

TITUS
Chapter Two
Leon L. Combs, Ph.D.
2011

Titus 2:1-5 But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.

This first verse is Paul's comment to Titus to behave in ways opposite to those of the false teachers he had just condemned. Titus is to know and teach sound doctrine so as to counter the false teachings prevalent in his Crete. The Christian must not act in any way counter to what he believes as a child of God. The word "sound" refers to healthy or wholesome so the doctrine being taught must not have any flaws in any part of it. Just as a body is not healthy if only one small part is sick, doctrine is not healthy if even some small part of it is wrong. Christian doctrine consists of many parts dealing with its many applications and they must all be "healthy". Titus is also told to speak the things which fit into sound doctrine. There is a bond between theology and ethics that must not be broken. Christian doctrine is not to be treated as just another scholarly endeavor but it must be applied to life. Paul then begins to tell Titus how to fit this doctrine into actions regarding older men, older women, younger men, and slaves.

Titus 2:2 Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance.

There are spiritual and emotional weaknesses in all phases of life. Older men can become more irritable, insensitive and forgetful and can begin to lose control of their emotions. As men age they must be aware of those possible problems and work to infuse age with love at all times. True love is not compatible with those weaknesses so older men must work to maintain love and self control in their relationships. Temperate generally means clear-headed and under control in all situations. As men age they generally do not become something they never were but their self-control can begin to waver and some of their basic faults will appear when they would not have manifested themselves earlier in their life. Some translations use worthy of respect rather than dignified. The older man should have developed a dignity of action in his life that immediately renders him worthy of respect. Unfortunately some TV shows portray some older men as "dirty old men" that is certainly not dignified or worthy of any respect. Older men should also be sensible in all of their actions reflected by an ability to control their emotions.

Faith, love, and perseverance are the three cardinal virtues of Christianity. The word "sound" is now applied to character as it was applied to doctrine in verse one with the same interpretations. Faith may refer to the doctrines of Christianity but the following two terms indicate that it is subjective, meaning their personal faith in the Lord that is a gift of God. This gift should be

shown in all their actions. They must also be healthy in their love for one another in obedience to the command of Jesus:

John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

This love was stated often by Paul as reflected in the following examples:

Eph 4:2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love,

1Thess 3:12 and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all men, just as we also do for you;

1Thess 4:9 Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another;

2Thess 1:3 We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater;

Thus older men should greatly exhibit this love for fellow Christians with no hint of vindictiveness or covetness of success of others.

The older men should also have developed perseverance in the faith as they have lived through many trials that could have caused ship wreck of that faith if it were not real. James also wrote of this endurance or perseverance:

James 1:3-4 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

James 5:11 Behold, we count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

Peter also wrote of the connected virtues flowing from faith that includes love and perseverance:

2Peter 1:5-8 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge; ⁶and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness; ⁷and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. ⁸For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As men age all of these Christian traits should be increasing as sanctification should be producing the fruit of the Spirit.

Titus 2:3-5 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, ⁴that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵to be sensible, pure, workers

at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.

Reverent can mean “befitting a holy person” or “like a priestess”, both of which can mean that the older woman must have the demeanor of a holy person in all that they do so that whenever someone comes into contact with this person they can sense the presence of God in their life. Their actions should indicate that they regard all aspects of life as sacred. They are also not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine. Putting the two negative traits together could be indicative of the association between overuse of wine and gossiping. Certainly too much alcohol does have the tendency of reducing one’s self-control and often leads to people saying things they would not ordinarily say. The same reduction of control is also a side effect of the use of other drugs and, in today’s society, one could add drugs to wine. Paul then puts a positive spin on the use of the tongue as older women should teach what is good, or what is in line with proper Christian doctrine.

He amplifies the teaching of the older women to specifically include the younger women in the congregation of believers. Titus is to teach the older men but the younger women are to be taught by the older women. They are to specifically teach the younger women to love their husbands and children. This is the love of sacrifice and service and not eroticism or emotion and romance. This type of love is the foundation for marriage whereas the other aspects of love can wear thin with age. True love, as taught in 1 Cor 13, will not fail and marriages based upon that love will last forever as intended. The older women are to encourage, or train, the younger women in this true love.

The younger women are also to be trained to be self-controlled and pure and busy at home. Paul is not stating that wives should only stay at home and to not be involved in some professional occupation also. He is opposing what was also stated in his letter to Timothy:

1Tim 5:13-15 And at the same time they 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. ¹⁴Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach; ¹⁵for some have already turned aside to follow Satan.

They should love the home and not let any outside force interfere with its Christian function. They are also to be kind which can mean benevolent or hospitable as they do tasks that are beneficial to others and especially to their household. Paul states that they should be subject to their husbands and this does not carry any sense of inferiority but recognition of God’s created order of responsibility and loving care between husband and wife as Paul stated also to the church at Ephesus:

Eph 5:22-28 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the

body. ²⁴But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; ²⁶that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. ²⁸So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;

Paul elsewhere stated the spiritual equality of women with men and such greatly elevated the status of women in the world: *Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.* However this spiritual equality did not take away from men being the head of the family.

Note one of the reasons that the younger women are to comply with these commands is so that nobody will dishonor the Word of God. As noted by Paul in the Ephesians verses marriage is to reflect the church structure and a marriage out of such an alignment reflects poorly on the church and dishonors the gospel.

Titus 2:6-8 Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; ⁷in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, ⁸sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

Titus is now told to teach the young men. They are to be sensible, which again means to be under self-control in all circumstances. Self-mastery is a quality that needs to be learned early in life and carried forward until death. Many people have ruined their lives by a lack of self-control as we have seen many times by the lives of people in politics and other areas. He is talking about all aspects of the sin nature: control of anger and tongue, ambition and avarice, sexual urges, etc. Christian young men should then be dedicated to purity before marriage and fidelity afterwards. Such characteristics are totally opposite to the teachings of the world and so pose severe temptations to young people today. Contrary to worldly teachings, self-mastery is possible or the exhortation to pursue it would not be made. Not only should the officers of the church teach such to all members of the congregation but they should also model such for all to see. Young people should also encourage other young people to the goal of self-mastery as such exhortation can be very powerful from one young person to another.

Paul then tells Titus to be a proper example for all to see. Humans respond to the examples of others should they be rap stars, porn queens, mockers, cheaters, idolaters, fornicators, or other violators of Christian ethics or those who uphold Christian ethics. There are plenty of negative models in the world and young people—as well as older people – need positive role models. Church leaders such as Titus should have pure Christian doctrine that is acted out by their ethical

behavior in the world and the church. Their speech should be beyond reproach so that nobody can criticize them for what they said that is contrary to their claim of being Christians. When someone in the body of Christ acts or speaks in a way opposite to Christian doctrine then the entire body is open to criticism as Paul states “nothing bad to say about us.” The entire congregation is open to criticism when one of the leaders acts or speaks contrary to Christian doctrine. The world is watching and even waiting to catch a Christian saying or acting in a way contrary to their stated religious beliefs. Even though the world condones all sorts of actions that Christians condemn, when a leader of a congregation is caught stealing, cheating, or involved in some extra-marital affair, they will make such actions top news and the entire congregation suffers. So Titus is urged to be the proper role model for all members.

Titus 2:9-10 Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative ¹⁰not pilfering, but showing all good faith that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

Paul now moves into the actions of slaves. I have already discussed slavery in my notes on 1 Tim 6 so they will not be repeated here. Slaves are to be under the authority of their owner in everything requested of them. They must be pleasing to them and not talk back to them. They would be allowed to politely suggest doing something differently as long as the task was accomplished but they should not be argumentative in the suggestion. They certainly should be honest and never stealing from their owners. Their actions should show that they can be fully trusted and that their attitudes and actions properly reflect the Christian doctrines so that such will be positively received by all who witness their speech and actions. The word adorn was used in arranging jewels in some holder to better show the beauty of each jewel and the entire structure. Thus the speech and actions of believers can adorn the doctrine of Jesus Christ for the entire world to see.

Paul has written about the effect of Christian doctrine as a witness to the world three times. In verse five he referred to the actions of young wives so that the word of God would not be discredited. In verse eight the actions of the young men must be such so that nothing bad can be said in the world about the congregation. Now in verse 10 he wants the doctrine of salvation to be positively seen in the world. The lives of Christians can either be a credit or a discredit to the message they represent.

Titus 2:11-15 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹²instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, ¹³looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; ¹⁴who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession,

zealous for good deeds. ¹⁵These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Paul begins verse 11 with a “for” or a “therefore” as he states the reason for the teachings that Titus is to give and live. Usually Paul begins with doctrine and then moves into its ethical implications as he does in Romans, Ephesians, and Colossians. In this letter he begins with actions and moves to doctrine. All the actions he has elaborated upon are required because of the Christian doctrine of the first and second comings of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first coming of Jesus was to bring the grace of God for salvation and we are now waiting for the second coming of Jesus to bring about the visible appearance of the hope of Christians. The grace of God has been obvious from His first interactions with His creation but it visibly appeared with the birth and actions of His Son:

2Tim 1:8-10 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, ⁹who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, ¹⁰but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

This grace teaches us the ethics of a life pleasing to God as we reject ungodliness and worldly desires and embrace sensible, righteous, godly actions as we live in the world. We can endure hardships and continue to reject evil and embrace good because of the hope that we have of the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The life and death of the Son of God had the purposes of redeeming the chosen people from every lawless deed and for purifying for Himself a people who would be zealous for every good deed. Christians live today for Him because of what He did and what He will do. We do not live in the past or the future but the past and the future actions of Jesus are the basis for all that we do today.

Paul then urges Titus to teach all these things with the authority given him by virtue of being a chosen child of God and an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ. He finally is told to not let anyone disregard him. Certainly Christianity is “disregarded” by the world today but no Christian should speak or act in such a way as to bring such upon him.