

Titus 2 • Trained by the grace of God

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Life Bible Ministry

We're in the second chapter of Titus, Paul's letter to Titus. Let's go ahead and read through the chapter and then we'll open up in prayer.

¹But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. ²Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. ³Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, ⁴and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, ⁵to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. ⁶Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. ⁷Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, ⁸and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. ⁹Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, ¹⁰not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹²training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

¹⁵Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.” (ESV)

Let's pray. Father, as we dig into these scriptures this morning and just see what they're, what they have to say for us. We rely completely on your Holy Spirit to speak and to reveal and to clarify in our hearts. Lord, you know what we need to hear most. You know what each and every heart longs for today. So fill us, Lord God, fill us according to your Word and according to your faithfulness. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

You might remember that the Apostle Paul ended the last chapter by making reference to these Jewish legalists who were going around and upsetting the whole household by their false teaching.

They were telling people that in order to be saved, they had to submit to circumcision and become Jews first. Converts to Judaism, and only then could they be able to be saved by putting their faith in Jesus. And it was a big mess frankly, back in the early church, which is why Paul begins this chapter now with a contrast saying in verse 1, “*But as for you* (speaking now to Titus), *but as for you* (he tells him, and again, there's that sharp contrast I want you to) *teach*, (he says interestingly enough) *what accords with sound doctrine.*”

Did you catch that there in verse one? “*But as for you, teach what it accords with sound doctrine.*” Now understand something, Paul is not exhorting Timothy to teach sound doctrine here, that's a given. He's telling him to teach the people.

Did I say Timothy? Thank you. But you need to be a little louder. I'm getting hard of hearing. Let me start again. We'll edit that out. I'm just kidding.

He's telling Titus that he expects him to teach the people about how their lives are to reflect sound teaching. okay. Now that may sound a little strange, but he's essentially saying, remind the people that your life should be consistent with the message. That's it.

And we would say it probably much more simply today, let your life match your confession. Let your life match your faith. Because our lives are supposed to reflect what we say, our confession in Christ. Sadly, it's not always the case.

And I think it's no wonder that unbelievers, people outside of Christ, are confused as to what this Christianity thing is all about. Because frankly, they see people all the time who make confessions of Christ, or yeah, I'm a Christian, Oh yeah, I'm a Christian. And yet they're living lives that are entirely contrary to what the Bible teaches and the life that Christ is birthing in us.

And that's why Paul goes on to outline for Titus how these various groups of people based on gender and age should conduct their lives so that they're living in such a way that their life reflects their confession. You say you're a believer. Wonderful. And this all comes down to fruit. You know we are probably going to get into James next after we finish Titus here on Sunday morning.

Sue was just asking me this morning,

“So where are you going to go next?”

“I, yeah, probably James. I got to go back and pick up John the last gospel, but I think I'm going to wait for a couple of books.”

But James really goes, this is what his epistle is largely about. And James is a challenging book to understand sometimes because he's telling people, you say you have faith. Great! Let me see it. And the fact that he talks about works really upsets some people because they think, well, is that a contradiction to what Paul said, that we're not saved by our works?

No, it's not a contradiction. James is challenging people in the same way that Paul is telling Titus to challenge people to say, if you are a believer, if you are a Christian, it's like saying, I'm an apple tree. Well, there ought to be apples on the branches. There ought to be proof of your confession in the life that you live, that's what Paul is saying.

So he begins to go through these various groups and he begins here in verse 2 by dealing with older men. I don't know what the cut-off is when you're old. I, you can help me out with that maybe. But anyway, if you're an older man, here you go.

But he says, “*Older men are to be sober-minded...*” And you'll remember we talked about that previously sober-minded means thinking clearly, being able, these older men ought to be able to think clearly, right? He says they must be “*dignified...*” The NIV says, “*worthy of respect..*” which is a good translation there as well for that Greek word that is translated here in the ESV, dignified. Next, he says, older men are to be “*self-controlled...*” And you're going to see this repeated in different languages for other groups. But self-control obviously means being able to exercise restraint in situations. He says also, that older men should be “*sound in faith...*” And that simply means that they have a stable and correct understanding of what it means to be in Christ, right? What it means to be a believer and walk out your faith. They should be sound and the word sound means healthy or whole, okay. They should have a complete understanding.

It says that they also are to be “*in love, and in steadfastness or love and endurance.*” Older men should show that kind of endurance with their faith and love toward people. And these again, are all things that Paul wanted Titus to remind the older men about, so that their lives were in keeping with a sound faith or a sound teaching, if you will.

Then Paul moves on to remind Titus about how to encourage the older women. He says, verse 3, “*Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior,*” the word reverent means respectful. They're to show respect in their behavior. He says they're “*not to be slanderers...*” or as the new American standard Bible says, they're “*not to be malicious gossips or slaves to much wine.*”

Now, I want to remind you that in many parts of the ancient world, wine was a daily beverage because of the fact that good drinking water was at times hard to come by. But there was always a danger whenever wine was around, of course. The people would become addicted. Paul refers to it as being enslaved.

You can use the word addiction if you want to, because it's a nicer thing to say to somebody than enslaved. You're enslaved to alcohol. I mean that, but you know what, that's what addicted means because you're going to serve whatever is your master. And so Paul is saying make sure that women don't give that position of master over to wine because that can happen.

And I'll just give you my opinion, which is worth nothing. But my opinion is just stay away from alcohol altogether. Stronger people than you have been messed around by alcohol and it has ruined their lives. And I've watched lives go down the tubes from alcohol. So just don't even go there. It's like, why? I mean, do you need it to be happy? You shouldn't. Anyway that's just my opinion. End of soapbox. Let's move on.

He goes on here, we're at the very end of verse 3, he says, “*They are to teach what is good...*” right? So women are to be teachers as well and they are in verse 4, “*to train the young women to love their husbands...*” He goes through this list of things, loving their husbands, loving their “*children...*” here it is again, “*to be self-controlled.*” , that idea of being able to show restraint.

And then he says also walking in submission. He writes specifically and submissive to their own husbands. And then he gives the reason why, “*that the word of God may not be reviled.*” You and I might just say something like that the word of God might not be dragged through the mud.

And so he gives this list of things that the older women are to challenge and encourage the younger women in through teaching and exhortation and instruction.

And without a doubt, I would have to say that the last one is probably the most difficult for modern women today to probably swallow because it talks about submission. And the reason it's so difficult is that we've been raised in a culture

where that word submission is pretty much a four-letter word. It's considered vulgar. It's considered outdated.

So, we have to every so often go back and say, what exactly does that mean? When the Bible says that a wife is to submit to her husband, just exactly what are we talking about here? And isn't that kind of old-fashioned? And we think that of course, because there are so many incredible misconceptions and misunderstandings about what it means to submit. And believe me, women are not, our wives are not the only people in the Bible who are called upon to submit. We're all called upon to submit in one way or another. But this is so misunderstood within the context of marriage.

And I remember even going to one of the very first marriage retreats that I went to the pastor there, I wasn't leading it. But the pastor was asking the guys what it meant that their wives were to submit to them. And one of the guys who had a total misunderstanding of the whole concept, he says it means, when I say jump, she says, how high.

And we all kind of were going, oh God, let's pray, right? Let's hold hands and pray for his wife right now. And that's what some guys believe that submission means that a wife is to submit to or to obey his every whim. But by the same token, there are women who misunderstand what submission means. They believe that it is the Bible teaching the inferiority of their gender. And both of those conclusions are 100% wrong.

True biblical submission, and we're moving beyond just husbands and wives, but true biblical submission is the idea that I willingly, not because I have to, but because I choose to subordinate myself to another individual to allow them into that place of leadership that God has called them to in order that we might together achieve the common good. That is what biblical submission is.

Now in the case of a wife, it all surrounds her personal recognition that God has called her husband into a position of headship in the home. A position that he didn't ask for, and I can tell you right now that most men feel very ill-equipped to carry out, okay. Men are, for some reason or another, called into that position of spiritual oversight and leadership and headship within the home.

Why did God choose men? I'll never know. Because we seem to do a pretty rotten job of it most of the time. But our calling is our calling. That's the fact of the matter. And a woman, when she recognizes the calling that the Lord has given him, not that he has taken on himself, but that the Lord has bestowed upon him, she responds to the Lord's calling with an attitude of submissiveness.

Literally subordination to that leadership role for the common good of the family. It doesn't mean she becomes a doormat, and it doesn't mean that she obeys his every whim.

The Bible doesn't actually say, wives obey your husbands. Although we've worked that into our marital vows: "Do you promise to obey your husband?"

It says she's to submit, but she's submitting to the Lord's calling on his life, you see. So that's her impetus.

I've had women tell me in marriage counseling, well I'll submit to him when he is worthy of being submitted to. Well, you're going to wait a long time because most of us are really thickheaded, I won't say, guys. And if you're going to wait for us to live this perfect life to walk in your calling, then you're going to wait a long time.

Women are to do that as a response to the Lord, not their husband, but to the Lord. She submits as to the Lord, and that is probably the most important thing about it, that is biblical submission. It is not groveling. It is not living in fear of his dictatorial leadership. It is actually quite the opposite, and it is actually a very beautiful thing.

And women, I will tell you that your example of submission is most perfectly modeled in the person of Jesus Christ, who being in the very form of God did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped. But poured himself out willingly, literally poured himself out, and he was submissive to his father and submitted even unto death on a cross.

Now that's a picture that's actually given to us in Philippians chapter 2, and it's not given just to women, it's given to all believers, but it's a picture for women. It's a model for women. See, Jesus is the model for men as leaders, and Jesus is the model for women as those who walk in that attitude of honoring that submission.

So when a wife begins to understand what God is calling her to do in marriage, she honors God and therefore honors His word. And that's what Paul says at the end of Titus so that our word might not be reviled, right.

Notice in verse 6, there's just one short reminder that Titus is to give to all the young men, he says, "*Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.*" And that's pretty much all you got to say to a young man because I remember being a young man and young men are usually pretty passionate. But the

problem is that passion often creates a certain emotional volatility. Can I say that in a man's life?

I remember as a young man saying and doing really really dumb things just because I was a young man and I felt very strongly about things. Many times I was dead wrong, but I still felt very strongly about them and I did things. And that's why there's a great need for men to be encouraged, young men to be encouraged to walk and restraint.

And again, here's what we have the same idea of walking in sound judgment, walking in self-control, restrain yourself, hold back. This is very tough to tell a young man today because we're living in a culture where he's told to just blah, just be who he is, just be yourself. Well, my 23-year-old self was pretty much out of control. So you know the world's telling me to be myself, and boy, I was doing it much to the chagrin of everybody I was around.

So Paul tells Titus to encourage the young man, you need to walk into restraint, pull back on the reins. It's okay to learn how to pull back on the reins a little bit. You don't have to say that. You can withhold your words. You can say, no, I'm going to take a breath and I'm going to wait before I respond or clench my fist or whatever emotional response, I'm perhaps having to the situation. And of course, some of the most important self-control or restraint that a young man needs to show is in the area of sexual awareness and sexual activity and that sort of thing.

And again, we're living in this world where it's just all out there. Even when I was a boy, we had to go and steal somebody's Playboy magazine. And now it's just on the internet and you just hop on and go to the right website and there it is. It's just all at their end, worse and way worse. And then nobody can stop you, and you can do it in the privacy of your own home, you can do it on your telephone. We at least had to make some effort. Doesn't mean that our hearts were any better, just means it was a little harder to come by.

But there's this huge gravitational pull, sexual gravitational pull for young men. It is absolutely enormous. And you got to think that God probably factored that into the life of a young man for the perpetuation of our species. There's this strong pull toward sexual activity and sexual awareness. But a young man prior to getting married has to show great restraint. And left to himself, he's not going to. Left to the encouragement of the world he's not going to show restraint ever because it's not in his nature. It's not in his flesh. The flesh does not know how to restrain itself. And so men have to be, young men have to be, constantly encouraged.

And then Paul in verse 7, turns to exhort Titus personally, he says to him, “*Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works...*” So again, we see that Paul encouraged those under him in leadership to be more than just teachers of the word. They were to be models of the word in their own lives, and that's Paul's way of reminding Titus to simply be a doer of the word, not just the one who speaks it.

And then he says, “*and in your teaching show integrity...*” the New American Standard Bible says, “*purity in doctrine.*” He says, you're also to “*show dignity...*” and the word kind of carries the idea of a seriousness, to the sharing of the word “*and sound speech...*” We've talked about that, the word, “sound,” strong, whole, your speech should be whole, strong and so forth. These are words that Paul said ought to describe and characterize the teaching of a man like Titus or Timothy or any other person who shares the word of God and why.

At the very end of verse 8, he says, “*so that an opponent...*” and that means basically anybody who is a detractor or a critic of who you are and what you say, “*may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.*” That doesn't mean they're not going to say evil things anyway, because if they want to say something evil, they'll make it up, but they're going to be ashamed on the day of the Lord. Because they know they will be made aware that they, there wasn't really anything there to criticize. They were just criticized because they were full of hate and darkness.

And then here in verse 9 and 10, this is interesting, Paul exhorts Titus on how to encourage those in the fellowship who had chosen a lifelong servitude to their master.

Do you guys remember last week, we talked about the fact that Paul declared himself to be a bond servant of Christ? Do you remember that? Some Bibles even say bond slave and some Bibles actually even just use the word slave, a slave of Jesus Christ. But the word is bond servant. You'll remember we talked about it last week. It means someone who has willingly chosen to continue their service to their master for life, okay.

Now Paul believed himself to be a bond servant of Jesus in that spiritual sort of a sense of the understanding. But now he's talking about those who are literally in a position of lifelong servitude because they've chosen to do that, okay. And that's why he says here, “*Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, they're not to pilfer* (That means to take things that don't belong to them, the master will

never know, he's got lots of these.) *“but (he says,) showing all good faith so that in everything, they may adorn the doctrine of God our savior.”*

Isn't that an interesting phrase? So that they may adorn the doctrine. Have you ever thought about the way you live adorning the teachings or the truth of God's Word?

We're all, this is that time of year when we're adorning Christmas trees, usually in our homes we bring in. I don't know if you do that sort of thing, if you don't, that's fine. Ours is fake but our love of Jesus is real. But we bring in this tree and it looks really bare when Sue first sets it up and then she adorns it, and she does a beautiful job. And she turns on the lights and all the things hanging on it that many of them point to Christmases of the past when our kids were little or whatever. And she adorns it beautifully. It makes this rather simple looking thing very very beautiful.

And your life, interestingly enough, has a similar sort of a characteristic as you adorn the gospel or the truth of God's Word with how you live. Think of it as the things you hang on your branches and you can adorn the gospel in a negative way, or you can adorn the gospel in a beautiful way.

And Paul is exhorting Titus, to encourage those who were lifelong servants to live in that service in such a way that they adorn the gospel, literally the teaching of Jesus as a beautiful thing. And they literally draw people to that teaching by the way they live.

And there's a lot of that going on in this chapter, isn't there? We literally decorate the gospel message with our lives. It's pretty interesting. So we all have that opportunity to do that either to decorate or to tarnish.

Verses 11 through 14. This is one of Paul's classic run on sentences. It's all one long sentence where the apostle states the background for what should be the changes, the lifestyle that he's exhorting here, Titus to share with the people. And he says, *“¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹²training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live (here it is again) self-controlled (in other words showing restraint), upright, and godly lives in the present age.”* And I want you to notice here in verse 12 that Paul says that Grace actually trains us. That is also translated in some Bible's teach.

Do you ever think of grace teaching or training? It's an interesting concept. I got to tell you something. The word, grace, or I shouldn't say more, just the word,

the concept of grace in the Bible, is one of the most incredible concepts in all of scripture. And you would do well to meditate on what the Bible has to say on that single idea of grace because it is very multifaceted and it could, it just directs our lives in so many ways. It affects our lives in so many ways. And here Paul tells Titus, and you and me that it actually teaches us and trains us.

Well, what is it training us? It's training us in godliness. Grace trains us in godliness. When your kids are little, you train them in propriety, goodness, fairness, rightness, and that sort of thing. And you're kind of the law, you know, that's the way parents are. When my kids were little, my wife and I were the law. And we would lay down the law and you got to do that for kids to keep them safe, this is this, that is that, there you go. But when somebody gets older, their parents are no longer doing it.

As believers, what is doing that work of training in our lives? God's grace. God's grace continues the training process, the teaching that's what Paul says here in verse 12.

Training us to do what? Renounce things like things that are ungodly, renounce worldly passions. Now please understand what worldly passions are. It doesn't mean every fleshly passion. You got to understand something about the flesh. There's a lot of things that we've made evil about passions of the flesh that aren't evil in and of themselves.

You guys do know that God created sex, right? To be enjoyed within the context of a monogamous relationship between a man and a woman. That's the way God created it. It's not evil. It's good. It's delightful. We've made it something evil by taking it into our own hands, using it for our own passion and pleasure selfishly, right? To the point where a lot of Christians have come to the place of seeing worldly passions as all evil. They are not. God created many of them to be good and useful in our lives and a blessing.

What Paul is talking about here to Titus and to you and me, is worldly spins on those passions. Because you see, the world takes what God created and they take what is legitimate and they make it illegitimate, right? That which has been given by God to be good, to be a blessing, they've taken and made it filthy and so we call those worldly passions. And again, that's the world's spin on pleasing myself.

And so that's what the spirit, the grace of God is training us to renounce and to say, no, we're not going to live like the world. We're going to take these things that God gave and we're going to enjoy them but within the context of God's

purpose and plan for such things. That's what the grace of God is teaching us to do. We are to turn our back on the ways of the world and to face the ways of God.

Interestingly enough, when he mentions here that we are trained or taught by grace, the Greek word is very full and it involves the entire process. In fact, it's a word that was often used to describe the raising of a child by their parents from the earliest days until the day they leave home.

Isn't it interesting that word would encompass that? So grace encompasses us and teaches us for the whole journey. It's not just a day of teaching, or a day of instruction. It's walking through the whole journey of life and teaching, encouraging, correcting, disciplining, and so forth. That's the way grace is responding to us and we don't always respond to it, the way we should, right?

Just because grace is training us doesn't mean we're submitting to its training. Sometimes even as Christians we buck and nip and bite and kick against the grace of God that is training us to live godly lives. The good news is God's grace will outlast you, very pleased to tell you that. I'm very pleased to announce that His grace and many times has outlasted my own stubborn refusal to go along, and I am so pleased.

But while Grace is working on our hearts, what are we doing? Verse 13, look with me in your Bible, while all that's going on, what we're doing is we're waiting. We're patiently waiting for the promises of God to be realized. He says, “*waiting for our blessed hope (and then he talks about what that blessed hope is, he says), the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.*”

Isn't that something? He's saying that what motivates us along the way. So here, he's putting it like this, he says, grace is training you. It's teaching you to live godly lives. So what's your motivation to follow along with that training?

Well, the hope that Jesus is coming and that I don't want to be embarrassed at his coming because I am stiffening my neck at the training process of grace. Because I'm bucking and kicking and arguing with the Holy Spirit when He's trying to do a work in my life.

And boy, have I done that in my life. I bet you have too. But I don't want to be found resisting that training. Jesus is coming back. That is our blessed hope, and the fact that He is coming back motivates us to live our lives today honoring Him.

Because he goes on to verse 14 to tell us that Jesus is the one, “*who gave himself for us to redeem us from all (this stuff in the world)...*”. He mentions lawlessness and that sort of stuff but that's what he came to redeem us from. Jesus came to redeem you from all the things that grace is now telling you to turn your back on, you with me? The fact that you can turn your back on those things is available to you and me now because Jesus came. And now as grace trains us, we are able to say, yeah, I'm not going to do that. And that means Jesus died to free us from the dominion, the control of our sinful flesh.

I understand the concept of addictions. I do. I understand the concept of creating deep ruts of sin that are challenging to get out of. I get that. But by the same token we have to understand those concepts alongside the power that we have been given through the Holy Spirit to conquer. And if all we're talking about is addiction and the power of addiction and the power of the flesh and my inability to change myself, we're not telling the whole story. We have to also bring into that equation the variable of the power of the Holy Spirit that is now living within us.

Paul says it's the same power that raised Christ from the dead is now living in you to enable the conquering of your life over the power of the sinful flesh. Isn't that amazing? I mean, doesn't that blow you away? And some of you're thinking, well, if that kind of power is operational in my life, why am I not seeing it? Well, because we're still kicking and biting and arguing and not yielding.

Paul ends the chapter in verse 15 again telling Titus, “*declare these things, exhort (the people) and rebuke...*” (the people, if necessary if you have to rebuke). I've told you before how much fun that is, but he says, do it “*with all authority and let no one disregard you.*” That's where we'll stop for today. We'll do Titus three, Lord willing, next week.

So stand with me please. We'll close in prayer this morning. Trust that the Lord spoke to your heart today through His Word. He's faithful to do that. If you need prayer this morning, we'll have some people up front here by the stage to pray with you, to encourage you. And if it's been a while since you've been talking to Jesus, maybe it's time to come home.

Christmas is a great time. It creates softness in people's hearts. I don't know if you've noticed that, but the Christmas season can create kind of an openness in people that might not be there otherwise. And it brings us to the realization that I need Him. I need the Lord in my life, and I need to stop trying to resist and do my own thing and live my own life. I need to give my life to Him.

Heavenly Father, I thank you so much for the power of your Word to transform our lives when we take it in, when we open our hearts to what it says and how we can apply it to our lives. And I pray, my Father, that we would do that, we would apply it.

But most of all, Lord, I pray that each and every person here would once again bow the knee, say, Jesus, I need you. I need you in my life. I need you in my heart. I need you in my marriage. I need you in my home. I need you in my thoughts. I need you in my body. I need you in every aspect of my life. And I ask you, Father God, to fill me with your Spirit and teach me your ways. And I thank you, Lord, for giving your life on the cross that the penalty of my sin might be fully paid.

I accept that work that you have done on my behalf, and I commit my life to you to live for you and with you, and to long for your appearing, which is my blessed hope. In Jesus' precious name we all pray, amen. Amen.