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C1209 – February 29, 2012 – Titus 2:1-10
Instruction To Specific Groups

Last week we talked about the false teachers that they needed to be silenced, to be rebuked, and hopefully restored to sound doctrine. This week we are going to move into some positive instructions to Titus and the church.

Let's look at **Titus 2:1 (NASB95) - ¹ But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.** First, notice that there is a contrast here – “but as for you”. Paul is contrasting what he is commanding Titus to do with what the false teachers were doing. The false teachers were not “sound in the faith”. They were upsetting “whole families” teaching things that they should not. They were producing controversy, strife, arguments, disputes. Their bad doctrine was corrupting the faith of the believers which resulted in bad behavior – ungodly behavior.

In contrast to the false teachers – who were teaching things that were unsound – false doctrine, what is Titus supposed to do? Teach the things that are fitting for sound doctrine. He is to teach sound doctrine so that those who follow his teaching will have sound doctrine and can apply sound doctrine. What is “sound doctrine”? The truth of the revealed Word of God. Not adding anything, not taking anything away and not distorting it in any way. Teach what God revealed, as He revealed it. As Paul commands Titus in **Titus 2:15 - ¹⁵ These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.** As **Romans 10:17** says - **¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.** Sound faith comes from sound doctrine.

Once again, as we did last week, let's repeat what the aim of Paul's apostleship was - **Titus 1:1 the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to [or which is for the**

purpose of] godliness”. We have noted several times that godliness comes from the “knowledge of the truth”. If we don’t have knowledge of the truth, we won’t have godliness. We can’t. And the more knowledge of the truth we have, the more we can grow in godliness. Look at **Titus 2:14** - we will get there in more detail later, but notice one of the reasons Christ gave Himself for us: ¹⁴**to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.** To redeem us and to purify us and make us zealous for good deeds. And remember last week, when we were talking about the false teachers. How were the false teachers characterized? Look at **Titus 1:16** – the false teachers were ¹⁶ **detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.** And anyone who follows the false teachers is in the same condition – worthless for any good deed.

This is why Paul commands Titus in Titus 2:1 to “**speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine**”. This is why he emphasizes the command in **Titus 2:15** - ¹⁵ **These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.** Titus is to be diligent to communicate the truth – sound doctrine - and knowledge of the truth leads to godliness. This is a very short book, but because of the devastation false teaching can cause in a church, there is a big emphasis on the responsibility to teach “sound doctrine”

Now, as I have pointed out a lot in these lessons, Paul is commanding Titus to do this. But Titus isn’t going to be there all the time. He can only be one place at one time and he is going to be leaving Crete when his “replacements” arrive. So – the elders Titus is appointing are going to be responsible for “speaking the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.” That is why **Titus 1:9** says and elder must - ⁹ **[hold] fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.** They will be the ones responsible for making sure that sound doctrine is taught. And what does this mean for us? It means that the elders of our church are responsible for making sure that sound doctrine is taught. That is why the elders of our church are so very careful about what is taught in the church and why, sometimes, it seems like we might be too suspicious – or intolerant – or critical - of what others teach. If we are going to err, we want to make sure

we err on the side of true doctrine and not be open to anything that might be false. As we said last week, sometimes false doctrine is hard to recognize.

There is another variable in this equation we always need to be mindful of. Keep in mind – the teacher is responsible for teaching the truth. That is his responsibility and he is accountable to God for how he handles the truth. However, what is the second part of that equation? The hearers. The people that hear the truth are responsible for what? Following it. Accepting it as truth and having faith in it as the Word of God. Trusting it. Not being “double minded” as James says. If we have faith in God and His faithfulness to us, we exercise our faith by following His Word. This is what leads to our spiritual maturity – our godliness. It doesn’t help to hear the truth and then ignore it and follow our own understanding. That’s walking in the flesh. What we are supposed to do is hear the truth, and be faithful to God by obeying it, knowing that God is faithful to us. It may not be pleasant for us. It may be very hard. But, God is faithful and it is far better to trust in His faithfulness to us, than to trust our finite corrupt selves.

Which leads us into the following passages. These passages describe the qualities of the certain groups within the church that should be increasingly manifested if they hear the truth, walk in faith, mature and grow in godliness. If they apply the truth they hear and mature as believers.

But, before we get into them, remember – like the list of qualities of elders, most of these qualities apply to all believers, not just those within these groups. For example, a young man can’t say – well, I was only instructed to be sensible – I wasn’t instructed to be “sound in faith” like the older men – I can wait to do that until I’m older. That’s not what is going on here.

Let’s look at Titus 2:2. This is addressed to the “older men” – in Greek, it is a word that is similar, but not quite the same as the word used to describe the elders, in the sense of the office of elder. The two words are “*πρεσβύτης*” and *πρεσβύτερος*. Very similar. Older men are always referred to as “*πρεσβύτης*” in the NT. However, the word used for the office of elder is *πρεσβύτερος*– and can be used for old man or for the office of elder. But *πρεσβύτης* is never used for the office of elder – only for older men. Because *πρεσβύτης* is the word used in Titus 2:2, we know that the verse is talking about older men and not elders.

So - who are the “older men”? As you would expect there isn’t a clear line. Basically, if you are over 50, it’s pretty safe to say that you would be in this group. However, it appears that men over 40 might be included. According to one commentary: “... there was also a rough division into young and old with the boundary set at the age of 40, and the NT writers appear to follow this. There is no doubt that people aged 30 were still ‘young’” Agrippa, at the age of 40 was referred to by Josephus as a ‘young man’. soldiers are *minores* up to age 46. Irenaeus stated that one was young up to age 40.”¹ Apparently the thought is that someone over 40 should be a mature man. And a mature man should have these qualities of maturity.

Let’s look at what qualities the older men are to have. Some of these are the same as the elders. First, older men should be “temperate”. This could mean temperate in the strict sense of not being addicted to alcohol – not a substance abuser – similar to the quality of an elder we talked about two weeks ago; but it could also have a broader meaning covering his attitude or demeanor – meaning, contrary to the ways of a drunk or drug addict, he is a sober man - level headed, restrained in conduct. Clear headed. Steady.

Next, older men are to be “dignified”. This means his behavior and his demeanor – what he does and how he presents himself – which makes him worthy of respect and honorable. He is noble, serious. *“It is a quality or bearing which is observable, will elicit the respect of other people...”*²

Next, older men are to be “sensible”. We ran into this quality when we were discussing the qualities of an elder in Titus 1:8. It means prudent, thoughtful, self-controlled. A person who avoids extremes, is moderate in lifestyle, and gives careful consideration to responsible action. A “balanced

¹ I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 239.

² I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 240.

demeanor characterized by self-control, prudence and good judgment.³ This quality also shows up Titus 2:12 as a quality to be seen in all believers.

Next, older men are to be “sound in faith”. There are two aspects that this could include. First, it could mean that they are to be sound in doctrine – the content of the faith – as opposed to the false teachers and their followers who were not sound in the faith. The phrase could also mean that they are supposed to be sound in their subjective faith – that they have a healthy faith – they walk in faith. It’s hard to tell from the context if “sound in faith” leans toward either of these two meanings. My view is that the thought includes both aspects – remember – this is supposed to be the fruit of teaching things that fit with sound doctrine. So – because of this teaching, the content of their faith – their doctrine should be sound. And, if they are obedient to the doctrine, their subjective faith – their walk in faith - should be sound, as well.

They are also to be “sound in love”. This is “agape” love – which is the type of love that has the best interest of the other person in mind. Don’t turn there, but the well known passage on love at **1 Corinthians 13:4–7** describes this kind of love: **⁴ Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, ⁵ does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, ⁶ does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.** **Philippians 2:3–4** also describes this kind of love: **³ Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.** This is not the emotional love we think of when we hear the word “love” – although emotion may certainly be involved. It is an attitude that manifests itself in behavior. The attitude is one of regard for another person’s best interest - and your actions are consistent with that attitude.

³ I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 184.

Finally, older men are to be “sound in endurance”. The word translated endurance means “the capacity to hold out or bear up in the face of difficulty – endurance, fortitude, patience, steadfastness, perseverance. I like the description - “patient endurance”. This means that he will not cave in when the pressure is on – he applies James 1:2–4 (don’t turn there) - ² **Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,** ³ **knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.** ⁴ **And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.** He can endure the tests of his faith knowing that this leads to spiritual maturity – godliness.

To sum this up for us older men – we are to be sober (in regard to both our intake of alcohol and other substances, as well as our demeanor), dignified (or worthy of respect), sensible (or prudent, thoughtful), and sound (or healthy) in our faith (both the content of our faith and our subjective faith), in love (our regard for the interests of others), and endurance (our perseverance under trials). That’s a pretty good list.

Now, let’s move on to older women. I think it is safe to say that the age a woman would be considered an “older woman” was about the same as the older man – if you were over 40 – probably part of the group. I won’t ask for a show of hands for who here would qualify. You know who you are.

Titus is to instruct the older women to be – look at verse 3 - ³ **..... reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good...**. Let’s take this apart a little bit.

“Reverent in their behavior” means that their demeanor should be holy – as a person fully devoted to God. It is interesting that the Greek word translated “reverent” – was used in a strict sense as a priest would behave in a temple. Priestly demeanor. The use here is broader, but the gist of the meaning is that their behavior should reflect their devotion to God. What does that look like? Maybe **1 Timothy 2:9–10** is a good example (don’t turn there) - ⁹ **Likewise, *I want* women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments,** ¹⁰ **but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.”**

Next, older women are not to be “malicious gossips”. Now, this doesn’t mean that they can be gossips if they are not malicious about it (however, is there any gossip that isn’t malicious?). The Greek word is “diabolos” and means slanderous. Slander is uttering false charges or misrepresentations which defame or damage another’s reputation. As an aside – guess what “diabolos” is also used for? – the Devil. This word is the same word that is used for Satan in many passages. Because Satan is a slanderer. So – if you are a malicious gossip, you are imitating Satan. Note that **1 Timothy 3:11** makes this a requirement for deacon’s wives.

Older women are not to be “enslaved to much wine”. Although not the same words, this is the same quality that is required of an elder - “not addicted to much wine” – they should not be alcoholics or substance abusers of any sort. This is also a requirement for deacon’s wives in **1 Timothy 3:11**.

On a more positive note, older women are to be “teachers of what is good” – the Greek word translated by the NASB as “teaching what is good” is a compound Greek word used only here in the NT – καλοδιδάσκαλος – a combination of “kalos” - the Greek word for “good” - and “didaskolos” the Greek word for teacher. It should be translated “teachers of good”. What does it mean to teach what is good? What is the purpose? The next two verses tell us.

Look at **Titus 2:4-5** – “⁴ so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.” Older women should be teachers of what is good so that they can encourage the young women “to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands.” The word translated “encourage” means “encourage, advise, urge” and possibly “train”. You should keep in mind that this applies only to the young women. Who are the young women? Based on what we said before about the older men and older women, it could be women under 40. Teachers of good does not mean that the older women are to teach men - 1 Timothy 2:12 prohibits this.

So, what are they to encourage the young women to do and be? First, to love their husbands, next to love their children. Those are pretty self explanatory – pretty clear.

Next, they are to encourage the young women to be “sensible”. We have seen this word before – when we were talking about the older men – as we said before, “sensible” means prudent, thoughtful, self-controlled. A person who avoids extremes, is moderate in lifestyle, and gives careful consideration to responsible action. A “balanced demeanor characterized by self-control, prudence and good judgment.”

Next, they are to teach the younger women to be “pure”. The Greek word “ἄ γνός” means “pure, holy”. And the sense is that the younger women should be encouraged to be morally pure.

Next, they are to teach the younger women to be “workers at home”. Basically, this means that they are to encourage the younger women to be “house workers”, domestic, housekeepers. They are to take care of the household – their husbands, children, servants, etc.. 1 Timothy 5:14 uses a different Greek word, but may help understand what Paul is talking about here - **1 Timothy 5:14 - ¹⁴ Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach;** In 1 Timothy 5:14, the Greek word translated “keep house” means “manage the house” with the basic idea of being in charge of the household – taking care of the household. But always subject to her husband in doing so.

Does this mean a young woman with a husband and children should not work outside the home? The answer is this - I don't think that is the correct question. I think the question is “what does it mean to manage the household?” And I haven't studied this enough to know. I think the principle that both Titus 2:5 and Timothy 5:14 are teaching is this - that her role in the family is to manage the household. I think that is pretty clear. That is her main responsibility. And her family depends on her to do that. So, since this is her main responsibility, she should not do anything that hinders her ability to manage the household. But the key question is this – what does managing the household mean? Manager of a household, particularly with children, is a big job. Read Proverbs 31:10-31 sometime. The legendary

“Proverbs Woman”. It’s a huge job description. She’s like the CEO of a major corporation. But - it’s all done as manager of her household. Her focus is on her household. Look at **Proverbs 31:27–29** - ²⁷ **She looks well to the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.** ²⁸ **Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband *also*, and he praises her, saying:** ²⁹ **“Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all.”** I could say – do what Proverbs 31 woman does – but we aren’t in the same culture. Back then it sounds like a household – at least her household – could be an economic juggernaut. So – what do you do? How do you figure it out? I think you try to figure out what was commendable about what she was doing and how this corresponds to our culture. And I’m sure there are other passages concerning this. I haven’t studied enough to be able to properly teach it. So – sorry to disappoint you, but I don’t want to be a false teacher. So - I’m going to leave it at that.

Next, the older women are to teach the younger women to be “good”. In this context, the meaning is probably more like “kind”. She “is to exhibit kindness towards all those with whom she comes in contact as she applies herself to her domestic duties”.⁴

The older women are to teach the younger women to be “subject to their husbands”. The tense of this verb carries the idea of “continually submitting themselves”. Its voluntary, not forced. And it is continuous – a positional kind of thing. They are to learn that they are under the authority of their husband and to be submissive to his authority - as a way of life in the household. God established the institution of marriage and the family – it is a divine institution. And He establish the design for order in the marriage and the family – the organizational chart - which is described best in **Ephesians 5:22–33** go ahead and turn there - ²² **Wives, *be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*** ²³ **For 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.** ²⁴ **But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.** ²⁵ **Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for**

⁴ I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 249.

her,²⁶ so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,²⁷ that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.²⁸ So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;²⁹ for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church,³⁰ because we are members of His body.³¹ FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.³² This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.³³ Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband. The husband is the head of the wife and is to “love his wife just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her” and to “love his own wife as their own bodies” – the two are one flesh, you know – and “nourish and cherish” her, like Christ does the church and “love his own wife as himself”. The husband is to love and care for his wife as Christ does the church – sacrificially – giving himself for her good. And the wife is to voluntarily submit to the husband’s authority, like the church does to Christ, its head. This is what the older women are to teach the younger women to be – willingly and continually submissive to the authority of their husbands.

The last part of Titus 2:5 gives a reason why the younger women should be this way - **so that the word of God will not be dishonored**. Let me point out that this is one reason, but I don’t think this means that it is the only reason. The fundamental reason the younger women are to be this way is that these things are qualities of godliness – which is the aim of all believers. However, one result of failure of the young women to behave this way is that the word of God will be dishonored. The “word of God” is God’s revelation – the message, Christian doctrine. The Greek word translated “dishonor” means to “slander, revile, defame, speak disrespectfully” of something. It has to do with what people say about the gospel. What this is saying is that - if the young women, who purport to be believers, do not exhibit these qualities – loving their husbands and children, sensible, pure, workers at home, good, being willingly subject to their husbands – it would give the opposition – the unbelievers - reason to slander the message. Which is pretty much the same thing as slandering God. The opposition is always out there watching us and

waiting for us to mess up – to not practice what we preach – and every time do – it gives them ammunition against us.

Why should the older women be involved in training the younger women in these areas? It doesn't say, but if you think about it – what do the older women have in this area that the older men don't? The experience. They older men haven't been there. They don't know what it is like. The older women are in the unique position of having been there and, because of that, they can teach and encourage the younger women as wives and mothers. What a great resource for the younger women. What a great opportunity for ministry for the older women.

Let's move on to the younger men in Titus 2:6 - **Titus 2:6 - ⁶ Likewise urge the young men to be sensible...**" This is pretty simple. I'm sure you can already guess who the young men are – those under 40 – based on our earlier comments.

Titus is to “urge” them to be sensible. The word “urge” is the same word translated “exhort” in Titus 1:9 – where an elder should be able to “exhort” in sound doctrine. It is also used in **Titus 2:15 – “these things speak, exhort and approve with all authority.”** “Exhort” is used broadly for giving encouragement; it suggests instruction with a practical bent, something more than simply detailing facts and doctrines, and it carries an element of persuasion and even command⁵ “Strongly urge” would also be appropriate. Titus is to exhort, strongly urge, the young men to be sensible.

We also know what “sensible” means – “sensible” means prudent, thoughtful, self-controlled. I guess being sensible is pretty tough for young men – because it's all they have been given to work on. It may be that the qualities directed at Titus in the next two verses were also indirectly meant for them – using Titus as an example. However, it is striking to me that this is the only quality that Paul mentions specifically for them. Why is that? We will talk about that later.

⁵ I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 167.

Let's move on to **Titus 2:7-8** – this part of the passage was hard for me to figure out - ⁷ **in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified,** ⁸ **sound *in* speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.** In this verse, Paul turns to Titus with some instructions. I had some difficulty with it - it is hard to figure out because of the grammar, and there are several different views of how it should be interpreted.

Here is what I have concluded – First, Titus is to show himself as an example of good deeds. He is to be an example of good deeds primarily to the young men – he may have been considered one of them – but also to the church as a whole. As we have talked about before, “good deeds” is a consistent theme throughout the book of Titus. Titus 2:14 tells us that we are to be “zealous for good deeds”. Titus 3:1 tells us that we are to “ready for every good deed”. Titus 3:8 says - ⁸ **This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men.** Titus is to set the example of “good deeds” for the young men and the church.

Next, I think he is to show himself sound or pure in his teaching. This can mean the act of teaching, or the content of his teaching. Based on the emphasis in this book on the content of the teaching, particularly compared to the doctrine of the false teachers, I think it is addressing the content of Titus' teaching. When he teaches, his doctrine must be pure.

Next, I think he is to show himself to be dignified. Dignified refers to a manner of behavior that is above what is ordinary and therefore worthy of special respect. A high moral tone and serious manner worthy of a leader. He is a leader and must demonstrate dignity.

Next, I think he is to show himself to be sound or healthy - and above reproach- in his speech. Sound means – uncorrupted, correct, healthy – and “above reproach” is – not subject to blame, not being considered blameworthy. He is careful to make sure what he says is correct and in accordance with sound doctrine – the truth – and that it does not give anyone a legitimate reason for blame.

The last part of verse 8 gives us another reason Titus is to be an example of good works, sound in doctrine, dignified and sound in speech - **so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.** “The opponent” refers to anyone who is opposed to Christ and His church. The opponent will be shamed because he opposes but he doesn’t have anything legitimate to accuse us of. He may make something up, but there’s nothing you can do about that. Titus’ has not given him any legitimate grounds to talk against the church. Also – notice that Paul says the opponent will not have anything bad to say about “us”. Bad behavior of a believer, particularly a leader of the church, affects the reputation of the whole church – not just the local church, but the universal church – the Body of Christ – and anything that affects the reputation of the church affects the reputation of Christ – our Savior.

Again, like we talked about with the younger women, others are watching – they may be people in the church who are following his example, or they may be outsiders – the opposition – who are looking for anything they can use to attack the church. Titus needs to make sure that his behavior does not set a bad example for the congregation or give the opposition any legitimate reason for attack. This illustrates how important our behavior is – and how much damage can be caused by talking the talk but not walking the walk. It leads some astray and it gives others the opportunity to attack the church.

Let’s move on to **Titus 2:9–10 - ⁹ Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, ¹⁰ not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.** Now Paul turns to instructions to slaves. Now, these are slaves. We don’t have time to talk about the institution of slavery back then, but there are several passages like this one in Titus that addresses slaves – Ephesians, Colossians, 1 Timothy, and Corinthians all have passages addressing slaves and their behavior.

In our passage they are first to be “subject to their own masters in everything”. They are to submit to their master’s authority.

They are also to be “well pleasing” – their goal is to do things that please their masters. They are not to be argumentative – this is the same word that

was used in Titus 1:9 to describe the false teachers – those who contradict – slaves are not supposed to oppose or contradict their masters.

Also, slaves are not to be “pilfering” – the Greek term means “not putting aside for themselves” – in modern terms you could call it “skimming the profits”. If you are operating the cash register and you take a few bucks out every now and then - that’s pilfering. Slaves aren’t supposed to do that. Neither are employees. I suspect the penalties imposed on slaves for pilfering were a little bit worse than the consequences to an employee.

“Showing all good faith” means showing within themselves all faithfulness. They are to demonstrate faithfulness to their masters. They are supposed to demonstrate fidelity, loyalty to their masters. Not just in being well pleasing, or not pilfering, but in everything. They are to be faithful servants.

So – slaves are supposed to submit to the authority of their masters, not be argumentative or contradictory, not steal from their masters, and be loyal and faithful to their masters.

Why are they supposed to be all these things? Look at the end of Titus 2:10 – **so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.** What does this mean? “Adorn” means to “do credit to”. “Every respect” means every respect of their relationship with their masters. The doctrine is the gospel, God’s message. So, a slave needs to be these things so that, in all respects, they will do credit to the gospel. Why is this important? First, because that is what God expects. But also – like we said before – people are watching. In this case, masters and presumably other slaves will be observing how the believing slaves behave. This is similar to **1 Timothy 6:1** - don’t turn there - **¹ All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against.** Slaves are to exhibit godly behavior for the same reason that everyone else in the church should exhibit godly behavior – so that there will be no legitimate grounds for anyone to speak against the name of God – God’s reputation – and or the doctrine of the church.

To summarize the qualities listed for each group: Older men are to be sober (in regard to both intake of alcohol and other substances, as well as

demeanor), dignified (or worthy of respect), sensible (or prudent, thoughtful), and sound (or healthy) in faith (both the content of faith and subjective faith), in love (regard for the interests of others), and endurance (perseverance under trials).

Older women are to be reverent in their behavior, not gossips, not abusive of wine or other substances, and are to teach what is good encouraging the younger women to behave in a godly way.

Younger women are to love their husbands and children, be sensible, morally pure, workers at home, kind, willingly submitting to the authority of their husbands.

Younger men are to be sensible. They are to follow Titus' example.

Titus is supposed to show himself to the younger men and others as an example of good deeds, sound in his doctrine, dignified, healthy and above reproach in his speech.

Slaves are to submit to the authority of their masters, endeavor to be pleasing, not be argumentative or contradictory, not steal from their masters, and be loyal and faithful to their masters.

One big question I had as I was preparing for this lesson is this – Paul could have listed other qualities for these groups. For, example, the only quality listed for young men was “sensible”. Why did he – or rather the Holy Spirit - list certain qualities and not others? I don't know. Maybe the qualities of the older men and older women are things that are more expected of someone of their age, experience and maturity. They are to set the examples for the younger members of the church – they are looked up to – respected and revered - they should behave in a manner worthy of this position. Like I said earlier – not only does a bad example give an opponent the opportunity to attack, but it also leads others astray. These older men and women need to be good examples. This is particularly clear for the older women – who will be encouraging the younger women. Another possibility is that some of these things may have been common problems for in the Cretan culture. If you remember, older women were instructed not to be alcoholics. One commentary said “..... **drunkenness and talkativeness or slanderous**

talk were common elements in the typical description of old women in Hellenistic culture.”⁶ Maybe this is why this is mentioned.

The qualities listed for the younger women seem to be tailored to their age and position in life. These may be the things that young women need particular exhortation about. It is striking, however, that “sensible” is the only quality specifically listed for the young men - but maybe this is something that they have particular problems with.

However, no matter what specific qualities are listed, every believer is responsible to grow and spiritually mature – to become more godly. Look at **Titus 2:11–12 - ¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹² instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age.** Godliness is the goal of all believers.

The overall purpose of these instructions is to encourage godliness. We are going to talk about Titus 2:11-15 next – which give us the doctrinal foundation for our call to godliness. However, there are some specific reasons given in our passage tonight for the qualities listed for some of these groups. Let’s look at those briefly. First, why are the older women supposed to have the qualities listed for them? Titus 2:4 tells us – so that they can encourage the younger women to have the qualities listed for the younger women. If the older women aren’t reverent in their behavior, or are gossips, or alcoholics – by their example, they undermine themselves so that they can’t teach what is good and they can’t encourage the young women – they have no credibility. Their ability to minister to the younger women is shot. Their behavior affects their ability to minister.

And what happens if they can’t encourage the younger women. It will be harder for the young women to learn to love their husbands and children, be sensible, morally pure, workers at home, kind, willingly submitting to the authority of their husbands. If they don’t learn this, what does Titus 2:5 say will happen – the word of God will be dishonored. It will give the opposition

⁶ I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 245.

– the unbelieving world - reason to slander the gospel. Bad behavior gives the world the opportunity to slander the gospel.

What happens if Titus doesn't show himself as an example of good deeds, sound in his doctrine, dignified, healthy and above reproach in his speech. First, the young men won't listen to his words – they will listen to his actions. They will be led astray. Second, Titus 2:8 says that those opposed to the church – the world – will have legitimate reason to attack the church – all of us. Once again, bad behavior gives the world the opportunity to slander the gospel.

What happens if believing slaves rebel against the authority of their masters, or are not interested in pleasing them, or are argumentative or contradictory, or steal from their masters, or are unfaithful? Titus 1:10 tells us – they will harm the gospel. Bad behavior damages the gospel.

This is why our behavior is so important – it affects our ministry, our ability to serve. It gives the world ammunition to attack us. It damages the gospel. And it damages God's reputation. Doctrine is very important, and it is critical. But as we said before, it is only half the equation. The other half is applying doctrine. Doctrine supplies the content of our faith, but we have to exercise our faith in that content. In other words, we know that God is faithful to His Word – that's doctrine. But we exercise faith by acting on that doctrine. We follow **Proverbs 3:5-6 - ⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.** We trust in the Lord – His Word – and we don't rely on our own understanding. If we do that we become what James 1:22 says – doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

One thing I didn't mention when we were talking about the qualification of elders that I need to point out – you can't develop these qualities on your own. We have been given the Holy Spirit to enable us to develop these qualities. You develop them by walking in the Spirit. So – we have to walk in the Spirit. How do you “walk in the Spirit” and not in the flesh? First, you have to increase in the knowledge of God. Look at Paul's prayer for the church in **Colossians 1:9-10 - ⁹ For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you**

may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God..” The extent to which you know God determines your ability to walk in a manner worthy of Him – to please him in all respects. If you don’t know Him, you can’t know what He wants, and you can’t please Him. That’s bad. But what is also bad is that you may sincerely want to please Him, but since you don’t know Him, you start making up what God is like and what pleases Him. And what you have done is created a god in your own image – and you try to please that god. So – you can’t please God without knowing Him. And you can’t know Him unless you know what He has revealed about Himself – this means you have to study the Bible to know God. It also means you have to study the Bible to know how to please Him. The Spirit enables you by illuminating the Scriptures and then using what you have learned. Finally, you will always sin in the process and you need to confess your sin quickly and get back into fellowship so that you can continue to learn, and as you learn through the enabling of the Holy Spirit, you grow.

Next time, we will talk about the doctrinal foundation for our call to godly behavior.

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