

The following text is based on a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph.

\* Portions of this sermon message have been edited to better transcribe the message. All the Scripture verses are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted and are in red. Therefore, it is recommended that this document be printed in color.

We are going to continue with our study of the book of Titus. We are going to open up with Isaiah 6:1-4—<sup>1</sup>In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup>Above it stood seraphim.... You have to appreciate what Isaiah is actually visualizing here. He sees the Lord who is—high and lifted up. In addition to that, the seraphim are above the throne of the Living God. When we read Scripture, we find that the seraphim are a little unusual. You do not read a whole lot about them because they are not mentioned a whole lot. We find more mention about the cherubim. So when we find the seraphim mentioned in Isaiah, this is a very rare occurrence. The term seraphim in Hebrew refers to fiery. In other words, it is typically translated burning.

So these angels that Isaiah sees are on fire. So he is looking at the throne of the Living God who is high and exalted, and above it he notices the fiery seraphim. As we continue, we need to make special note of the seraphim because they are a little unusual—each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup>And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory. <sup>4</sup>And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

What an awesome thing! Think about all of the things that these seraphim could be speaking. There are so many things they could say, but they speak one thing—Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh (Holy, Holy, Holy). That statement is so powerful that it literally shook heaven like thunder. And it is so true that He is Holy, Holy, Holy that it shook heaven!

Try to get your arms wrapped around the idea that it is literally shaking heaven. What an awesome sight to see! And understand something—this is a proclamation; this is the purest definition of the Living God. And in regard to the sense of His character, there is no greater way that you could possibly describe Him than Holy.

I want to add something else. This is not just a statement of proclamation; it is a statement of warning. You are going to see as we get into this today that what the seraphim are crying out, Holy, Holy, Holy, is a warning of who He is. How does Isaiah respond to this? Well, like any man—<sup>5</sup>"Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of host" (Isaiah 6:5).

So Isaiah witnesses the Lord in the totality of His holiness. He hears the proclamation from the seraphim proclaiming His holiness. And because of this he is completely undone. And guess what? He loathes

himself; he completely loathes his uncleanness, and he recognizes something—he is not worthy to be in the presence of the Living God.

Humility is not a problem when you have the revelation of the holiness of the Living God. It comes naturally. In fact, Job himself had the very same experience that Isaiah had and responded the exact same way that Isaiah did. I want you to see this because there is a pattern here in Scripture. In Job 42:5-6 we read—<sup>5</sup>"I have heard of You [the Lord] by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You.<sup>6</sup> Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

So here you have these righteous men of God. You have Isaiah, and you have Job. And when they get a glimpse of the Living God in all His holiness, when they are exposed to this holiness, they fall apart; they loath and abhor themselves.

My point is this—with the revelation of His holiness and revelation of His purity, something very special happens to us. This revelation transforms us and enlightens us. It brings us to this place of perfect clarity where we understand who we are in comparison to who He is and the relationship between the two. Acknowledging God's holiness brings us to a true place. It is supernatural. The way you see Isaiah and Job and many others in Scripture responding to God's holiness is an example of how this revelation or supernatural experience brings you to a place of repentance, worship, and adoration. It brings you to a place of truth. Amen? It is this mentality that we need to have. It is this mentality that we need to have in our pursuit of Yeshua to be worshippers, followers, and disciples all of Yeshua. I want you to remember all those stories throughout the Gospels when Yeshua confronted the demons. Do you remember how they recognized Him, and they would throw themselves before Him and beg for mercy? They were begging that Yeshua might not destroy them before the appointed time. By what name do they call Him? They said—we know who you are the Holy One of God. Do you see how they identify Him? They are in the spiritual realm, and the way they identify Him is the very same way that the seraphim identified Yehovah—You are the Holy One.

In fact, let me take it a step further and tell you what Isaiah saw. He saw the Lord high and lifted up and the burning angles above the throne. If we go to the New Testament, we are told in the Gospel of John that what Isaiah saw was Yeshua. Let me show you this in John 12:39-41—<sup>39</sup>Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again.... Here is the situation—John is dealing with the reality that people are rejecting Yeshua for who He was. Continuing—<sup>40</sup>"He has blinded their eyes.... Now keep in mind this comes right from the passage we just read from in Isaiah. Again—<sup>40</sup>"He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them."<sup>41</sup> These things Isaiah said when he saw His (Yeshua's) glory and spoke of Him. It is explicitly referring to Yeshua. This is who Isaiah saw. So when Isaiah becomes undone and stricken with fear, and he is trembling because of the holiness of Adoni Tzva'ot (God of armies), he says this happened because he saw Yeshua in His glory.

I share these things with you so that we have some perspective in regard to the One we serve. Our God is holy; He is to be feared, He is to be revered, and we are supposed to be standing in awe of Him. We must acknowledge Him as holy. And you know that this is something that has become allusive to the modern-day church; the modern-day church does not understand holiness in its purest form according to Scripture. Church service and gatherings have become a place to sit around to be comfortable; they have become seekers sensitive and seeker friendly. We are literally treating this as a coffee shop scenario in that we just comfortably relaxing and go into the service. However, we are told Psalm 89 that God is to be revered in the assembly of the saints; there should be fear and trembling when you

gather together with the fellow elect. It should be awesome! And instead, our hearts and our minds are filled with the worldly things we have to do the rest of the week as we sit in the chair and the Pastor bores us out of our mind.

This is what happens when we do not understand what holiness really is. We do not understand what holy matrimony according to Scripture is. We do not understand what the Sabbath is and what does it mean to keep it holy. God said the Sabbath is holy, but we do not know because we have forgotten these things. These things are allusive to where we are at right now, and that is a very scary thing because the Lord demands you acknowledge His holiness. He demands it! How do I know this is true? From Scripture. And believe me that this is a life and death situation. This should really rock your boat in regard to your vision of coming into a worship service or to any other fellowship or gathering.

Let me show you this in Scripture. Let us go to Leviticus 9:22-23—<sup>22</sup>Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings. <sup>23</sup>And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people. I want to explain what is happening here. The priest (Aaron) and his sons are being sanctified for the work of ministry. This is what is happening right now. And it is the crescendo moments where the final sacrifices for the sanctification or ordination of the priests has been completed. This is where we are at right now. And then it says in Leviticus 9:23-24—<sup>23</sup>Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people. <sup>24</sup>And fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces. Isn't that fascinating! So this sanctification, this ordination, was sealed by the Living God because it was consumed. When He consumes the sacrifice, He accepts it. The fire of the Lord, the glory of the Lord, was shown.

The story takes an interesting twist as we continue. This is what we read in Leviticus 10:1-2—<sup>1</sup>Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. <sup>2</sup>So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.

Are you getting the context here? The Lord called Aaron and his two oldest sons Nadab and Abihu specifically to the priesthood. These two oldest sons were ordained by God Himself; they were called to serve in the ministry, and He just killed them. Why? Because they did something that was against His will; it was against His commandments. Think about this—they offered a fire that He had not commanded them. This was of their own heart. They did not acknowledge God in His infinite glory or in His infinite holiness. And we know this because as we continue to read in Leviticus 10:3 it says—<sup>3</sup>And Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying: 'By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.' " So Aaron held his peace.

Think about that—He must be regarded. You know, you hear the statement—<sup>4</sup>draw near to God and He will draw near to you (James 4:8)—and we just think that in-between driving to work and going to play tennis we will go ahead and say a quick prayer. If that is how you live in relation to God, you understand nothing about the God of Israel; you understand nothing about the God who created heaven and earth.

When Isaiah and Job had their experience, they were not thinking about anything but the holiness of the Lord, how they loathe themselves, and how they do not belong in His presence. There was no schedule to be concerned about. There were no worldly things going on that moved them. It was the holiness of

the Lord that moved them. But here in this situation Nadab and Abihu forgot. They decided to worship the Lord in a manner they saw fit according to their own choosing, and He killed them dead. He wants to be acknowledged as holy. You acknowledge Him according to who He is, and you do what He says. It is that simple. Amen? We must acknowledge Him in His holiness.

With that said, I want to take you to the book of Titus. What we are going to do is we are going to take this information, and it is going to kind of be of assistance to us as a backdrop to understanding and appreciating what Paul is going to convey to Titus here at the end of chapter one. So with that said, let us go to Titus 1:15. And we read this—<sup>15</sup>To the pure all things are pure. I have covered this before, but I ask the question—what is he referring to when he says—all things are pure? Is this a situation where Paul is giving legal rights of self sanctification to anything he wants? In other words, can he just take a special Jesus sticker and slap it on particular situations and call it—all things are pure? Can Paul deem this pure because he is pure? Therefore, everything that Paul deems as pure is pure? Clearly this is not what he is saying.

Let's be honest. Peter knew what he was talking about when he said—untaught and unstable people twist [Paul's words] to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16). Paul makes statements at times that if taken alone can be very dangerous in the hands of the wrong people. In the hands of the wrong people, they can be deadly. They can manipulate it and use it for their own liking, for their own choosing, and to justify their own sinful actions.

When we look at 1 Corinthians 6:12 & 10:23, we find that multiple times Paul actually makes the statement—all things are lawful for me. Really? Does that mean he can covet? Does that mean you and I can steal? Does not Paul says—all things are lawful for me? Why would he say that if he did not mean it? I have actually had a gentleman come up to me and tell me that he does not need to keep the Ten Commandments because all things are lawful for him now. Someone in this building told me this. Does that blow your mind?

Peter knew what he was talking about when he was warning the people because people want to isolate particular statements Paul makes and make entire doctrines out of them. And there are other times that the Apostle Paul says the same thing he says in 2 Corinthians 5:18—all things are of God. Really? Is not honoring your mother and father or taking the Lord's name in vain of God? Remember what Paul said—all things of God. Are particular sinful situations that you see unfolded of God? No! That is not what Paul is saying. And this is not what he is saying in Titus 1:15 when he says—all things are pure. He does not mean that everything we decide is pure becomes pure.

It is interesting that this very statement is made in Romans 14:20. Remember the context of this and surrounding verses. These verses are about the meat eaters in contrast to the vegetarians. There is a very hostile conflict between the two because the vegetarians have this conviction that meat is not holy. They claim that eating meat is not a pious thing to do. So there is this confrontation between the two groups, and Paul reminds the people that meat is not the problem. If God has declared meat to be clean, it is clean. And then he basically says—all things are pure. So he makes the statement in the context that what God has said is OK is then pure and holy. And that is the end of the discussion. So by comparison, that is exactly what is being described here. So Paul's statement looks like this—to the pure (meaning to the holy) and to the sanctified (meaning to those that love and know Him) everything that God commands in His Torah is pure. In other words—to the pure all things are pure. This is the context of what Paul is sharing, but as we continue in Titus 1:15, Paul says this—<sup>15</sup>To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and

conscience are defiled. In other words, he says—their mind and conscience are contaminated—they have been polluted.

So we have two groups of people here. We have the pure or purest, and then we have these men that Paul calls defiled and unbelieving. The pure believe all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure. You see, these men are like that of Nadab and Abihu. They did not acknowledge the holiness of God; they did not acknowledge His commandments. Instead they chose to acknowledge their feelings and their hearts. Compare this to Jeremiah 17:9—<sup>9</sup>The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? The heart is desperately wicked; you cannot plumb the depths of its deception. The heart is the most persuasive thing in the world, and we all have one. That is scary!

There are so many Proverbs that talk about the heart. Proverbs 14:15—<sup>15</sup>The simple believes every word, But the prudent considers well his steps. Proverbs 28:26 says—<sup>26</sup>Only a fool trust in his own heart. We cannot trust our feelings. What we find in Titus 1:15 is the measuring rod. This is what can be trusted.

I will tell you, however, that our feelings are very persuasive, cunning, strong, and overwhelming. Am I the only person in here that has to fight these things? I know I am not. This is the eternal struggle. It is our own flesh; it is the deception of our hearts that is constantly trying to lead us astray. Constantly!

Well, I want to go to Scripture because I want to support the way I just defined and presented this in regard to the context and the interpretation. I want to look at how the Bible talks about purity. I want to do this so that you can understand where Paul is coming from, and why he chose to say it the way he did. Let us go to Psalms 12:6 where we read the following—<sup>6</sup>The words of the Lord are pure words. Remember that—<sup>15</sup>To the pure all things are pure (Titus 1:15). I know what Paul is talking about. He is talking about—<sup>6</sup>The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times (Psalms 12:6). Proverbs 30:5—<sup>5</sup>Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. We can take what we just read in Psalm 12 in the context of being totally refined—<sup>6</sup>The words of the Lord are pure words [refined]. And again in Proverbs 30:5—<sup>5</sup>Every word of God is pure [refined]. In Psalm 19:7 we read—<sup>7</sup>The law [Torah] of the Lord is perfect.... It is what? Perfect. The transliteration for the Greek word used for pure is *tamiym*. In the Hebrew it quite literally means without blemish; it means pure. The Torah of the Living God is pure. And what does it do? It is—converting the soul (Psalm 19:7).

This is the effect that Isaiah and Job had experienced. They repented in dust and ashes because of the holiness of the Lord. The Torah is the holiness of the Lord; it has an effect on you and will cause you to repent. It is powerful! Remember when we talked about Jehoshaphat and how he sent the priest out to teach the Torah and turn the hearts of the people back to the Living God (2 Chronicles 17:6)? It sparked a revival; it sparked repentance. Think about Nehemiah chapter eight in regard to the Feast of Trumpets. The people started weeping and wailing. Why? Because they hear the words of the Living God. They hear the holiness; they acknowledged the holiness of the Lord, and it broke them down. Powerful!

We continue in Psalms 9:7-8—<sup>7</sup>the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; <sup>8</sup>the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. When you are confronted by and acknowledge holiness, it gives you sight—<sup>105</sup>Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path (Psalms 119:105). It gives you the ability to see in the deepest spiritual

reality. It puts light in your path that shows you the way things really are; it shows you who you really are. It shows you the intent and the thoughts of your heart. The commandments of God are pure.

Continuing on in Psalms 19:9—<sup>9</sup>**the fear of the Lord is clean.** The transliteration for the Greek word used for clean is *tahowr*. It means pure. Again, Isaiah, job, and all the other righteous men of God in Scripture feared the Living God. And this is the command—<sup>12</sup>**Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.** <sup>13</sup>**For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).**

Continuing in Psalms 19:9-10—<sup>9</sup>**The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.** <sup>10</sup>**More to be desired are they than gold.** That is critically important. Your heart has to desire the holiness of the Living God. This is what we are to covet—**seek first His kingdom and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33).** He is talking about His righteousness and His holiness. We need to desire His commandments. Continuing in Psalms 19:10-11—**Yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.** <sup>11</sup>**Moreover by them Your servant is warned.** So this holiness of the Living God gives light, and we are warned. Paul says in Romans 7:7— <sup>7</sup>**I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."** It warns us!

I find all of this interesting. All of this goes back to Isaiah's experience as he looked up and saw the seraphim crying out to the point that heaven is shaking—Holy, Holy, Holy. It is a warning. The Lord is holy. Holiness warns us. What is the Torah? It is the holiness of the Living God. What does it do? It warns us. Continuing in Psalms 19:11—**and in keeping them there is great reward.** This is what Yeshua says at the end of Revelation 22:12— <sup>12</sup>**And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.** According to what? His work and his deed. What he has chosen to do, and what he is dedicated to. This is conceptual faith. And it is interesting that as you continue to read on in Revelation 22:14, the very next thing that is said is—<sup>14</sup>**Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.** There is a reward.

I want to take you to Titus 1:15-16. First, however, I want to give you a real life example of this scenario unfolding in a biblical example and lay the groundwork here. I want to show you how it parallels what Paul is dealing with, and what his structure is in Titus 1:15-16. In Exodus 9:18-21, we are getting into the plagues. In fact, six of the plagues have already happened, and disaster has come upon the people and the land; the hand of the Living God has come upon them. He is about to bring the seventh plague; however, this one is a little bit different, and you will see why as we look at Exodus. This is what we read in Exodus 9:18-19—<sup>18</sup>**Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause very heavy hail to rain down, such as has not been in Egypt since its founding until now.** <sup>19</sup>**Therefore send now and gather your livestock and all that you have in the field, for the hail shall come down on every man and every animal which is found in the field and is not brought home; and they shall die.** Now here is what is interesting about this statement—this is not just made to Israel. It is actually directed to Pharaoh and the Egyptians. And what is God telling them to do? He tells them to hide your servants, your slaves, and your cattle because I am raining this plague down. Now this is amazing to me! He is offering them life.

We go on and read this in Exodus 9:20-21—<sup>20</sup>**He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses.** <sup>21</sup>**But he who did not regard the word of the Lord left his servants and his livestock in the field.** This is the same structure of what Paul is dealing with in Titus 1:15—**To the pure, all things are pure.** They listen to the word of God. It resonates with

them; they acknowledge His holiness. That is what these men are doing here. And remember, was there or was there not a mixed multitude that went up out of Egypt? Now you have a little bit of insight into whom these men might have been. They were the ones who acknowledge the power of the authority of the Living God, and they listened. Remember—all things are pure. So they hid.

Then you have the second group mentioned. These are the defiled and unbelieving as Paul would call them. And they did not regard the words of the Lord. What do you think happened? Their livestock and servants were killed. They did not recognize the holiness of the Lord. They ended up like Nadab and Abihu. Remember Proverbs 13:13—<sup>13</sup>**He who despises the word will be destroyed, but he who fears the commandment will be rewarded.** It is that simple. You can be one of two groups. It is the sheep or the goats. That is who it is, and this is the message that Paul is conveying to Titus. This is very powerful!

We have been focusing on—all things are pure. We have been focusing on the puritans. Who are these men? I want to take you to 1 John. John really defines this well. 1 John 3:2—<sup>2</sup>**Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.** <sup>3</sup> And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. Think about that—You purify yourself just as He is pure. This is what it means. This is who Paul is referring to—the pure—to the pure all things are pure. We know who the pure are. It is those who are the ones who purified themselves like Yeshua in order to be like Him—<sup>48</sup>**Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48).**

This is the concept. Right? The concept comes right from the Torah. Leviticus 19:1-2—<sup>1</sup>**And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.** Everyone who draws near to the Living God must acknowledge Him as holy. It is not an option. If He is holy, we need to get right. We need to be holy as He is holy.

We have got the Torah, Peter, Paul, and John testifying about the same thing. But I like what Peter does here in 1 Peter 1:13-15—<sup>1</sup>**Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;** <sup>14</sup> **as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;** <sup>15</sup> **but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.** You know what I love about this? Peter draws the conclusion that being obedient children and obeying God's commandments is literally equated to being holy. It is to understand what it means to be drawn out, to be called holy, and to purify oneself through faith in Yeshua. This is how you do it if you are going to call Yeshua your Master and your Savior. You are going to have to follow Him. He does not just say believe. He says follow me. He wants disciples who do what He did. It is enough for a servant to be like his master. This is presented over and over again. We could say this ten different ways, and it is scattered throughout Scripture in a variety of different stories.

I want to take you back to Titus 1:15, and I want to focus on the second group of people whom Paul is calling the defiled and unbelieving. Paul is going to go on to give a characteristic about these particular men that might shock you. And I say that because when we read this—the **defiled the unbelieving**—the knee jerk reaction is to think that these are atheist, agnostic heathens. They denied Yeshua as Lord, so of course they are going to be abominable. Of course they are disobedient to faith in Christ. That is not the context of what Paul is sharing. This is where it gets really scary. Listen to what he says as he continues to describe the defiled and the unbelieving. Listen to this characteristic in Titus 1:16—<sup>16</sup>**They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.** That is scary! The context of what he is saying is defiled and unbelieving. This is the

same context that is utilized in Hebrews 3:7-19. You remember in Hebrews that Paul literally equates disobedience to unbelief. Do not take my word for it; go read it yourself. Pay attention to the last verse in chapter three. Paul equates disobedience to unbelief.

So that really brings this into shape and form when you see that Paul is calling these people defiled and unbelieving, and that they profess to know God. They are making the claim—I know Yeshua, I serve Him, and I am His servant. It is really scary when you realize what Paul is describing here is something that Yeshua had already laid out before Paul wrote this epistle. Paul is just reiterating the principles.

As you go to Matthew 7:15, you read Yeshua saying—<sup>17</sup>**Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.** Now here is the thing, they do not come with name badges saying I am a false prophet. Get your microscope out and look deep inside. They come to you proclaiming Yeshua as Lord and Savior. They come proclaiming that they follow Him; they proclaim that they are His servants, and they do His work. They are among the sheep, and they look like the sheep. It is only when you see the inside, in the spiritual realm, do you get to see that they are not a sheep. Although everyone says that these are righteous men of God, or these are righteous women of God, these are not authentic. But Yeshua says in Matthew 7:16—<sup>16</sup>**You will know them by their fruits.** **Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?** In other words, when He is talking fruits, He is talking about works. You will know them by their actions and by their deeds; that is how we know them.

Moving on to Matthew 7:17-20—<sup>17</sup>**Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.** <sup>18</sup>**A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.** <sup>19</sup>**Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.** <sup>20</sup>**Therefore by their fruits you will know them.**

The concept works great in the sense that by their fruits you will know them; by their works or not you will know them. There is good fruit, and there is bad fruit. Who is to decide what is good and what is bad? Who makes that decision? Do you? For example, I could portray several different scenarios; I could talk about unborn children. To one person I could say—should this child live? There are some defects with this child. And the person says yes. They would take the position that life is important; life is good. This is the right thing to do. Then I can ask somebody else and they could say no. They would believe that it is cruel. Why would you bring somebody into the world when they are deformed and humiliate them? Why would you do that? I could give you a zillion examples of this, but you get where I am going with this point. Who says what is good and what is not? It is right here in the Bible. It is not your heart; it is not us who defines what is good or what is bad. It is the Holy God, and we have got to trust in Him. Remember that a fool trusts in his own heart. I am not worthy to classify what is good and what is not, and I know that I will be the first to tell you that I am not the guy to ask. Yeshua is. His word is trustworthy. The Bible is a trustworthy source. We are all in the flesh, so we are all subject to deception because we all have evil, wicked hearts. That is the reality.

Continuing on. Look at what Yeshua says in Matthew 7:21-23; He really brings it home. <sup>21</sup>**Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord.'** They are calling Him by name; they profess to know God. This is the confession; this is the profession. <sup>21</sup>**Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.** <sup>22</sup>**Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'** They look super spiritual hyper. They are the ones that community people respect. They never thought for a second they were not saved. They are calling Yeshua by name, and then they are testifying to the deeds that they did in His name. To them there is no confusion; they are saved. Then Yeshua says this in verse twenty three—<sup>23</sup>**And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart**

from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' He says that they need to get away from Him because they literally practiced Torahlessness; they did not acknowledge the holiness of God. They rejected it like Nadab and Abihu, and they decided to follow their king, their master, the very same way.

Going to Titus 1:16—**they profess to know God, but in works they deny Him.** This is who He is referring to. He is referring to the people that Yeshua is talking about. I love what Yeshua says here in Luke 6:46—<sup>46</sup>**But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?** You do not do the things that are holy. How can we call upon a Holy God and reject His holiness? You cannot do it. Look at Hebrews 5:9—<sup>9</sup>**And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.**

We need to be honest here. When we hear words like law, statutes, and obedience, and that we need to obey them, does this not rub your flesh the wrong way? We do not like it. We do not want people telling us that we have to do something. We hate it. It is anathema to our flesh; our flesh is rebellious. This is something that is no mystery. I am not sharing with you a profound mystery here; our hearts are rebellious. And so when we hear things like a commandment or something that is commanding, we rebel. I do not want to be under anybody's authority. I refuse. See these are the realities. It is something that you need to remember about your flesh—your fleshly tendencies are absolutely going to run the other direction when confronted with holiness. Period! We want to turn away from the commandments; we want to turn away from the Torah. Yeshua said in Matthew 26:41—<sup>41</sup>**The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.** The flesh is weak.

Do you know what I really hate about the flesh? It is nourished, it grows, and it flourishes on lies from the pit of hell. Lies like what Satan told Eve in the garden. Do you remember what he did? He called into question the holy commandment of God. God commanded them to not partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Do not do it. And then Satan comes and says—Did God really say? In other words, do you really think you have to keep that commandment? And then he sets the hook, and he tells her that she surely will not die. There will be no repercussions for this action; it is OK. In fact, what you do not realize is that God has been suppressing you. This command is totally oppressive. He is keeping good things from you. You are going to be like Him if you do this; you are going to experience something amazing. Your eyes are going to be open, and you will be like God; you will not die.

You know that many times Satan tells us those same lies daily a thousand different ways. He tells us that it does not really matter. Is God really going to strike me when I am looking at all these people walking around just fine and happy? They have got smiles on their faces; they look prosperous. This is what I see. They are not getting killed. And that is what Satan tells you. He tells you that they are just fine; there are no repercussions for ignoring God's holiness or the sanctity of truth. In fact, you can get into it even a step further by listening to the lie that says—why even try; no one can do it. None of you can keep the law perfectly. I love the arguments that there are 638 commandments, and no one can keep them all. It is this sewage that Satan is spewing out by telling you that you cannot do it; it is hopeless.

I want to share with you a passage in Scripture. This is why I love the word of God. His word refutes every lie from the pit of Hell. We are looking at Jeremiah 18:11-12—<sup>11</sup> **Now therefore, speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the Lord: "Behold, I am fashioning a disaster and devising a plan against you. Return now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.** And how did these men respond? <sup>12</sup> **And they said, "That is hopeless! So we will walk according to our own plans, and we will every one obey the dictates of his evil heart."** The ones

that Paul called defiled and unbelieving in Titus 1:15, this is how they think. They will tell you that it is hopeless, and that you cannot do it. So guess what? They are just going to do it their own way. This, then, results in every man doing what is right in his own eyes.

The reality of all of this is that we are living in that generation. I do not mean in the world; I mean in the church. The situation is that everyone is doing what is right in their own eyes. You know the defiled and the unbelieving? They say it is hopeless. Those who are pure, they say—I can do all things through Messiah Yeshua who strengthens me. Right? He gives this power and strength to walk in His holiness.

I want to close with this passage from Jeremiah 23:16-17—<sup>16</sup>Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They make you worthless; They speak a vision of their own heart, Not from the mouth of the Lord. <sup>17</sup>They continually say to those who despise Me....

They are rejecting His holiness; they are rejecting His voice, and they reject His commandments. As we continue in verse seventeen we find false prophets saying—'The Lord has said, "You shall have peace"'; And to everyone who walks according to the dictates of his own heart, they say, 'No evil shall come upon you.' " They tell you that you are just fine; you are going to be OK. And this is why I am telling you that the land is filled with false prophets. We look at our friends, we look at family, and we can look at all these righteous people around us, but they are all rejecting the holiness of the Living God. These are scary times we are living in! Amen?

And so when we read this statement in Titus 1:15—<sup>15</sup>To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. <sup>16</sup>They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work, you now have a really in-depth understanding of where Paul is coming from. This is a very terrifying passage. The context of it is not talking about unbelievers in the sense of rejecting Yeshua flat out. Paul is talking about those who confess Him.