

Daily Bible Study

“What Christian Men Are To Be”

Titus 2:1-2, 6-8

November 24 – November 30, 2013

MONDAY –This week as we continue our look at Titus; namely **Titus 2:1-2, 6-8**, we look at “*What Christian Men Are To Be*”. What kind of things should a Christian pastor teach the men of his congregation; the older men, the younger men, and leaders such as himself? Our text gives us very direct and practical answers to these questions. In **Titus 2** the Apostle Paul addresses specific groups of individuals; older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and slaves. But instead of directing them directly, he addresses Titus as to what he is to teach them. In summary, Titus is to teach them “*But as for you, teach what is consistent with sound doctrine*” (NRSV). We learn from this that doctrine and practice for a Christian are to keep in step with each other. A life built on sound teaching in the faith is to be accompanied by a lifestyle that lives in harmony with it. Titus is the man here commanded by the Apostle to teach and tell the people (five groups) in detail what it means for them as various ages and individuals in the church. The beginning word of contrast, “*But*” tells us that the life and teaching of Titus must contrast sharply with that of the false teachers who were doing damage in Crete. Not only must these false teachers of error be reproved (Titus 1:13), but as **Romans 12:21** tells us we are to *overcome evil with good*. He must “*speak*” (literally *talk* – which in Greek can mean to speak or talk, with the possible implication of more informal usage) what is consistent with sound doctrine. Whether formally teaching or conversationally speaking he needs to set this example of speech and life being consistent with truth. Read **Titus 2:1-2, 6-8**: “*But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: ² that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; ... ⁶ Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, ⁷ in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, ⁸ sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.*”

Suggestion for Prayer: God, teach me from Sacred Scripture how to live and talk with a life that is consistent with Your truth and glorifying to You.

TUESDAY – **Titus 2:1-2**: “*But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: ² that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience...*” We introduced the text and topic yesterday and now we turn to the first of the specific groups addressed; *the older men*. When does one become an older man? We know from ancient Greek literature that the word translated “older” (*presbytes* – meaning “an old

man, an aged man, any adult male human”) was used describing someone as young as fifty. Without taking a hard line concerning an actual age the text is obviously talking about men who have years and experience behind them. John Chrysostom an early church father comments that just because you get older does not mean you necessarily mature and things get easier; “there are some failings which age has, that youth has not. Some indeed it has in common with youth, but in addition it has a slowness, a timidity, a forgetfulness, an insensibility, and an irritability.” The *older men* receive two main exhortations which could be summed up in the words dignity and maturity. Scripture commands these men to *be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience...* *Sober* (*nephalios* – sober, temperate) describes a man of moderation. For example, this word is used with respect to the use of wine. He doesn’t go to excess. He is not a slave to his appetites. Whether he is eating, drinking, sleeping, spending money, or engaging in recreation, he keeps a firm hand on his desires and drives. *Reverent* describes a man who is as the literal Greek defines this word, “worthy of respect”. Some other suggested translations are grave, dignified, and serious. Paul is not saying older men can’t joke and have fun but he does mean that the fun is to be kept in control, within boundary. Older men are not to play the fool. There is to be a seriousness about them that reflects the seriousness of life and the seriousness of the things of God. Older men are to live and act in ways that is fitting with their maturity and years. Men worthy of respect are strength to their family and congregation. *Temperate* men are men who are “of sound mind”. We saw this word earlier in connection with qualifications for elders (**1:8**). The idea is that of being a sensible man known for sound judgment. An older man of sound mind will have his speech, behavior, decisions, counsel that he gives, and responses that he makes to the situations in life guided and checked by self-control and wise discretion. *Sound in faith* means “healthy in faith”. Older men have a healthy trust in God. They rely wholly on Him and His revealed truth, the Word of God. An example of this in Paul’s life would be when he was on the sinking ship in **Acts 27:25**. Paul took God at his word and displayed a soundness of faith that should characterize every older Christian man and all Christians for that matter. *Older men* are to act *in love* in their attitude to others. Again, *sound in love*. Their love is to be in good health, too. It is not to be allowed to grow cold and lacking in principle. If needs be, it is *tough* love which has them to warn, rebuke, and exhort fellow Christians they see in spiritual danger. It is to be a love obeying the great commandment, being supremely expressed to God and also to neighbor as himself. *Healthy in patience* describes an attitude of steadfastness, constancy and endurance. They are to be examples of perseverance. The older Christian man should not be a man blown around and a waffle and waverer that we fear will be put him off his stride when trials come. Rather, he is to be an example to others of what it means to overcome in the strength of Christ, remaining faithful to God, His Word, and His people through thick and thin, to the very end.

Suggestion for Prayer: God, help me if an older man to pursue these commands and pray for help to live them out. May we all strive for this maturity, seriousness, love, and patience.

WEDNESDAY – Titus 2:2: ^{“2} *that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience...*” Yesterday we saw the commands for *older men* but the question might be asked, “Why is it so important that these things be true of older Christian men? If Christians of all ages are to grow in grace and knowledge and be like Jesus, why is Scripture so insistent that maturity of age be matched by spiritual maturity?” One very important and likely reason is that older men in this way will be an example to those who are younger. The influence of a Godly, mature example by *older men* CANNOT be underestimated. This is a very important and lacking reality in many Christian churches. John Benton comments on the matter of being *reverent* (worthy of respect); “there is solidity and commitment to what is right which inspires younger men to secretly say to themselves “I want to be like him”. *Older men* need to ask, “Do I feel that challenge, to live as an example and inspiration to younger Christian men? Providing them with models of godly and mature Christian living they can follow and show them what it means to be men whose conduct harmonizes with the sound doctrine they have embraced?” Seriously, is this your aspiration men or are your aspirations separate from the community of faith and primarily personal and physical family related? The 19th century Scottish preacher Andrew Bonar had something said to him at the beginning of his ministry that every Christian man should ponder. It was this: “Remember that very few men and very few ministers keep up to the end the edge that was on their spirit at the first.” In other words, very few Christian men continue to grow and develop and mature to the close of their lives. Sadly, it can be said many are not the men they were in their younger days. May we *number our days and apply our hearts to wisdom (Psalm 90:12)*. Regardless of our ages, we all should strive to be an example of Godliness as Paul told Timothy in **1 Timothy 4:12**.

Suggestion for Prayer: *Father God, help us all to be diligent and faithful to follow You and grow and mature all our lives. Remind us that our lives and the joys and rewards of faithfulness to You will follow us forever as we live eternally in Your joy.*

THURSDAY – Titus 2:6: ^{“6} *Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded,*” Here we get the instruction for younger men as we are told that Titus is to *exhort the young men to be sober-minded*. What age-limit does the apostle have in mind when he refers to these “*young(er) men*”? With respect to the age question Hendriksen comments; “Is he thinking only of those under forty? (**1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 2:22**.) But then, if by “aged men” those of 60 and over are indicated, there would remain a large group—those of 40–60—for which he has no admonition at all. Hence, “young(er) men” may here indicate all those under 60; or else the age-limit separating the two classes—“aged” and “young(er)”—may have to be lowered somewhat, say to 50 years of age.” (See Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* II. xxii, 5; also **John 8:56, 57**.) Regardless of the precise age in view we see this admonition is very brief and some scholars therefore believe that the phrase “*in all things*” belongs here and not with **verse 7**. The word *sober-minded* is becoming very familiar to us. As previously mentioned, it was used in **1:8** of elders and in **2:2** of *older men*. The focus is on the mind. Younger men are to

think and be sensible, clear-headed and be able to exercise sound judgment. Remember that the church situation at the time here in Crete was difficult and these young men were being exposed to false teaching. There was teaching contrary to the will and Word of God. In the face of so much false teaching we all need to have our minds on Jesus and His Word to keep us from being led astray. To be of sound mind impacts our speech, behavior, the decisions that we make in life, the counsel that we give to others, and the ways in which we respond to situations in life. Its value cannot be over-estimated. And we obtain this thinking through the Bible. In the Bible we have the mind of Christ and of God; clear direction as how we are to live and what we are to believe. The mind is like a garden and if it is not weeded and cultivated it quickly becomes a wilderness. The Christian mind left alone will quickly become worldly in its thinking. Young men must learn to master themselves, to exercise *self-control* which is also related to this word *sober-minded* in the Greek. So, as mentioned as we look to the start of what is labeled **verse 7** in our Bibles, *In all things, in every respect, young men* must place their minds and lives under the discipline of the gospel, and guard from the evil temptations of their own sinful nature and the opinions and customs which abound in the pagan world. We must never place our own conclusions, feelings, or ambitions above the Word and will of God (**Romans 12:3, 2 Corinthians 10:5**).

Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, help me to put my mind You and Your Word (Philippians 4:8). May I be protected and led into truth as I meditate and walk in the light of Your Word.*

FRIDAY – Titus 2:7-8: ^{“7} *in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility,* ⁸ *sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.”* **Vs.7-8** are specifically for Titus: Paul is clearly addressing Titus in his character as a Christian leader and his example to the People of God. In conduct he is to be a pattern that could be followed leading people toward Jesus and Godliness. Titus is to set an example by his life being a pattern of *good works* for all to see and imitate. In *doctrine* (teaching) he is to show *integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, and sound speech*. A similar admonition was addressed to Timothy. He also was to be an example, *the believers’ pattern*. Titus must *exhort* the young men (**vs.6**) and give them a *pattern* (**vs.7-8**). Teaching and example must go hand in hand. Teaching alone won’t do as example often does more, “actions speaking louder than words”. Teaching needs to be done with *dignity, seriousness* and with *incorruptibility*. Clear truth of the gospel that cannot be *condemned* (criticized) and distorted by false teachers or those standing contrary to the Truth of God and His Word. Paul says, “teach and live Titus that opponents will *have nothing evil to say of you*.” The word is actually “*us*” not “*you*” as we see the enemies criticism and attack is directed not against Titus alone, but against him as a disciple of Jesus; therefore really against Jesus Himself.

Suggestion for Prayer: *Father God, protect Your church; both its teachers and teaching.*