

Message #9**Titus 2:6-10**

There is a story about a young man who had asked his dream girl out for a date and she had accepted. He was very nervous. He hadn't dated much and he didn't know what he would say to her and yet he wanted to make a good impression. So he asked one of his friends at school what he thought he should say. The friend said say something profound from past history. Say something like this: "When I see your face, time stands still." The young man thought that would be a great thing to say so he worked on it over and over again. Finally the day of the date arrived. He picked her up and he took her to a great restaurant. They were setting there and he decided it was time to tell her what he had memorized. The problem was, he was so nervous he was having difficulty remembering the line. But in the silence, he knew he needed to say something so he blurted out: "I just want you to know your face could stop a clock."

It isn't easy being a young man trying to find his way in this world. Walter Liefeld, who wrote a commentary on Titus, said, "Young men today live in a world that can easily bring out the worst in a person" (*I & II Timothy, Titus*, p. 334).

It has never been easy for a young man to maintain a good testimony and this world is not making it any easier. This is a world filled with young men who, for the most part, are shallow, shady, sensual and sinful. God wanted the young men to be different. He wanted them to stand out for Him.

In fact, God expects His people to manifest the fact that they are his people regardless of the place in which they live. Crete was one of the wildest places on earth and God expected older men, older women, younger women and younger men to reflect the fact that they belonged to God. He expected men to go to work and reflect that they belonged to God. In this section, Titus lays out two different classifications of those who needed to reflect God's grace. Both primarily have to do with younger men:

YOUNG MEN AND SERVANT-EMPLOYEES ARE TO BE A VISIBLE DEMONSTRATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD IN A WILD AND UNRULY WORLD.

There are two main classifications of people in these verses that both in some ways have to do with young men.

CLASSIFICATION #1 – Young men are to be a reflection of God's grace. 2:6-8

It is tough to be a young man growing up in the real world. A young man thinks about girls, he thinks about a career or education and he wonders where he is headed in life. Depending on his personality, he has his own interests, his own peculiar bent. He typically gets a job. In fact, before he is done, he will probably have had many jobs. But he wonders where life will take him.

Young men have fearlessness to them. They are not afraid to try new things. In fact, that can get them into trouble. I read of a young man who was driving at a high rate of speed and he went flying by a police officer who pulled him over and said to the young man, "I have been waiting for you all day." The young man said, "I got here as fast as I could." Fearlessness.

Young men typically have skepticism to them and they often question things. Nothing necessarily wrong with that. Now if the young man is a Christian, he has a unique opportunity to truly stand out and influence others for the grace of God, especially when living in a world that is unruly and wild.

Young men are in a position to stand out for the glory of God and be a dynamic influence in the lives of others. What they need to do is described right here.

Titus was to teach the young men what to do to reflect God's grace. It is interesting to me that the way a young man stands out for God is probably not the way most would think. **Actually it is by one's consistent character that one stands out for the glory of God.**

Now there are five specific character traits that are to be manifested by a young man who demonstrates God's grace. Most young men who go to church are not even taught these things, which is sad. Because according to the Word of God, if a young man puts these character traits into his life, God will greatly use him to make a difference in even a crazy world:

Character Trait #1 - Young men demonstrate God's grace by being sensible. 2:6

The word "sensible" means that a young man is to develop a mind that is right, sound, sober, self-disciplined and self-controlled (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 438). A young man who demonstrates "sober judgment" and "self-mastery" over decisions in life is a tremendous display of God's grace.

The most ferocious battle the young man will face will be a battle for his own mind. A critical key to being self-controlled is being controlled in one's mind.

Not only does a young man have the normal battles of a sin nature like every person, but he is also susceptible to the many promptings of a sinful world. So if you were a young man living on the island of Crete and you had a self-controlled sensible mind, you would stand out.

Crete was a tough environment for a young man. Crete offered the young man many opportunities to get out of control.

- 1) It was an island that featured girls and immorality even in a context of religion.
- 2) It was an island given to drunkenness. The grape crop was and still is a key part of life.
- 3) It was an island that was lazy. Many young people didn't want to work. I am certain there were many young men who were beach bums.
- 4) It was an island given to lying. Hardly anyone told the truth.

Now you can see where a young man who was controlled would stand out to this world. A young man who is self-controlled of mind will stand out in any world. Whether it is in a job or in a college dorm or just in any context of life, a young man who is sensible is a rare thing.

My radio career was often in a Crete environment. One night I was working a high school class reunion. My job was to play the music from their era and have some fun with the people. Everyone at the party was having fun and the booze was flowing. Most of the people were getting drunk. There was one couple, I still remember to this day, which was different. They were having fun and they were visiting with former classmates, but they stood out. They were in total control. They were not handing out tracks or preaching or reading their Bible, but I was reading them. They had stability to them in a setting that was unstable. They stood out. I would learn later that they were Christians. In fact, years later they came to see me when I was teaching in Grand Rapids and they asked if I remembered that night. I said, "I did." I remembered that night and I remembered them. Why? It is because when everyone was getting out of control, they were sensible and in control. They were a true demonstration of God's grace.

Young men need to be sensible. He needs to control his impulses and mind. If he is married, he needs to be faithful. John Stott made three interesting observations about this (*The Message of I Timothy & Titus*, pp. 189-190):

- 1) It is possible for a young man to be this way.
- 2) The young man needs encouragement to be this way.
- 3) The young man needs examples of older men who are this way.

Character Trait #2 - Young men demonstrate God's grace by being a good deed's example.
2:7a

The words "show yourself to be an example" indicate the young man is to have integrity of mind and life.

God wants His young men to show themselves to be an example of His grace by doing "good works." God wanted young men to show they were His young men by their behavior. Now words "good works" (καλων εργαων) are intriguing.

The word "good" specifically refers to doing good external things (*Ibid.*, p. 229). This is just the opposite of doing bad external things. The word "work" refers to any task or work that is undertaken. This word was often used of employment (*Ibid.*, p. 178).

The point is that a young man should never involve himself in bad works of any kind, but always involve himself in good work. The young man who involves himself in good, decent work stands out for the glory of God.

Now on the island of Crete, most young men didn't even want to go to work. But when a young man has a job and works hard at it, he does demonstrate God's grace. He does stand out.

Character Trait #3 - Young men demonstrate God's grace by being pure in doctrine. **2:7b**

Young men need to be carefully taught the Word of God. They need to be taught the books of the Bible and they need to be taught Systematic Theology. The assumption here is that the church will be teaching them that.

Young men, who are serious about the Word of God and the doctrines of God, will stand out as a great statement for the grace of God. The grammar is strong here; God wants young men trained in "pure" Biblical doctrine.

The word pure speaks of doctrine that is not corrupt. These young men were living on an island that was filled with all kinds of religious teachings. There was Jewish legalism and Greek mysticism and Roman polytheism. God wants young men well-taught and well-grounded. When a young man is pure in doctrine, he stands out for the grace and glory of God.

Any young man who is serious about accurately knowing God's Word is truly one who reflects God's grace. Most young men could care less about an accurate understanding of the Scriptures.

Character Trait #4 - Young men demonstrate God's grace by being dignified. **2:7c**

Take a serious look at what is said here. The word "dignified" is a Greek word that means reverent, serious, august and grave (*Ibid.*, p. 404). God wants His young men to be reverent young men. Young men who are serious-minded about God and His Word and reverent stand out to the world.

I know of a case in which a young man confronted what the other young people were doing in the church. There were young people his age up on a stage entertaining people in the church as a rock band and one young man said, this is not right. This is not reverent. This is not of God.

Did that young man change that church? No. But what he did do was make a statement for God. He ended up leaving that church but before he did many saw a reverent young man who stood out for the grace and glory of God.

Young men who come to church to reverently worship God and hear God's Word are a great testimony for God's grace. We have some wonderful young men in this church who are reverent and they are a great testimony for God's grace.

Character Trait #5 - Young men demonstrate God's grace by being sound in speech. **2:8**

It isn't just the women who need to guard their speech; it is also the men. The young man who will reflect God's grace is one who will be sound in speech. In other words, he uses speech that is healthy. It is healthy theologically, morally and ethically.

A young man who uses his speech this way makes a tremendous statement for God's grace. This kind of speech is:

- 1) Beyond Reproach
- 2) Prevents opponents from putting one to shame.
- 3) Leaves people with nothing bad to say.

Now young men, if you will develop these character traits in your life, you will stand out in your world, like these guys would on the island of Crete.

CLASSIFICATION #2 – Servant-employees are to demonstrate they are a reflection of God's Grace. **2:9-10**

Verse 9 probably has primarily young men in view who work for a living, but it is applicable to any who work for a living. They work for someone. There are some character traits they are to have:

Character Trait #1 - A servant-employee is to be subject to his own masters in everything. **2:9a**

These are not pick-and-choose options. You pick what you want to do for the master and don't do what you don't want to do.

Now there are those who present the idea that if you are being asked to do some menial job that you consider to be a menial job, you should revolt and not submit. Paul says the employee who will make a statement for the grace and glory of God will be one who submits himself to the master's request and does the job.

When you spot some young man who willingly submits to the authority of his employer and does not complain or whine, it is a great display of God's grace.

Character Trait #2 - A servant-employee is to be well-pleasing to his own master. **2:9b**

A believer is not just to do the job, but to do it in a way that well pleases the boss. So many employees are confused on this point. An employee who wants to please the boss, pleases God. Most want to please themselves.

Character Trait #3 - A servant-employee is to not be argumentative. **2:9c**

Mouthy people impress other people, but they don't impress God. In fact, you can know this; a mouthy person in no way reflects they are right with God. A godly person does not talk back to his superiors. A godly person is not argumentative and critical. A godly person does not talk back to his superior and he does not talk about his superior.

There are two ways one can verbally oppose his master: 1) To his face, 2) Behind his back.

Godly people quietly go about their business and do their job well.

One writer said there are many ways this can work itself out with their “verbal strikes.” A student can mutter sarcastic remarks against a teacher; a secretary can whisper defiant remarks when her boss asks her to do something she does not like; a wife can degrade her husband even if obeying what the husband wanted to be done. In each case the person is argumentative and does not reflect the grace of God (Knut Larson, *Titus*, p. 364).

Character Trait #4 - A servant-employee is not to be one who pilfers. **2:10a**

This word has to do with one who steals.

Character Trait #5 - A servant-employee is to be one that demonstrates all good faith. **2:10b**

This is what adorns the doctrine of God. When an employee or one who is subject to any authority manifests these traits, they do reflect the grace of God.

It is interesting that there is a great emphasis on doctrine in these verses. The young man is to be pure in doctrine (**v. 7**) and the young man is to “adorn the doctrine of God” (**v. 10**).

Doctrine matters and so does how we apply it. Truth is our religion doesn’t mean much if it isn’t backed up with a life.

In every way a young man will do his best to reflect Jesus Christ to this world in “every respect.”

God wants older men, older women, younger women and younger men to reflect His grace to this world and may God help each of us to do just that. We will either make a good statement for God in this world or we won’t.