

LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE — Main Reading: **Titus** 2:1-10

Out of all the lessons I've ever prepared, reading tonight's passage throughout the week has been one of the most **convicting** experiences of my life. Let me tell you why:

The first chapter of Titus is a long **introduction** followed by the sad state of affairs on the Island of Crete— a long list of all the popular **sins** among the people there.

And those should have been convicting to us because we might see some of those **behaviors** in our own lives—even though they don't belong.

You might have an **authority** complex...
you might **talk** a little bit more than you should...
you might be a pathological **liar**...
you might be **greedy**, violent, or lazy...
you might give **impurity** a place in your heart and mind...
you might be **disobedient**...

And if any of those are true for you, just like the Cretans, you need to be **rebuked**...and so do I.

But I think this week might be even more convicting, because the beginning of chapter 2 sets the standard for life in the Christian church.

v. 1 — “But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.”

Paul uses the phrase “sound doctrine” 5x in this letter, and here, Paul explains that Titus there is a way of life that “fits” or “goes with” Christian doctrine.

An Titus was supposed to teach what accords—what *goes along* with—healthy doctrine.

Now, earlier in the letter, Paul mentioned that “godliness goes along with sound doctrine,” so...

here, Paul is going to make an outline of what it means to be **godly**.

Today, this command is *still* in effect for the church. If the church starts teaching that certain sins are okay, and they start justifying certain behaviors, it will only lead to **destructive** behaviors.

So, we need to be the place that makes disciples by teaching a Jesus-approved curriculum.

The church is supposed to teach Jesus' words—**Matthew** 28:19–20,
and be the headquarters for truth—1 **Timothy** 3:14–15.

I also think that this verse points to the fact that the Bible is practical.

Titus was supposed to give his congregations **action** steps on how to live better.

So, I think we should strive for that in our Bible studies today,
and hopefully I've given you some practical ideas over the several Thursday nights we've shared,
but I want to get better at bringing out the life **application** for you.

Thankfully, the life applications are sometimes easy to find.

Several of the New Testament books follow a pattern that
really shows us the connection between **truth** and **obedience**.

Romans 1 to 11 is theology, and chapters 12 to 16 is lifestyle.
Ephesians 1 to 3 is doctrine, and 4 to 6 behavior. Colossians 1 to 2 is teaching, 3 to 4 is conduct.

And now we come to the conduct portion of Titus.

v. 2 — "Older men..."

The phrase "older men" is used 3 times in the New Testament.

- 1) Zechariah was an older man when Gabriel informed him that his wife Elizabeth would give birth to John the Baptist.
- 2) Here, Paul uses the phrase in Titus.
- 3) And Paul later uses it to describe himself in Philemon.

Now, the right question to ask is "At what age is someone considered an older man?"

Well, everything in Jewish culture points to age 40 being the halfway point.

Now, we live in a culture where no one wants to admit they're old...They'd rather pretend to be young.

But, according to the Bible, it's *good* to be old! **Job** 12:12, **Proverbs** 16:31

In America, we have this obsession with being young.

Young people are the trendsetters, and old people are forgotten.

Sometimes even in church, we'll say "*I want a church of young people!*" or "Ugh...this church is nothing but old people"—even though someday, we'll be the old people in church.

But, truthfully, God has given older people a *huge* role in society—*especially* in the church.

So, let's go over the roles of older men and women. First, the older men:

"...sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness."

Old, Christian men should have dignity—they should be **respected**.

Now, this doesn't mean that an older man should never laugh...or anything extreme like that.

That being said, old men should walk in such wisdom that when they speak up, the church **listens**.

Rather than trying to seem young and hip, older men should set an **example** for the younger men.

Hopefully, you know an older man who—for the most part—fits this description.

On the other hand, you might know an older man who's cynical, sour, negative, **bitter**, or unhappy.

Or...you may know a man who has recently started to make all sorts of **rash** decisions.

But, that is not the biblical way for a man to live his life. Christian men are supposed to make **wise** choices.

And now for the older women:

v. 3-5 — Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good,

A similar standard of behavior is required of older women.

Apparently, heavy **drinking** was a big issue on the Island of Crete—both the men and women in the churches are instructed to be sober-minded and not to be addicted to alcohol.

Today, research suggests, that more women are drinking more alcohol than ever before in human society—**1 in 8 women admit to binge drinking.**

There is a Facebook group with 170,000 members called:
“OMG I so need a glass of wine or I'm gonna sell my kids”

And there's even a brand of wine that used this tagline:
“Put your kids to bed and have a glass of MommyJuice.”

But, rather than Netflix-ing themselves to death drinking glass after glass of wine,
Older Christian women are supposed to:

“...train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.

Older women were to train younger women to do several things:

① Love their husbands and children—in that order.

In a family, the spouses—the adults—*must* come first.

God established this as the order: the parents are in charge of the household.

If there's a family where the kids run the show, rest assured that it's a dysfunctional family with children who are *impossible* to corral.

If children are the sole focus of a marriage,
and the spouses have not dedicated time and energy to each other...When the kids move out,
and the parents become empty nesters, the marriage is likely to fall apart.

② Work at home.

This doesn't mean—in my estimation—that a wife shouldn't have a job...
but that the duties at home cannot be ignored.

According to Proverbs 31, here are some types of work that great women can do:

Works with her hands...find ingredients and prepare meals...invest in and maintain **real estate**...

raise a **garden**...make **merchandise**...sew and knit clothing and linens...

give to **charity** and volunteer in the community...and make **deliveries**.

But in the midst of all of this work, it is important to raise the children right.

Yes, this is a team effort, and it is *just as much* the father's responsibility to be present in the household as it is the mother's.

However, there *are* some differences in the **roles** of men and women.

For one, the man is responsible to **provide** for the household—to earn a living.

He is also supposed to **love** his wife in a way that is comparable to Jesus' love for the church (Eph. 5).

In response, the woman is supposed to love her husband and set the **tone** of the home.

There's this word in this passage that some people don't like, but it's not bad at all in its true meaning.

The word is **submit**. Now, here's what it doesn't mean:

The man comes home and says,

"Honey, I don't care that we're financially strapped, I'm buying a brand new boat."

And the woman is supposed to say, *"Okay honey, whatever makes you happy!"*

No, that would **not** be proper submission or love.

That would be a man who does not have a sober-mind like God would want Him to have.

Christian submission in marriage is when the wife says,

"Here is a man who **loves** me, who **provides** for me, who holds me in a place of **honor**, and who has my best interest in mind. Here is a guy who is godly and I can trust.

I'm going to be **loyal**, I'm going to be his teammate,

I'm going to do my part, I'm going to trust his **leadership**."

The world would have you believe that submission is a bad thing...

That submitting is a thing that makes a person less-than.

But, that can't be so...since Jesus submitted to God the Father. **John** 6:38, 1 **Corinthians** 15:28

Jesus is God the Son—totally equal to the Father, and yet He submitted to Father's will.

So, when the Bible calls **women** to submit to their husbands, or **children** to submit to parents, or **citizens** to submit to the government, it is asking you to act like Jesus—accept the Jesus role.

See, the members of the Trinity each have different roles, but they are equal in authority.

Ephesians 1 teaches us that the Father **planned** salvation.

Jesus **paid** for it, and the Holy Spirit **applies** it to our hearts.

These are *different* roles, but all the *same* God.

So, please don't think that a difference in duty means a difference in value.

If our marriages are out of control, lacking in love and submission, the word of God will be reviled.

In other words, if Christian spouses can't get along and listen to God's instructions, then outsiders will **judge** our whole belief system based on that.

So, we need to be on top of our conduct in the Christian household. **Psalms** 127 & 128

v. 6 — “Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.”

This part was so convicting to me because there are many areas in my life where I don't seem to have much self-control, and yet, this is the main thing that Paul tells Titus is important for a young man to have.

Today, there is an epidemic of **immaturity, lust**, and lack of **time-management** among young men.

And the solution for both young men *and* young women is: Find a **mentor**.

Stop treating the older Christians in our lives like they're out-of-touch,

and realize that they've got a *whole lot more* **experience** than you do.

Maybe, instead of looking for marriage advice on **Google**, we could offer to take an older Christian out to lunch and pick their brain about marriage...

QUESTION : *Who's an older Christian in your life that could give you advice?*

When is the last time you went to an older, wiser believer for guidance?

Next, Paul gives Titus some instruction for himself—his own behavior.

v. 7-8 — *Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity...*

This verse is very similar to a popular verse written to Timothy. 1 **Timothy** 4:12

v. 9-10 — *"Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior."*

Now, this was written because, believe it or not, a lot of Christians in these days were slaves.

Today, for us, our closest thing to a master is an employer, and as Christians, we should strive to be that boss' best employee—the one they rarely have a problem with.

Believers that work for other people are told to adorn the doctrine of God.

Adorn is a fancy word for "wear"

and the Greek word behind it actually gives us our English word, **cosmetics**.

Just like a person would put on makeup in the morning, we need to put on the truth and godly living each day.

A preacher once put it like this: Christian living and beliefs shouldn't be like a lucky tie, or a fancy dress that only gets worn on the most special of occasions.

Instead, they should be worn like the coat that you put on *every* day.