

Titus 2:1-10 | But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so 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. Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. 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.

## Titus 2:1-10 | Beautiful Resilience

Let's begin with our final verse from last week so that we might get a sense of Paul's transition into his further positive instruction for the Church in Crete.

Titus 1:16 | They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

This is what the church in Crete is surrounded by and even internally influenced by therefore Paul calls Titus to sharply rebuke these attackers of the freedom of the gospel. But for any of that effort of rebuke to work it must be fortified by a deeply resilient and even beautiful church. And that is why immediately following the instruction of rebuke he turns to the positive call of Titus in the church to teach what accords with Sound Doctrine.

Titus 2:1 | But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.

That which accords with sound doctrine as we will see is right living. The right living is what brings the doctrine to life and takes our faith from a dead letter to a living faith. Just as we saw how the corrupted living of the Cretans leads to a corrupted doctrine in the church & the strong character of the elders is necessary for the leaders of the church to be equipped to rebuke this false teaching which denies the freedom for the gospel. In order for the church to be truly fruitful and resilient she must seek to participate in a mode of life grounded in sound doctrine in all the ordinary facets of life. They are in a culture war, but their greatest defense of the gospel is cultivation of godly lives. Not in some special places but right where they live, right where God has placed them.

Paul therefore instructs 5 categories of people within the church, applying similar but different callings to each of them so that in the context God has placed them they might seek to honor the Lord in the fullness of their lives. Therefore we will look at these groups, Older men, older women, younger men, Titus, and slaves.

## 1. Older Men

Titus 2:2 | Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.

Paul lists two groups of three qualities. The first group of three shows us their steadiness which makes them not slaves to their passions but constant. They are not drunkards, they are not greedy, they do not easily fly off the handle and they are not easily taken advantage of by external pressures. They are dignified meaning they are obviously worthy of respect.

Thus the second triplet of soundness, in faith, love and steadfastness. They have a true faith in the Lord, and they have a real love for the saints and they are able to maintain it through threats and hardships.

My wife's grandfather was one of these older men. I used to love talking to him through the difficulties I was going through especially at the beginning of our church and he simply trusted the Lord for deliverance. That was a powerful steadfastness. These men are ballast stones that allow the church to bear the battering of the world. Not frightened by the false teachers or thrown of course but holding fast in sound faith and love.

## 2. Older Women

Titus 2:3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine.

Older women are like an immune system that guards against disease and multiplies health. To be reverent in behavior is to honor that which is honorable and in doing so they preserve it and multiply it. In not being slanderers they stop the disease like spread of discord within the church and the looseness probably especially of speech which comes from being a slave to wine. This prevents their capacity to multiply being distorted into a capacity to divide.

Titus 2:3b-4 | They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children,

This is why I want to draw our attention to these women as love multipliers within the church. The ability to love a husband and children is not something that you just know how to do you must be trained in how to do this. This is not an easy job and it is often times deeply unsatisfying and extremely taxing and mundane. The older women in their reverence, that is rightly honoring what is good, are able to encourage and train the younger women to participate in this goodness. So that homes are more full of love for husbands and children.

### 3. Younger Women

Titus 2:5 | to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.

The younger women, just like the older men are called to be self-controlled, not tossed around in fear or steered by the epithets of the world. Younger women are to be pure, or chaste and this forms a resistance against the false teachers warned against by Paul and Peter who are driven by sensuality and greed.

They are to be working at home. That is they understand their domestic domain as one to be honored even if it is dishonored or hidden from the world. There is a type of feminine productivity in the home that is simply unique to women. Because women have this capacity to take love and multiply it so that it becomes truly fruitful.

One instance of this I've seen is a woman named Keng Yin in Malaysia. She is Chinese Malay and an extremely talented electrical engineer. She never married and never had children of her own but made a lot of money designing electrical systems for offshore drilling platforms, (as one does). Her home however was not empty but full of college age women for whom she paid for their schooling and gave them a place to stay while they were attending the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur. Singleness does not mean unfruitfulness in the kingdom for a woman and it does not mean masculinity either.

Paul continues to instruct the younger women to be submissive to their own husbands, that is respecting the leadership he has been given by God in the home. Not to husbands in general but to their own husbands. This is all so that the word of God may not be reviled. These type of younger women, like the older women who instruct them and the older men, act as a bulwark against false doctrine and false teaching. Fruitless idle homes are breeding grounds for resentment, but these women multiply the love of God in the world.

### 4. Younger Men & Titus

Titus 2:6 Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.

This brief instruction to the younger men is deeply important. Young men are easily lead astray by their passions. They are prone to seek whatever brings them immediate gratification and therefore can render their whole lives useless. They are unable to restrain themselves from wrath, or to conjure their strength for the necessary fight, or just get up and go to work. Young men need to practice self-control and from this they will be able to participate in all they will see demonstrated in Titus life because Titus is called to show these young men in particular and the church in general a model of godly living. The

young men are like the rudder of the ship. And if they cannot steer themselves the church will be ever wandering from her course.

Titus 2:7-8 | Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

Titus must show his good works, that he goes out of his way to serve his church. That in his teaching he demonstrates integrity thus building trust that the word preached is the truth of God. It is to be a model of dignity, and soundness so that he is not creating opportunity to be condemned. He must not be manipulative or people pleasing, he must not skirt difficult issues which Creates peace in the near term but undermines the truth of the word of God and creates opportunities for opponents to put him to shame. You see this all works for the defense of the church. It positions the church in a place where the evil that can be said about it must fundamentally be false and slanderous.

## 5. Slaves

Titus 2:9-10 | 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.

Over a third of the population of the Roman Empire were slaves. And although they are in the bottom of the Roman hierarchy their position does not limit their ability to live lives which are pleasing fruitful and beautiful to the Lord. The station they have been given is one of submission to their masters in everything. This can be received with resentment or with seeking to be pleasing. It can be a place of undermining or a place of showing all good faith. The slave by the power of the gospel, is able to live in such a way in which they adorn the doctrine of God our savior even in ways which are not able to be done by others. How much more than, when you find yourself in positions that you cannot get yourself out of, or circumstances which you never would have chosen for yourself? You may understand that you are not outside of a place in which you may honor the Lord.

Titus 2:11 | For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,

I've got to skip into next week a bit which grounds this action. It is all done by the grace of God bringing salvation for all people. These good works flow not from self-righteousness but from the grace of God who saved us and brings salvation to all people. In his example lived out in all our ordinary lives in the freedom of his grace, the church prevails.