

“Duties for Young Men”
Titus 2:6-8
(Preached at Trinity, March 19, 2023)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we’ve seen, sound doctrine has been at the heart of Paul’s letter to Titus. I pointed out that it is important for us to understand that sound doctrine was not the focus of Titus and the other elders alone. Sound doctrine is church business. This is Christian business. Sound doctrine leads to Godliness.
2. Sound doctrine must always translate into sound behavior. There are many people who have a high view of doctrine. They will argue every jot and tittle. But their doctrine has little effect upon their lives. Doctrine and practice must never be separated. True doctrine will always instruct a person unto godliness.
3. Paul addresses the subject by directing attention upon several different groups within the church.
Older men, older women, younger women, younger men, bondservants
So far, we’ve seen the first three: Older men, older women, and younger women.
4. This morning I want us to focus on the fourth group—the younger men.
Young men form a particular group with particular dangers and temptations. Peter may have had his eye on this group when he warned:
1 Peter 2:11 NAU - "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul."
Paul wrote in his letter to Timothy:
2 Timothy 2:22 NAU - "Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."
5. William Barclay wrote of this dangerous period of life:
“The time of youth is necessarily a time of danger.
 - (1) In youth, the blood runs hotter and the passions speak more commandingly. The tide of life runs strongest in youth, and it sometimes threatens to sweep a young person away.
 - (2) In youth, there are more opportunities for going wrong. Young people are thrown into company where temptation can speak with a most compelling voice. In youth, there are far more opportunities to encounter disaster and to wreck one’s life.
 - (3) In youth, there is often that confidence which comes from lack of experience. In almost every sphere of life, a younger man will be more reckless than his elders, for the simple reason that he has not yet discovered all the things which can go wrong. No one can buy experience; that is something for which only the years can pay. There is a risk, as there is a glory, in being young.”¹

¹ William Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 3rd ed. fully rev. and updated., The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003),

6. While Paul is addressing young men particularly because there are some things that are unique to this group, there are other issues that are universal to every Christian. Paul repeats the word, “likewise” that he used regarding the older women. Paul says like other believers the young men needed to be “sensible.”
- A. Paul uses this word four times. (σώφρων) - Once in 1 Timothy and three times in Titus. Twice regarding elders and the other two regard older men and younger women. **1 Timothy 3:2 NAU** - "An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,"
- B. “Sensible” – It means self-controlled. It is similar to the word “dignified” in V.7
1. Christian maturity learns to set proper priorities. Setting our eyes upon Christ, upon the proper course of life.
Paul spoke of fighting the good fight and keeping the course.
Sadly, in our culture older men set their priorities upon spending their latter days in frivolous living. They call it retirement.
Richard Phillips – “The Christian does not see his senior years as one last chance for fun before dying. Rather, he knows that eternity draws near in the joyful rest of heaven with Jesus Christ. While he lives, the godly older man wants to leverage his experience and relationships to make as big an impact for the kingdom as possible.”²
 2. Younger men also set their sights on frivolous living, lives of self-indulgence without carefully contemplating the important issues of life. Too many remain in a perpetual state of adolescence, never truly entering adulthood.
 3. Paul is saying that young or old, Christian maturity results in mature thinking, sensible thinking.
6. Besides the importance of being sensible, self-controlled, possessing sound judgment, Paul adds the importance of our example before others, the purity of our doctrine, the seriousness of our demeanor and the words that we speak. That is, the careful use of our tongues speaking words that are above reproach.
- I. The importance of our example before others
- A. The Christian’s life should serve as a paradigm
1. If someone wants to know what a Christian looks like they should look no further than us. Paul is giving this charge to Titus.
“show yourself an example of good deeds”
 2. Paul is including Titus among the young men in the church.
This is a universal charge to every believer.
Paul was never ashamed to admonish others to follow his example.
Paul’s life was consistent with his doctrine.
Philippians 3:17-18 NAU - "Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. ¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* enemies of the cross of Christ,"

282–283.

² Daniel M. Doriani and Richard D. Phillips, *2 Timothy & Titus*, ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2020), 183.

- 1 Corinthians 4:16** - "Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me."
- B. We must all be aware of our example before others
1. Our lives should be characterized by good works.
Good works are not meritorious but Paul attached good works to the essence of our salvation.
Ephesians 2:8-10 NAU - "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."
 2. James affirmed the importance of good works.
James 3:13 NAU - "Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom."
James 2:18-20 NAU - "But someone may *well* say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." ¹⁹ You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. ²⁰ But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?"
- II. The purity of our doctrine – Once again Paul is stressing the importance of sound doctrine "with purity in doctrine."
- A. This is a universal charge.
1. Paul commanded Titus in **Verse 1**
"speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine."
 2. To older women they are admonished to give themselves to "teaching what is good."
 3. Now to younger men Paul charges "purity in doctrine."
- B. As we've seen, this epistle continually makes a strong connection between doctrine and practice.
1. In the opening verse of **Chapter 1** Paul wrote of "the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness"
In other words, sound doctrine produces godliness.
 2. Jesus made the connection between Scripture and sanctification.
John 17:17 NAU - "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth."
 3. Young men must be thoroughly saturated by the Word of God.
Acts 20:32 NAU - "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."
James 1:21-22 NAU - "Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. ²² But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves."
1 Peter 2:1-2 NAU - "Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, ² like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,"

III. The purity of our words

Titus 2:8 NAU - "sound *in* speech which is beyond reproach"

A. This too is of universal importance.

1. People of every age group have to carefully guard their tongue.
2. As we saw regarding Paul's admonition to older women not to be malicious gossips, the tongue is the hardest and slowest to change in the Christian life. James describes the difficulty

James 3:4-8 NAU - "Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. ⁵ So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and *yet* it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! ⁶ And the tongue is a fire, the *very* world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of *our* life, and is set on fire by hell. ⁷ For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. ⁸ But no one can tame the tongue; *it is* a restless evil *and* full of deadly poison."

B. The word for "Sound" is a form of the word Paul uses to describe sound doctrine.

1. Paul has in mind particular speech, sound words. He is tying it to sound doctrine.
2. We must speak words that strengthen and edify.
Ephesians 4:29 NAU - "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such *a word* as is good for edification according to the need *of the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear."
 - a. The word for "proceed" is ἐκπορεύομαι - to flow forth like a river. It's like a dam bursting. The valve must be carefully controlled.
 - b. "but only such *a word* as is good for edification according to the need *of the moment*"
In other words, it is necessary for us to speak the right thing at the right time and learn the virtue of remaining quiet.
3. Our words must never contradict our doctrine.

Conclusion:

1. Christians are placed under careful scrutiny by the people of this world. Too often Christians are charged with hypocrisy. This is because too often we fail to demonstrate with our lives the doctrine that we preach.
Paul says here we should live in such a manner: "so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."
2. Notice Paul says, "having nothing bad to say about us." A reproach upon one Christian brings a reproach upon all. We all bear the name of Christ.
3. Peter also stressed the importance of our behavior.
1 Peter 2:12 NAU - "Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation."
1 Peter 4:15-16 NAU - "Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; ¹⁶ but if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name."