

Titus 2:1-10 sermon

In the first couple of centuries of Christianity, the lives of the Christians were an incredibly strong testimony to the transforming power of Christ in our lives. We have letters from Roman officials where they talk about how Christians did an amazing job taking care of their own people's needs as well as those within the communities in which they met. They talked about how real Christians could not be coerced into denying Jesus – even if it cost them their lives.

However, as time went by the powerful witness of many Christians began to deteriorate.

- The 19th century German philosopher, **Heinrich Heine**, said: ***"Show me your redeemed life, and I might be inclined to believe in your Redeemer."***
- **Mohatma Gandhi** is often quoted as saying, ***"I like your Christ. I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ."***

And many nonbelievers today aren't terribly impressed with the testimony of many Christian's lives. For many there appears to be this disconnect between what they claim to believe and how they actually live. Way too often Christians reflect Paul's statement in Titus 1:16 ***"They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him."***

The irony or the tragedy, depending upon how you look at it, is that that description of Paul, while it may fit many Christians lives, was actually uttered to describe false teachers who had crept into the churches there on the island of Crete. And Paul goes on to describe them as ***detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.***

That word "unfit" is an interesting word in the original Greek. It's the word, *adokimos*, and was a construction term. When they were constructing a building and a stone they selected didn't fit they would scratch an "a" on it, an alpha for *adikomos*, and set it aside so no one would pick it up again and use it.

In our passage this morning, Paul instructs Titus: Titus 2:1 (NIV) ***You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine.***

The word used for "sound" is a tremendous contrast to the word "unfit". The word for "sound" in the Greek is what we get our word *hygiene* from. It means that something is healthy or whole or fit. And so it helps our doctrine look healthy, instead of *unfit*.

It's very important that we grasp what Paul is instructing Titus to do here. He's telling Titus to instruct the people in the churches in Titus to live their lives in such a way that the deep truths of Christianity, the doctrine, would be attractive to others. And as read through this passage in just a minute you'll notice how important it is to God and Paul that our behavior displays the truth and beauty and the power of the message of Jesus Christ. There shouldn't be an incongruity but a beautiful reflection of Jesus Christ and his love and grace poured out for us through the way in which we live our lives.

Before I read through this passage this morning, I think it's important to point out one other thing. Paul instructs Titus to teach these principles to the Christians in the churches. But the word Paul chooses that's translated ***"teach"*** is not the normal word used for teach in the Greek. The word Paul strategically uses here more captures the idea of teaching while living out your life throughout the day rather than in a closed classroom setting with certain hours. It's much more the idea contained in **Deuteronomy 6:6-7** where Moses instructed the people:

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NIV) ***These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.***

Titus 2:1 (NIV) ***You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine.***

And the verb tense Paul uses for teaching what is appropriate to sound doctrine is a **present tense verb** which means that it should be taking place all the time. Which means what he's describing here is not just dropping off your kids for a Sunday School class for them to learn these things or for you to merely attend a Bible study to learn these principles. These principles are learned dynamically, communally as

you do life together with others within the church and listen to them as well as observe their lives. It's what today is often called mentoring. Where someone takes someone else under their guidance or you intentionally come alongside someone else who's mature in their faith and you watch how they do life and you learn how to live out what you've learned.

That leads into a point that I've emphasized in the past but is worth repeating. Paul is taking our doctrine, what we learn in Bible study or from a sermon or the study of God's Word and putting it out into the streets as it's applied and lived out in each our lives. The goal of a Bible study or listening to a sermon is never merely intellectual knowledge. The goal should always be a transformed life as a result of what you've learned. And that's what Paul is emphasizing here. I especially appreciate how Paul puts this in the very last verse of our passage.

Titus 2:10b(NIV) ...*show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.*

In the way you live your life you have the privilege and responsibility to make the gospel of Jesus Christ attractive. But if you come across as condescending and judgmental to others then the gospel doesn't look attractive. Jesus did an amazing job doing this. People were attracted to him as if he was a magnet for God. They closely watched his life and they were intrigued and liked what they saw and heard and were drawn to him and then that gave Jesus an opportunity to tell them about the love of God. That principle ought to be the same in our lives as well and some of you are doing an excellent job doing that.

Please follow along as I read our text this morning – **Titus 2:1-10**

Did you catch the mentoring system Paul is setting up here? Older men take seriously living out the transformed life that the Holy Spirit is constantly trying to produce within us and then these older men take a younger man under their wing and teach them, as they do life together, how to live out their walk with the Lord.

Likewise, older women live a life that attracts younger women to be curious about the transforming power of the Gospel message and then these older women mentor younger women in this walk.

And then lastly, Paul instructs the slaves on how they should behave. The application for us would be for employees (although some of you feel like slaves in your job). And how to act as an employee that would make the gospel message attractive to other employees and to your boss as well. We're not talking about trying to earn brownie points with your boss but rather to be a witness to them with the hopes that they would eventually come to know and accept Jesus Christ as their own Lord and Savior.

This same principle is talked about in Matthew 5:16 and 1 Peter 2:12. In both of these passages, the end result of them observing your life day after day is that they glorify God. The only reason they would be glorifying God is if they've accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. By the way you've lived your life it's created a curiosity for Christ and then that curiosity ended up bringing them down a path which led them to a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Let me ask you – who modeled Christ's love to you that has caused you to go deeper?

Who has modeled a walk with Christ in such a way that it created a far greater curiosity for who Christ is and led you to go deeper?

How has that modeling transformed your life?

Rufus Jones, an influential Quaker leader often talked about how he saw the love of God through his mother on a day that he'd let her down.

One day, when he was 12 or 13 his mother went to town, leaving him behind on the farm with some chores. He fully intended to do the work, but instead he played ball with his buddies. When he saw his mother's car pull into the driveway that evening, his heart sank. He knew he was in for one of the worst whippings of his life. His mother parked the car and came into the house. She looked him straight in the eye and took him upstairs into the bedroom, knelt down beside him, wrapped him in her arms, and, with tears streaming down her face, prayed one phrase over and over; "Lord, make a man out of him. Lord, make a man out of

him.” Whenever Rufus Jones would tell that story his voice would grow quiet, and his eyes would tear up, as he remembered that special feeling of “standing in the weeping arms of love.”

That’s a mother who took her knowledge of God, her doctrine, and lived it out and made the gospel of Jesus Christ attractive.

Who are you intentionally trying to model Jesus to? They should be on your daily prayer list. Pray that God would take the seed of your life and water it and cause it to grow in to full blown relationship with Christ among those you live with, work for or count as friends.

Also, do you have someone in your life that is serving as a mentor? Someone that you look up to who’s living the kind of Christian walk that’s described here. And **who are you intentionally trying to mentor in their walk with the Lord?**

Titus 2:1-10 sermon outline

What form of “teaching” is Paul talking about here?
How often is this form of teaching supposed to happen?

What does it mean to teach what is *appropriate to sound doctrine*?
(especially in contrast to the “*unfitness*” of the false teachers)

What should be the ultimate goal of any Bible study?
What’s the end goal of living the kind of lives described here?

Who are you currently praying for (or ought to be praying for) that they come to know Jesus Christ?

Characteristics of groups of people:

Older men:

- **Temperate:** not controlled by anything other than the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)
- **Worthy of respect:** dignified, others look up to you.
- **Self-controlled:** to act with a saved mind, disciplined
- **Sound in faith:** not constantly wavering
- **Sound in love:** generous in their love for God and others
- **Sound in endurance:** means to “*abide under*” someone or something. We abide in tough times knowing that God is in charge of the storm.

Younger men:

- **Self-controlled:** one of the same qualities the older men are to have. (see Proverbs 25:28)

Older women:

- **Reverent:** means to be like a priestess in that they have an aura that they’ve been in God’s presence (like Anna in Luke 2:27).

Not a slanderer: the Greek word is *diabolos* from which is translated “the devil”. Satan is the supreme slanderer (see Revelation 12:10) (see also Proverbs 16:28). A slanderer is someone who intentionally tries to destroy someone’s reputation. A good test question would be: Do people think better or worse about the person you were just talking about?

- Remember: great minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events but small minds discuss people.
- **Not addicted to much wine:** controlled by the Spirit not wine or other substances (opiates, pornography etc.)
- **Teach what is good**

Younger Women:

- **Love their husbands:** much more than just two individuals living in a house together while pursuing their careers.
- **Love their children:** For those of you who have children, do they see Christ’s love flowing from you?
- **Self-controlled:** Christians have self-control by letting the Holy Spirit control their lives rather than doing it.
- **Pure:** not contaminated by surroundings: To intentionally guard your heart and mind from anything that would go against God’s principles.
- **To be busy at home:** in that culture a wife and mother wouldn’t usually have a career outside of the home. And yet, while those circumstances have changed today, she still has a tremendous opportunity to display God’s goodness, hospitality and love in the interactions in her home.
- **Be kind:** (see 1 Timothy 5:10 and 1 Thessalonians 5:15) If you’re struggling with being kind to someone meditate on God’s kindness to you (Romans 2:4)

- **Be subject to their husbands:** it literally means to arrange or to line up under. A woman is to support and encourage her husband. Similarly, elsewhere (Ephesians 5:21) the husband is instructed to submit to his wife as well. It's the idea of mutual and voluntary servant hood as modeled by Jesus when he washed the disciples feet.

Slaves (or employees):

- **Be subject to your employers in everything:** It doesn't imply inferiority but rather function. Your job is to do what they tell you (as long as it doesn't violate God's principles).
- **Try to please them:** (see Ephesians 6:6)
- **Don't talk back to them:** This would include not bad mouthing them behind their backs.
- **Don't steal from them:** you steal by taking things, either possessions or by not working when you're supposed to be.

Show them that you can be fully trusted: (1 Corinthians 4:2)

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