

Titus 1:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Analysis

Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught—ἀντεχόμενον (antechomenon, clinging to/holding firmly) depicts tenacious grip on doctrinal truth. τοῦ πιστοῦ λόγου (tou pistou logou, the faithful/reliable word) refers to apostolic teaching, the Christian deposit. κατὰ τὴν διδαχὴν (kata tēn didachēn, according to the teaching) stresses conformity to received tradition, not innovation. Elders conserve and transmit doctrine, not invent it.

That he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers—two pastoral functions require doctrinal mastery. First, παρακαλέω (parakaleō, exhort/encourage) builds up believers through healthy teaching. Second, ἐλέγχω (elegchō, refute/convict) confronts ἀντιλέγοντας (antilegontas, those who speak against/contradict). Biblical eldership requires both nurturing orthodoxy and refuting heresy—positive and polemical theology.

Historical Context

The false teachers in Crete (1:10-11) required elders who could both teach positively and argue negatively. Unlike modern anti-doctrinal sentimentality, first-century Christianity demanded theological precision to preserve the gospel against distortion. The "faithful word" was an objective deposit, not subjective experience.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Are you "holding fast" to apostolic doctrine, or have modern innovations and cultural accommodation compromised your beliefs?
2. Can you both encourage believers with sound teaching and refute false doctrine, or do you only know how to critique?
3. What false teaching currently threatens your church community, and are your leaders equipped to both exhort and rebuke?

Interlinear Text

ἀντεχόμενον	τοῦ	κατὰ	τὴν	διδασκίαν	πιστοῦ	λόγου
Holding fast G472	G3588	as G2596	G3588	he hath been taught G1322	the faithful G4103	word G3056
ἵνα	δυνατὸς	ᾗ	καὶ	παρακαλεῖν	ἐν	τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ
that G2443	able G1415	he may be G5600	and G2532	to exhort G3870	by G1722	doctrine G1319
τῇ	ὑγιαίνουσῃ	καὶ	τοὺς	ἀντιλέγοντας	ἐλέγχειν	
G3588	sound G5198	and G2532	G3588	the gainsayers G483	to convince G1651	

Additional Cross-References

2 Thessalonians 2:15 (Word): Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

2 Timothy 1:13 (Faith): Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 6:3 (Word): If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

1 Timothy 1:10 (Parallel theme): For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

1 Timothy 1:15 (Faith): This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

1 Thessalonians 5:21 (Parallel theme): Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Revelation 3:3 (Parallel theme): Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

Job 2:3 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

Proverbs 23:23 (Parallel theme): Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

Titus 2:1 (Parallel theme): But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: