

Titus 1:12-13 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

- [Titus 1:1](#)
- [Titus 1:2](#)
- [Titus 1:3](#)
- [Titus 1:4](#)
- [Titus 1:5](#)
- [Titus 1:6](#)
- [Titus 1:7](#)
- [Titus 1:8](#)
- [Titus 1:9](#)
- [Titus 1:10](#)
- [Titus 1:11](#)
- [Titus 1:12](#)
- [Titus 1:13](#)
- [Titus 1:14](#)
- [Titus 1:15](#)
- [Titus 1:16](#)

ADORNING THE DOCTRINE OF GOD
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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
See [Summary Chart by Charles Swindoll](#)
Chart below from [Michael J. Penfold](#)

Focus	Appoint Elders		Set Things in Order	
Divisions	Ordain Qualified Elders Titus 1:1-9+	Rebuke False Teachers Titus 1:10-16+	Speak Sound Doctrine Titus 2:1-15+	Maintain Good Works Titus 3:1-15+
Topics	Protection of Sound Doctrine		Practice of Sound Doctrine	
Topics	Organization	Offenders	Operation	Obedience
Place	Probably Written from either Corinth or Nicopolis (cf. Titus 3:12).			
Time	Circa 63 AD			
Modified from Talk Thru the Bible				

Titus 1:12 [One](#) of [themselves](#), a [prophet](#) of their [own](#), [said](#) (3SAAI) "[Cretans](#) are [always liars](#), [evil beasts](#), [lazy gluttons](#)." (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [eipen](#) (3SAAI) [tis](#) ex [auton](#), [idios auton prophetes](#), [Kretes aei pseustai](#), [kaka theria gasterea argai](#)

Amplified: One of their [very] number, a prophet of their own, said, Cretans are always liars, hurtful beasts, idle and lazy gluttons. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

KJV: One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow

bellies.

Phillips: One of them, yes, one of their prophets, has said: "Men of Crete are always liars, evil and beastly, lazy and greedy." ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: A certain one of them, a prophet of their very own, said, Cretans by nature are incessant liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons.

Young's Literal: A certain one of them, a prophet of their own, said -- 'Cretans! always liars, evil beasts, lazy bellies!'

ONE OF THEMSELVES A PROPHET OF THEIR OWN SAID: eipen tis ex auton idios auton prophetes:

Even one of their own prophets has said (NIV)

A certain one of them, in fact, one of their own prophets (NET)

One of their [very] number, a prophet of their own, said (Amp)

It was one of themselves, one of their own prophets, who said (NJB)

One of their own number—a Prophet who is a countryman of theirs (WNT)

Prophet ([4396](#)) (**prophetes** from **pró** = before or forth + **phemí** = tell) generally refers to a person inspired to proclaim or reveal divine will or purpose. In the present context these are pagan prophets not true prophets of God.

Epimenides was born in Crete at Cnossos and was a self-styled "**prophet**" (or poet) and was so accepted by the Cretans, Cicero and Apuleius. Although Epimenides, may have been exaggerating, his basic assessment was on target. He was a highly respected Greek intellectual and as a native of Crete, he knew the people well and was not speaking out of malice as an enemy.

Spurgeon - According to Jerome, this was [Epimenides](#), a prophet-poet who lived in [Crete](#) in the sixth century before Christ. (He describes the Cretans) They were a degraded people. Hence, those who would teach them had a most difficult task and needed great grace. Paul exhorts Titus that only specially fit men, men whose example would have influence, and whose characters would have weight, should be allowed to be elders in such churches.

Illustration - A British ambassador was reporting to Queen Elizabeth II about a head of state he had been having difficulty with. The ambassador tried to approach the subject delicately, using large words and complicated language. However, the more he spoke, the less clear he became. Finally, the exasperated queen interrupted and said, "Are you trying to tell me that the man is just bonkers?" Paul was just as blunt in his assessment of the false teachers that Titus had to refute. Quoting the philosopher Epimenides, Paul declared, "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons." Epimenides was a religious teacher who lived in the sixth century B.C. Aristotle and Cicero referred to him as a "prophet." Paul quotes him because Epimenides was from Crete and because of his strong criticism of his own people. Although his assessment was harsh, his opinion was widely shared. So much so, in fact, that in Greek culture, to call someone a "Cretan" was synonymous with calling that person a liar. TODAY ALONG THE WAY - When are "sharp words" warranted in dealing with another believer? Paul's directive to Titus provides a helpful checklist that can be used when we are considering a possible rebuke. First, how serious is the offense? These false teachers required a sharp rebuke because of the nature and impact of their teaching. Others were being seriously damaged by their false doctrine. Second, what is our motive? Is the goal redemptive? Do we want to sound off, or do we want them to be sound in the faith? ([Copyright Moody Bible Institute. Used by permission. All rights reserved](#))

CRETANS ARE ALWAYS LIARS: kretes aei pseustai:

- Ro 16:18; 1Ti 4:2; 2Pe 2:12; 2:15 Jude 1:8, 9, 10, 11,12, 13

Cretans were never anything but liars (NJB)

The men of Crete are ever false (BBE)

Cretans ([2912](#)) (**Kres**) refers to inhabitants of the island of Crete and here introduces an unfavorable generalization about Cretan character (or lack thereof).

Always ([104](#)) (**aei**) means these Cretans were perpetually, invariably, at any and every time incessantly prone to speak lies and the

ancient world knew this even coining the verb “Cretanize” (Greek = **kretizo**, to lie and **kretismos** = Cretan behavior, lying) as a figure of speech for lying and cheating.

Liars ([5583](#)) (**pseustes** from **pseudomai** = to utter untruth and attempt to deceive by falsehood) describes Cretans as those who continually utter untruth and try to deceive their listeners with their lies. Like father like son for Jesus said that Satan “was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.” (Jn 8:44) Contrast **apseudes** which describes the non-lying God. To whom are you listening? Much (most?) of the fare on television and the movies is heavily laced with the arsenic of our archenemy Satan! So many of us think we can watch PG-13 movies (that take the Name of our Savior in vain, even using it as a curse word!) and television shows with “L” (for language) and not be affected by it (sadly I fall into this trap too often!)

No people ever had a worse reputation than the Cretans. The ancient world spoke of the three most evil **C's**

Cretans
Cilicians
Cappadocians

The Cretans were famed as a drunken, insolent, untrustworthy, lying, gluttonous people.

Cretan avarice was proverbial, Polybius recording that “The Cretans on account of their innate avarice, live in a perpetual state of private quarrel and public feud and civil strife... and you will hardly find anywhere characters more tricky and deceitful than those of Crete. Money is so highly valued among them, that its possession is not only thought to be necessary, but highly creditable; and in fact greed and avarice are so native to the soil in Crete, that they are the only people in the world among whom no stigma attaches to any sort of gain whatever.”

GotQuestions - Question: “What does it mean that all Cretans are liars?”

Answer: The declaration “all Cretans are liars” is found in Titus 1:12. Crete is an island in the Mediterranean where Paul had preached and where many were converted to Christianity. In his letter to Titus, the apostle Paul told him that the reason he left him in Crete was to “straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town” (Titus 1:5). New churches were being formed, and the appointment of godly leaders to oversee them was a priority for Paul. Beginning in Titus 1:6, Paul details for Titus the qualifications for elders, one of which is the ability to “encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it” (verse 9). He goes on to say that in Crete there were many rebellious people and deceivers who must be silenced as they were teaching falsehood for financial gain (verses 10–11). At that point, Paul quotes a famous Cretan who wrote, “Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons” (verse 12). That writer was Epimenides of Gnosus, a seventh-century BC poet, prophet, and native Cretan who characterized his own people as liars. Epimenides wasn’t the only one to describe Cretans in this way. Other ancient writers and philosophers concurred, and Paul’s assessment serves to confirm the Cretans’ character to be generally evil. The Roman poet Ovid referred to Crete as mendax Creta, or “lying Crete.” The Greeks used the verb cretize as a synonym for lie. All people are guilty of lying at one time or another, but not all are habitual liars, as it seems the ancient Cretans were. Lying seems to have been a governing vice among them. They were not only guilty of it in certain specific instances, but always. They were, in the vernacular of psychologists, compulsive liars, those who lie even when there is no external motive for the lie. Lying was their fallback behavior in all instances. Lying is incompatible with a relationship with the God of Truth. This is why Paul tells Titus to “rebuke [the Cretans] sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith” (Titus 1:13). No one whose life is characterized by lying can be grounded in the Christian faith or follow Jesus, who is Himself “the truth” (John 14:6). We worship God who “cannot lie” (Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18). The Christian faith is built on the promises of a God whose promises are always fulfilled. He is a God of truth, and those who worship Him must worship in truth (John 4:24). The Bible tells us that God hates lying (Proverbs 6:16–17), that liars will not escape punishment (Proverbs 19:5), and that their ultimate end is in the lake of fire (Revelation 21:8). Knowing this, Paul urged Titus to admonish the Cretans in the strictest way possible, in order to save their souls from hell.

Small Thing, Big Impact - Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification. —Ephesians 4:29 Are most people truth-tellers? Can what they say be taken at face value? **Or are they like the ancient Cretans, whose reputation was that they were “always liars”?** (Titus 1:12). Lies, of course, are communicated by the tongue. That small part of the human body can make a powerful impact. It can ruin a reputation. It can destroy a friendship. It can cause lasting heartache. On the other hand, the tongue can give comfort and hope in time of bereavement. It can shine the light of saving truth into the mind of someone wandering in spiritual darkness. It can praise and glorify God. We shouldn’t be surprised, then, that Scripture repeatedly urges us to exercise great wisdom and care in how we use this small part of the body. Proverbs 18:21 is not exaggerating when it warns us that “death and life are in the power of the tongue.” David was not indulging in pointless poetry when he denounced “men ... whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword” (Psalm 57:4). And the apostle James said that the tongue can be as destructive as a fire (James 3:1-12). By the Holy Spirit’s power, may we use our tongues to bless our hearers, build up

one another, and glorify our Creator in prayer and praise.

Lord, set a watch upon my lips,
My tongue control today;
Help me evaluate each thought
And guard each word I say. —Hess

The tongue is a small organ that creates either discord or harmony.

EVIL BEASTS: *kaka theria*:

evil brutes, (NIV)

“Wicked wild beasts”, savage animals (GWT)

evil and beastly (Phillips)

They are evil animals (ICB)

cruel animals (NLT)

vicious brutes (NRSV)

hurtful beasts (Amp)

dangerous animals (NJB)

evil beasts (BBE)

Evil ([2556](#)) (**kakos**) is an adjective that basically denotes a lack of something or not as it ought to be. It is the opposite of good (**kalos, agathos**). It describes one who is evil in himself and, as such, gets others in trouble. In a moral sense **kakos** describes these Cretans as wicked, vicious, bad in heart, conduct, and character (cf Php 3:2-note).

Beasts ([2342](#)) (**therion**) refers to any living creature, excluding humans. In this verse it does however refer (figuratively) to humans as those who are wicked and possessed of a 'bestial' nature. These men are veritable "monsters".

In Acts **therion** denotes a venomous creature, Luke recording that a "viper (that) came out because of the heat, and fastened on (Paul's) hand" as "the creature (**therion**) hanging from his hand" (Acts 28:3, 28:4)

The Cretans were like wicked dangerous animals and vicious venomous vipers. Their actions and effects were like those of wild, ferocious, dangerous, savage and brutal beasts. They behaved like a wild animals, living solely at the level of their depraved sensual appetites and passions.

These men were not just “beasts” but “**evil** beasts”, not just “gluttons,” but “**lazy** gluttons.” They were celebrities, not servants and they “lived it up” at the expense of their followers, and (true to human nature), their followers loved it!

LAZY GLUTTONS: *gasteres argai*:

Slow bellies (KJV)

lazy people who do nothing but eat (ICB)

lazy bellies (YLT)

lazy people who do nothing but eat (NCV)

lovers of food, hating work. (BBE)

Lazy ([692](#)) (**argos** from **a** = without + **ergon** = work) literally means without work, without labor, doing nothing, as one not working the ground and so living without labor. As employed in the New Testament, **argos** always describes something inoperative or unserviceable.

Argos conveys several ideas depending on the context - **(1)** unemployed - without anything to do (Mt 20:3,6, 1Ti 5:13); **(2)** being unwilling to work, wanting nothing to do, shunning the labor which one ought to perform - idle, neglectful or lazy (as used here in Titus 1:12) and **(3)** unproductive - useless, unprofitable or worthless (Jas 2:20, 2Pe 1:8-note; Mt 12:36).

Argos is used 7 times in the NASB (Matt 12:36; 20:3, 6; 1 Tim 5:13; Titus 1:12; Jas 2:20; 2 Pet 1:8) and once in the Septuagint (LXX) (1 Ki 6:7)

Matthew 12:36 "And I say to you, that every **careless** (literally "not working", barren, unproductive) word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment. (**Comment:** Re-read this verse and think about the implications of what comes out of our mouths. Are our words "working" - ergon - words, words that are productive and which edify? "Not working" words include those that are flippant, irresponsible, hypocritical or in any way inappropriate. cf Eph 4:29)

Matthew 20:3 "And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing **idle** in the market place;

Matthew 20:6 "And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing; and he said to them, 'Why have you been standing here **idle** all day long?'

1 Timothy 5:13 And at the same time they (younger widows) also learn to be **idle**, as they go around from house to house; and not merely **idle**, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention.

James 2:20 But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is **useless** (unprofitable, worthless - carries the idea of fruitlessness - see parallel thought in Mt 7:19-note)? (**Comment:** What does a fruitless life demonstrate?)

2 Peter 1:8 (note) For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither **useless** (unproductive) nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Argos is translated: careless(1), idle(4), lazy(1), useless(2).

In short, in this verse **argos** refers to "unemployed stomachs" who wish to eat without working to earn their living.

Paul had a parallel description in his epistle to Philippi describing those who were

"enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite (their belly or stomach), and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things." (Php 3:19; 20-see notes Philippians 3:19; 3:20)

Gluttons (1064) (**gaster** <> English = gastronomy, the art of good eating) which referred to the belly particularly the stomach and was used as a figure of speech for appetite, excessive eating and gluttony.

Cretans hated work but loved to eat and thus were generally self-indulgent, greedy, lustful and overfed.. Paul affirmed that the six-hundred-year-old testimony of Epimenides (ca 600 B.C., one of the seven "wise men" of Greece) was still true. Unredeemed flesh doesn't change much and does not have any tendency to get better.

Callimachus wrote a poem emphasizing the tendency for Cretans to lie --

"Cretans are chronic liars, for they built a tomb, O King, and called it thine; but you die not. Your life is everlasting."

His point was that the so-called gods don't die so how could they have a tomb and thus the Cretans are notorious liars. Callimachus and the Cretans are of course both "liars" for a "god" named Zeus is but a myth contrived by men rejecting the only Living God.

Titus 1:13 **This testimony is (3SPA1) true. For this reason reprove (2SPAM) them severely so that they may be sound (3PPAS) in the faith (NASB: Lockman)**

Greek: [e marturia aute estin \(3SPA1\)](#) [alethes. di' en aitian elegche \(2SPAM\)](#) [autous apotomos. hina hugiainosin \(3PPAS\)](#) [en te pistei](#)

Amplified: And this account of them is [really] true. Because it is [true], rebuke them sharply [Amplified Bible - Lockman](#)

Barclay: For that very reason correct them with severity, that they may grow healthy in the faith [deal sternly, even severely with them], so that they may be sound in the faith and free from error ([Westminster Press](#))

Phillips: There is truth in this testimonial of theirs! Don't hesitate to reprimand them sharply for you want them to be sound and healthy Christians, ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

ICB: The words that prophet said are true. So tell those people that they are wrong. You must be strict with them. Then they will become strong in the faith ([ICB: Nelson](#))

KJV: This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;

Weymouth: This testimony is true. Therefore sternly denounce them, that they may be robust in their faith,

Wuest: This testimony is true, for which cause be rebuking them severely in order that they may be sound in the Faith

Young's Literal: this testimony is true; for which cause convict them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,

THIS TESTIMONY IS TRUE: e marturia aute estin (3SPAI) alethes:

This witness is true (KJV)

There is truth in this testimonial of theirs! (Phillips)

And this account of them is [really] true (Amp)

and that is a true statement (NJB)

This witness is true (BBE),

The words that prophet said are true (ICB)

Testimony ([3141](#)) (**marturia** from **martureo** = to witness) refers to evidence given. Here the witness by one of the native Cretans which comes from one who should know the truth about his own people people ("One of themselves" - Titus 1:12).

True ([227](#)) (**alethes**) means conforming to reality and thus unconcealed, manifest and in accordance with fact. As such **this testimony** is credible and is not to be rejected as a "witness".

FOR THIS CAUSE **REPROVE** THEM SEVERELY: di en aitian elegche (2SPAM) autous apotomos:

- Titus 2:15; Pr 27:5; 2Cor 13:10; 1Ti 5:20; 2Ti 4:2

convict them sharply (YLT)

correct them with severity (Barclay)

Don't hesitate to reprimand them sharply (Phillips)

Because it is [true], rebuke them sharply [deal sternly, even severely with them] (Amp)

So be severe in correcting them (NJB)

So say sharp words to them (BBE)

Therefore sternly denounce them (WNT)

So tell those people that they are wrong. You must be strict with them (ICB)

So rebuke them as sternly as necessary (NLT)

So speak to the Christians there as sternly as necessary (TLB)

For this reason (therefore, so) - (See discussion on **terms of conclusion** = a) Identifies a logical consequence or conclusion (b) Identifies a statement which summarizes what was previously stated (c) Identifies a deduction from (usually previously stated) facts, propositions, experience, reasoning, etc (d) Sums up a preceding argument.

Spurgeon - Do not count it a trifle to be sound in the faith. Do not think any error to be harmless, for truth is very precious and error, even when we do not see it to be so, may lead to the most solemn consequences of mischief. In this world we see too much of salvation without Christ—I mean we meet with many who believe that they are saved because they have been baptized, or confirmed, or passed through the ceremonies of the church to which they belong. They have not looked to the precious blood. They are not depending simply upon the finished work of the Redeemer, but something else than Christ has become their confidence. Now, avoid that and buy the truth, which lies here: "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). It is true that certain troublesome heretics need to be rebuked sharply that they may be sound in the faith, but discretion is needed, and a loving spirit to guide the discretion. The sheep must not be driven as if they were swine. The tendency of stern orthodoxy is to act toward an erring one as cruel fathers do when they whip their boys without mercy, for they drive ten devils in while they think they are whipping one out. A doubter may be worried into a heretic before we are aware of it. Certain minds will learn anything from those they love and nothing from those who are masterful with them. The gentleness of Christ is a choice qualification for a pastor. Heresies are better kept out by a full gospel than driven out by fierce controversy. Sheep may be worried into worse straying, but they can be held by their teeth most securely if they are led into plentiful pasture.

Reprove (1651) (**elegcho** [word study] from **elegchos** = bringing to light) means to **bring to the light** (to reveal hidden things) with the implication that there is adequate proof of wrongdoing. To shame or disgrace and thus to **rebuke** another in such a way that they are compelled to see and to admit the error of their ways. To show someone that they have done something wrong and summon them to repent.

The **present imperative** is a command for Titus to continually reprove (see why it is so imperative in the next portion of the verse)

Titus is to **reprove** with such an effectual wielding of truth as to bring his hearers at least to conviction of their erroneous stand and possibly (hopefully) to the point that they are compelled to admit the error of their ways. As someone has well said pastors are to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted.

In his final epistle Paul commanded Timothy whether it was convenient or not to

"preach (aorist imperative) the word; **be ready** (aorist imperative) in season and out of season; **reprove** (**elegcho** - aorist imperative), **rebuke** (aorist imperative), **exhort** (aorist imperative), with great patience and instruction" (see **note 2** Timothy 4:2) (**Comment:** Why was this pastoral function so critical? Paul explained *"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths."* - see **notes 2** Timothy 4:3; 4:4)

Severely (664) (**apotomos** from **apo** = from, a preposition indicating separation or dissociation + **temno** = to cut as with a knife or ax) is an adverb which means literally "in a manner which cuts off". Figuratively **apotomos** means abruptly, curtly, sharply, precipitously, harshly, rigorously.

TDNT has this note writing that **apotomos** means...

"sharply cut," and it then has the more common derived sense of "steep," "inaccessible," and the transferred sense of "sharp," "keen," "exact," "careful," "strict," and even "severe" or "pitiless." ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

The only other Biblical use of **apotomos** is also by Paul...

2Corinthians 13:10 For this reason I am writing these things while absent, in order that when present I may not use **severity** (**apotomos**) in accordance with the authority which the Lord gave me, for building up and not for tearing down.

It would be enough to **"reprove"** but because of the inherent danger, Paul commands Titus to do so **"severely"** (sternly, seriously, vigorously, sharply, curtly, pungently, incisively) so that the reproof would cut with penetrating force.

The picture is to cut as with a knife or ax, as one would do axing in a door of a house on fire with the occupants in imminent danger. It is necessary to appear rude sometimes for safety, if the house is on fire and life is in danger. As a physician I know that the most thorough, certain cure to prevent the spread of cancer is complete excision of the initial lesion. So too the surgeon of the soul cuts to achieve a cure and make what is diseased sound.

There is a temptation in the church today to not confront (ever in love) destructive, divisive error and to be "mealy mouthed" and resist calling such "spiritual cancer" what it really is.

Rocks in a Hard Place - Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. —Titus 1:13 Has God called you to live as a rock in a hard place? Let me explain what I mean by that. In the first century, Titus was drafted by the apostle Paul to live in a hard place called Crete. The people on this island were known throughout the Mediterranean world as lazy workers and dishonest merchants. They had a long history of despicable living, and possessed the morals of an alley cat. A Cretan poet, Epimenides, who lived in the sixth century before Christ, wrote, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons" (Titus 1:12). In Greek literature, "to cretanize" meant "to lie." Morally and spiritually, Crete was a hard place in which to live. Yet Paul established a church there and asked Titus to organize it and appoint leaders. Titus had to be a rock in a hard place. By his teaching he was to expose error and proclaim truth; by his way of life he was to be an example of what it means to live for Christ (2:7-8). Has God called you to represent Him in a workplace where Christ's name is a curse word, or in a neighborhood where people have no time for God? Then by all means you must know God's truth and reflect that truth in your life. A society such as ours needs Christians who live as rocks in a hard place.

Lord, grant that I may shed Your light
Where wickedness is rife,
And may it help some sinful soul
To find in You new life.
—DJD

A rock-solid believer thrives even in a sin-hardened place.

THAT THEY MAY BE SOUND IN THE FAITH: hina hugiainosin (3PPAS) en te pistei:

- Titus 2:2; Lev 19:17; Ps 119:80; 141:5; 2Cor 7:8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 1Ti 4:6

for you want them to be sound and healthy Christians (Phillips)

that they may grow healthy in the faith (Barclay)

so that they may be sound in the faith and free from error (Amp)

that they may be robust in their faith (WNT)

Then they will become strong in the faith (ICB)

to make them strong in the faith (TLB)

Who is "**They**" in context? Although it might at first seem to refer to the false teachers, the intended result ("**sound in the faith**") would support that Paul is here referring to the members of the local body.

So that (2443) (hina) expresses purpose (see discussion of importance of querying **terms of purpose or result** - so that, in order that, that, as a result). Here Paul gives us the intended goal of vigorous reproof -- it is not to destroy but in fact to make them "**sound in the faith**".

Sound (5198) (hugiaino [word study] from hugies = healthy and source of English **hygiene**) means to be healthy or in good physical condition.

Hugiaino is used metaphorically here by Paul who desires that the recipients of the reproof would be free from mixture with error and deception and be in excellent "spiritual" condition.

Paul uses **hugiaino** (and cognates) eight times in the pastoral epistles and nowhere else. The other uses are by Luke (why might he be familiar with this word?) and one by John.

Paul knows that church leaders must major on sound doctrine because only sound doctrine will lead to holy living, here described as those who are "**sound in the faith**". Personal spiritual health is always negatively affected when one takes in unhealthy or unsound doctrine. The ultimate goal of discipline should be to recover the one who is in error (Gal 6:1 2Th 3:14, 15).

Here are all 12 uses (minus the current verse Titus 1:13) of this verb **hugiaino** in the NT...

Luke 5:31 And Jesus answered and said to them, "It is not those who are **well (hugiaino** - KJV has "whole" - present tense) who need a physician, but those who are sick.

Luke 7:10 And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in **good health (hugiaino** - KJV has "whole" - present tense)

Luke 15:27 "And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back **safe and sound** (this phrase translated by one Greek verb **hugiaino** - present tense)'

1 Timothy 1:10 and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to **sound** (present tense) teaching,

1 Timothy 6:3 If anyone advocates a different doctrine, and does not agree with **sound** (present tense) words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,

2 Timothy 1:13 Retain the standard of **sound** (present tense) words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. (note)

2 Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure **sound** (present tense) doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; (note)

Titus 1:9 holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in **sound** (present tense) doctrine and to refute those who contradict. (note)

Titus 2:1 But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for **sound** (present tense) doctrine. (note)

Titus 2:2 Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, **sound** (present tense) in faith, in love, in perseverance. (note)

3 John 1:2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in **good health** (present tense), just as your soul prospers.

Hugiaino is found 11 times in the **Septuagint (LXX)** (Gen 29:6; 37:14; 43:27-28; Ex 4:18; 1 Sa 25:6; 2 Sa 14:8; 20:9; Pr 13:13; Dan 10:19)

May be sound is **present tense** (this is to be their lifestyle - continued spiritual health) and **subjunctive mood** (mood of possibility) is used here with [hina](#) to express purpose -- the purpose of the unflinchingly stern reproof.

What are they to be **sound**, healthy and free from error in?

The faith ([4102](#)) (**pistis**) in the active sense defines belief directed toward a person or thing (this is not the way *pistis* is used in this verse). Here Paul refers instead to the specific faith which is the content of what is believed. In other words "the faith" in this context is not referring to personal faith by which one is saved but instead refers here to the system of truth itself as taught. (for discussion of this use of "faith" click "**the faith**")

The faith is that body of doctrine that was given by God through the Apostles to the church and in context often refers to the truth of the gospel. While individual teachers and preachers may disagree on the fine points of theology, there is a basic body of truth ("**the faith**") to which all true Christians are committed. And so we see Jude appealing to his readers to "contend earnestly for **the faith** which was once for all delivered to the saints." (Jude 1:3)

Believers who had not yet heard of Paul's conversion described him as "He who once persecuted us is now preaching **the faith** which he once tried to destroy." (Gal 1:23)

Paul exhorts the Corinthians to "Be on the alert, stand firm in **the faith**, act like men, be strong." (1Cor 16:13)