

Set in order – Sermon 9 – Titus 2:2,3 – The Fullness of Faithfulness (Seasoned Saints)

Intro:

1) Word Picture – Bud Vs Bloomed flower

- a. Differences:
 - i. Bud = not mature - lacking fulness and blessings of a bloomed flower: smell, color, attractiveness, ability to spread pollen and seeds
 - ii. Bloomed – bright, blessing, smell, etc.
- b. If you pick it too early, you miss the fullness of its beauty
- c. I'd venture to say – if your husband showed up on Valentine's Day with a bouquet of budded flowers, it wouldn't be that impressive
 - i. You want to see the fullness of a bloomed, mature, full arrangement

2) The same goes for the Christian walk

- a. Some people follow Jesus, but never pursue a fully blossomed life
 - i. As Paul would put it in Titus, they are “wanting”
- b. People seek to harvest Biblical blessings, but come short because they settle for not pressing into the fullness of faithfulness
- c. Many Christians are walking around with a budded faith and budded blessings rather than a blossomed faith with blossoms of blessings

3) Paul addresses this type of issue here in Titus

- a. Addresses the reality that they need spiritual growth – 1:5
- b. Addresses their need for healthy doctrinal teaching – 1:9 ,2:1
- c. Now – addresses what it looks like to walk faithfully at different stages of life

4) I wonder how many blessings of our faith we tend to miss because we have settled for immaturity rather than a blossoming, full, mature faith

5) In the passage we are looking at today, Paul expounds to Titus what it looks like to have the fullness of faithfulness at different stages of life

- a. Aged men/women, younger men/women, workers
- b. Today we are going to look at the “aged” category and see what God’s Word says about being “set in order” as an “aged” believer
 - i. Call them – “silver saints” or “seasoned saints”
- c. Q – what does it look like to have a life fitting sound doctrine and set in order as an aged believer?

6) Sermon: The Fullness of Faithfulness

- a. Text: Titus 2:2,3

A Distinction to be Made

- 1) You'll notice as we read down through Titus 2 that God's Word makes a clear distinction between men and women and their roles and responsibilities
 - a. Paul addresses different groups of people in this chapter separating them by age and sex
 - i. Aged men/women – young women/men
 - b. This is, by no means, a comprehensive list of difference – but it does detail for us some distinctions to be made that we cannot biblically ignore
- 2) It's not popular in our culture today to expound on sex/based/gender-based distinctions – but for the Bible believer, it is vital
 - a. 2 reasons:
 - i. These distinctions rest in the context of a lifestyle becoming of "sound doctrine"
 1. They pertain to healthy Bible teaching
 2. They reveal what Biblical maturity and a life "set in order" looks like
 - ii. It affirms and promotes God's Word
 1. 2:5
 2. Notice what's attached to living these distinctions correctly
 3. Blaspheme – Grk. Blasphemo
 - a. Blapto – to hurt
 - b. Pheme – reputation, fame
 - c. To speak irreverently of God and His name
 - b. In other words – these distinctions matter
 - i. These distinctions are not "old fashioned" they're Biblical
- 3) Doctrinal insight
 - a. 2 major schools of theological thought when it comes to male/female distinctions in the Bible
 - i. Egalitarianism – Complementarianism
 - ii. The Bible teaches complementarianism
 - b. Egalitarianism
 - i. Teaches: men and women have no real role distinctions in the home or the church and that leadership and authority are interchangeable based solely on gifting or felt-calling
 - ii. In the egalitarian view:
 1. Sex/gender distinctions are primarily cultural
 2. View role distinctions as a result of the Fall
 - a. Makes the distinctions oppressive
 3. Texts that seem to address distinctions are flattened to be simply differences of personality or patriarchy
 4. Seeks to redefine any differences as "inequalities"
 5. Cites passages like Gal. 3:28 as a proof text having overarching authority over all other passages mentioning distinctions

c. Complementarianism

- i. Teaches: men and women are equal in worth, dignity, and salvation, yet have distinct God-given roles and responsibilities at home and in the church
- ii. Key idea – Equality of essence, distinction of function
 - 1. Illustration – steering wheel Vs Tire
- iii. In the complementarian view:
 - 1. Men and woman are created equal in transcendent purpose, meaning, value – Gen. 1:27
 - a. Yet, men and women are assigned different responsibilities and functions (Gen. 2, Titus 2, Eph. 5)
 - 2. The differences are not a defect – they are a design
 - 3. The distinctions are not cultural, they are creation-based
 - 4. Distinctions are not oppressive, they are liberating as one steps into their God-given role and responsibility

4) Titus 2 affirms Complementarianism

- a. Paul structures this instruction by gender on purpose
 - i. “Titus 2 is one of the clearest examples of intentional gender-based discipleship in the NT”
 - ii. Notice Paul does not say – “Teach everyone to be...”
 - 1. Rather – he addresses how the aged men/women model Godly living differently
 - iii. This teaches us – men and women model Godliness best when they are fulfilling their God-given, distinct roles and responsibilities
 - iv. If the distinctions were interchangeable – Paul’s entire structure in Titus 2 is unnecessary

5) Titus 2 affirms that the church is to reflect God’s order, not cultural trends

- a. These believers needed to be set in order and one aspect of that was to fulfill their God-given roles in the church
- b. IOW – these distinctions were in line with God’s Word NOT culture’s voice
- c. The church does not consult the culture for sound doctrine, it receives it from Scripture

6) Titus 2 teaches us that God not only saves individuals – He shapes men as men and women as women for His glory and their good

- a. God designed discipleship to be done through distinct models of maturity – not a generic spirituality
 - i. Older men – set the standard for younger men
 - 1. Model sober strength, doctrinal stability, and Biblical endurance
 - ii. Older women – set the standard for younger women
 - 1. Shape them through reverent living, wise speech, honorable marriages, and godly instruction

7) Outcome – 2:5 - God’s Word is validated by the spiritual growth done His way

A Directive to be set

- 1) In elaborating on what living out sound doctrine is supposed to be – Paul gives different instructions for different categories of people**
 - a. V2,3
 - b. Paul rightly assumes that different genders and different ages face different challenges and temptations when it comes to living out their distinct roles and responsibilities
 - c. IOW – Paul is saying to these Cretan congregations – You’re not off the hook
 - i. He just finished with expounding on the role and requirements of elders
 - ii. Now – he gives a list of roles and requirements for the congregants
 - iii. This is not moralism – this is what a Gospel-changed life looks like
- 2) It's fascinating that Paul is addressing the Gospel walk this way**
 - a. Reveals that different seasons of life present different challenges and temptations that could hinder spiritual health and maturity
 - b. IOW – different seasons of life affect believers in different ways and we must be on guard to stay sound in our faith and set in order in our walk
- 3) The 1st category Paul gives distinctions to is the “aged”**
 - a. Why?
 - b. Good word – Godliness proven over time is a strong witness for the life-changing power of the Gospel
- 4) Textual insight**
 - a. Aged – an older person
 - i. V2 – Presbutes – an elderly man – stated in the masculine
 - ii. V3 – Presbutis – an elderly women – stated in the feminine
 - iii. These terms are derived from “Proeisbaino” – “to be far advanced”
 - b. According to Knute Larson – “In the Greco-Roman world in which Paul lived, only 2 age categories were recognized: young and old”
 - c. The term “aged” generally refers to people 45 years and older, and “young” is any one under that age
 - d. Paul used this term to describe himself in Philemon 9 when he was about 60
 - e. This word was used to describe Zacharias in Luke 1:18
 - i. Tells us this word was linked to those who were past child-rearing years
 - f. What Paul is about to instruct here is aimed at those who were considered “aged”
- 5) Significance of addressing this group of believers?**
 - a. As an older saint – there is a purpose, plan, and path of how you are to live, conduct yourself, and what you are to strive for in the sunset years of life
 - i. IOW – your job is not done just because you’ve aged
 - ii. Old adage – You don’t retire until you expire
 - b. As a younger saint – these truths encourage you to”
 - i. Look for older saints who are living this out and learn from them
 - ii. Reveals what you are to aim for as you mature in age and faith

6) In addressing this category of people, Paul instructs us on what should accompany those saints who are older in age

- a. Biblical maturity, wisdom, reverence, and patience
 - i. Ideally – Job 12:12
- b. However – experience tells us – that's not always the case
 - i. Typically – age brings decreased energy, diminished vision and hearing, debilitating aches and pains, a discouraging attitude
 - 1. All of which often affect the spiritual fervency of a seasoned saint
 - ii. “As we grow older, change can become harder to accept. Life can become less fulfilling, less satisfying, and more disillusioning. It is easy to become a creature of habit, and the longer a habit is practiced, the more deeply entrenched and formidable it becomes. Besetting sins can become such an integral part of daily life that they cease to be recognized as sins at all.” – J Mac.
 - iii. Knowing the reality and temptations in growing older – Paul gives Biblical directives of what a seasoned saint should look like

7) Truth – Old age does not automatically qualify a believer as more godly, more faithful, more satisfied or even more effective in service to God

- a. The reason Paul gives these directives is due to the temptation for aged believers to “back off” rather than “press on”

8) The Scripture abounds with wisdom on growing old well

- a. Godliness is to increase not fade with age
 - i. Ps. 92:12-15
 - ii. Older believers do not retire from fruitfulness – rather fruitfulness should be more visible with age
- b. Age doesn't automatically qualify a saint for great glory
 - i. Prov. 16:31
 - ii. Age itself is not the crown – its righteousness in that age
- c. Older saints should be models and teachers of Godliness
 - i. Duet. 32:7
 - ii. Biblical wisdom should flow from the aged to the younger
- d. Growing old should be marked by faithfulness
 - i. 2 Tim. 4:7-8

9) A church is blessed when its older saints understand their task and pursue it with Godly fervency

- a. Ps. 71:17

A Description to be lived

- 1) So what does it look like to be “set in order” as an “aged” saint?
- 2) Men – set a Godly example for biblical strength, maturity, and soundness in faith
 - a. Sober – nepharios – vigilant, clear-headed, watchful
 - i. Carries the root idea of being free from intoxication – things that mar the mind
 - ii. Denotes the idea of mental and spiritual alertness
 1. Not a diminishing of Godly thought, but a vigilance in Godly thought
 - iii. Mentioned as a character trait of church bishops – 1 Tim. 3:2
 - iv. A sober saint is not easily fooled by the enemy – 1 Pet. 5:8
 - v. A sober saint is able, with biblical accuracy, to discern the important things in life
 - vi. His priorities are set by God and are in right order
 - vii. A sober saint’s mind is not clouded by covetousness or lust
 1. A sober saint understands – happiness is not having what you want, but wanting the things you have
 - b. Grave – semnos – dignified, worthy of respect, noble
 - i. The older men ought to seek to live reverently and seek to inspire the younger men to a reverent lifestyle
 - ii. A word that refers to moral weight – a person who takes their character seriously
 - iii. “Someone whose life commands attention w/o demanding it”
 - iv. To be grave means to live dignified, not superficial
 1. Phil. 4:8 – honest
 - c. Temperate – sophron – self-controlled, sound-minded, disciplined in life
 - i. Indicates a person who uses proper thinking and demonstrates mental control
 - ii. One who places a voluntary restraint/limitation on his freedoms
 - iii. Speaks of mastering your desires – having an internal restraint
 1. Write down – Prov. 25:28
 - d. Sound in faith, charity, and patience
 - i. Sound – healthy, whole, without disease
 - ii. Faith – persuade belief
 1. They believe rightly
 2. Important – context of false teachings
 - iii. Charity – Sacrificial love
 1. Demonstrates Godly love:
 - a. In marriage – Eph. 5
 - b. To others – 1 Cor. 13:4-7, loves his neighbor as himself
 - iv. Patience – under + abide
 1. One who abides well under the pressures of life
 2. Not a passive waiting – but knows how to wait on the Lord
 - a. Is. 40:31
 3. They’ve had their faith tried and remained faithful
 - a. James 1:3,4

3) Women – Set a Godly example of biblical femininity and faithfulness

- a. Behavior becoming holiness – to conduct their lives in a manner fitting holiness
 - i. Carry yourself as if you are always walking on holy ground
 - ii. Has root meaning of being priestlike
 - iii. A life characterized by concentration and dedication to the Lord
 - 1. Set apart from and to
 - 2. Important for our day – seeking to redefine successful womanhood and femininity
- b. Not a false accuser – not to be entangled with gossip, slander, or malicious conversation
 - i. Diabolos – accuser
 - ii. Translated 34x's as a title for Satan – “devil”
 - iii. Used of Judas in John 6:70 who in opposition to God, acted like the Devil
 - iv. Word referring to how to speak of others
 - 1. IOW – older women set the example by being advocates, not accusers
 - v. As you grow in years, your speech should grow in grace
 - vi. Older women are to refrain from engaging in gossip and slander
 - vii. Paul doesn't treat this as a “small sin” – he names it with demonic language
- c. Not given to much wine
 - i. Not given – douloo – to make a slave/servant
 - 1. To be mastered by
 - ii. Wine – oinos – generic term, in context references something that you can become intoxicated by
 - iii. The emphasis here is not only on quantity, its on mastery
 - iv. Say it this way – the aged women learn not to grow dependent and turn to a drink rather than turn to the Lord
 - 1. Older women should know that a drink doesn't fix problems, the Lord does
- d. Teachers of good things – kalodidaskalos
 - i. Rare compound word tailored for this role
 - ii. Teach what is noble
 - 1. They are to teach others about Godliness and holiness
 - iii. Brings clarity to the teaching roles of women in the church
 - 1. Younger women – V4
 - 2. Children – aged carries reference to mothers/grandmothers
 - a. 2 Tim. 1:5, 3:15
 - iv. Question for aged women – What younger woman are you teaching godliness to?
 - 1. We have plenty!
 - v. Write down – ideal woman – Prov. 31:26

4) In addressing a life that is fitting sound doctrine, Paul gives the aged saints a description to aim towards

Challenge

- 1) Instead of living out the status quo – live a life of fervent Godliness into your aged years**
 - a. Go down with a fight
- 2) Younger saints:**
 - a. Find older saints who are living this out and learn from them
 - b. Grow into this maturity
- 3) Prayer – God give me the grace to have the energy, ability, stamina, and fervency to go well into my older years with Godliness**
 - a. Seasoned saints are to be steadfast saints