

## WHAT SHOULD MY CHURCH LOOK LIKE?

My church went without a pastor for 17 months. That kills a lot of churches. So now we have almost reached a reset - a blank slate. I think that when a young pastor is called to pastor a church, the church knows that a new and different vision is likely to come with him.

This church is a good church with wonderful folks. My vision is to have a church and ministry that is discipleship focused. We have to have new people to disciple... disciples of all ages. My current goal for our church is for each and every person to be able to disciple someone. So, let's look at what our church should look like when people walk in.

*“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;” Ephesians 4:11-13 (NKJV)*

I believe that this is vital to, not only church growth and survival, but also church health and viability in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

## DISCIPLESHIP IN PRACTICE: TITUS 2:1-8

*“But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things – that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.” - Titus 2:1-8 (NKJV)*

This scripture splits the church into people groups. Not one can survive the church without the other. Let's dig into what the Spirit inspired Paul to write in Titus.

### SECTION 1: Older Men

(V2) Sober - it is written of deacons and bishops in 1 Timothy 3:3-8, that they not be given much wine. Paul writes this of all older men in the Titus church. It is tough to give sound advice if your brain is swimming in liquor.

Reverent - KJV reads “grave”. This does not mean you must be a solemn, stone-faced man that never laughs. You should be respected. For good reason, not for fear that you may lash out. The word, “grave”, means to be dignified. There is a certain dignity that an older man must carry. This dignity, in the right situation, produces respect from those around him.

Temperate - this is a word, or rather an attitude, that leads to discretion and self control. This is all based in sound, biblical teaching. God wants us to be prepared for the unknown future, all while living a good life following scriptural principles. Frivolous and careless use of God’s provision is the exact opposite of this which is based in ignorance. One thing old men are not is ignorant and unlearned. Don’t act like it!

Sound in faith, in love, and in patience - All three of these go hand in hand. You ought to know why you believe something and be able to show why you believe it. Your convictions should be based on sound doctrine and scripture, not because that is what grandma taught me 60 years ago in Sunday school.

Now on the note of what grandma taught, let’s look at the next demographic Paul talks about:

## SECTION 2: Older Women

(V3-4) Paul writes the word, “likewise” which means “in the same way, as well, also, in like manner.” This means that the older women should possess the same character traits listed for the men, plus a few that he lists for them as they fulfill their role in the church.

Reverent in behavior - these should be respectable just like the men. But so should your behavior. How you dress, how you carry yourselves, speak, and also how you teach your families.

Not slanderers - These women should not be treading over the same or reputation of another person. Not a word to run someone down should come from your mouth. That is not just for older women, but we should all live the same.

Not given to much wine - This is the same deal as the men. It is kind of tough to do this next part if you are hammered drunk.

Teachers of good things - Many older women who are godly women are excellent teachers. These women are able to teach you not only to make your bed, brush your teeth, and cook, but also biblical principles to live by. These women, much like the older men, want to see the next generation grow into their spot knowing they have been instilled with biblical, Godly truth.

These women serve, among many others, one more purpose listed here: “teach the young women to...” So this will also hold to truth what our young women should look like in our church, which is our next demographic.

The older folks in our church are vital, they are the ground floor of this church. They hold experience, wisdom, and knowledge that is to be passed to the next generation.

- *“The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, If it is found in the way of righteousness.” Proverbs 16:31*
- *“Wisdom is with aged men, And with length of days, understand.” Job 12:12*

They also help to grow a young pastor into a pastor to lead the future generations years down the road. Elder members should be like the wise man in the ancient proverb. Plant trees for someone else’s shade.

### SECTION 3: Younger Women

(V4-5) Older women were responsible for teaching younger women these things because you all had to learn to do them too. So, as Paul writes to Titus, who better among them was there to teach things of this nature than the elder women?

Love your husbands - The love of the husband is the first step to a successful household. Many families split. Why? Because during the course of raising a family, the couple “love” the children so much and get caught up in the busyness of life that they forget how to love each other. Guess who is there when the nest is empty? Your spouse; loving that person is vital to a happy, healthy relationship.

Love your children - Building off the last statement, your children come second. You can always make more (LOL, just kidding). Your children are important. You should love your children so much that their butts get sore from time to time. That is part of raising them. *Proverbs 13:24* says, *“The one who will not use the rod hates his son, but the one who loves him disciplines him diligently.”* God uses discipline with us in love, so should we for our children also (Hebrews 12:7). Mothers are vital in this role even though most fathers are disciplinarians. If mothers play no role in discipline, then they become a safe haven for the child to escape their consequences.

To be discreet - This means to have a correct and disciplined outlook on her ministry, which is the home. Not only at home, but in public also. This can also be looked at through the eyes of “self control”. If us parents are not disciplined, how can we ever discipline your children?

Chaste - to be pure in mind, heart, and conduct. As a Christian, this calls for a life undefiled by sin, reflecting moral excellence and integrity, and aiming to honor God in all thoughts, desires, and actions.

Homemakers - This does not suggest that wives are to be kept in the house like a prisoner, but rather that they care for the home and guide the home. In 1 Timothy 5:14, Paul advises that young women manage the home. This is part of your ministry.

Good and obedient - These two go hand in hand. Good is better translated to kind. The christian wife should have no issue following under the leadership of the Godly husband.

#### SECTION 4: Younger Men

Now we have heard mention of husbands, let's look at what Titus was instructed of the younger men. Just as older folks do, young men play a vital role inside the church: They are the upcoming generation to lead the church. Titus was to be the exhortation and example to these younger men. I whole-heartedly believe that just as much as Titus is to be the example, so should the elder men. To start, we hear the word "likewise" again.

Sober-minded - These boys are to be sober and available to those in need. Young and old. They also need to be able to be taught or coachable. Uncoachable young men typically find themselves in trouble.

Now we see a shift in the writing, moving away from encouragement and to a teaching of doctrine and an example to the men. "Showing thyself" - your pattern should be followable. These young men should have a good example to follow by looking at you. That is a tall order, but scripture and biblical, Godly truth will keep you on the right path.

Now we see the teaching. "...in doctrine..." - showing different things doctrinally (biblical principles). The world's manly man and the Lord's Godly man are two totally different things. We need to be Biblical Godly men not worldly men.

Integrity - being able to be counted on and a man of your word.

Reverence - Being respectful and respectable. We should be worthy of the elder men's respect and not expect it. Being humble is far better received than being arrogant.

Incorruptibility - This is not self-achieved. This is only achieved by the grace of God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

(V8) Sound speech - so that when people slander your name, they will be shamed because they cannot find anything worth throwing you under the bus. That is tough with the temptations of today. We should all live by this exhortation also.

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Every generation and every role is vital to our church's health and mission. God is actively at work in the life of every believer, preparing them for good works (Ephesians 2:10). If you are unsure of the unique part you play in the church, the Body of Christ, or if you desire to serve your purpose at a higher level, dedicating time to build your relationship with God is the most impactful place to begin.