

Abounding Grace Christian Church

The Epistle of Paul to Titus – Part 4

I. Exposition of Chapter Two.

A. **Verses 1-2** - **“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;”**

1. **“But as for you,..”** – Just previous to this, Paul speaks about the attitudes and things false teachers had been speaking. They were **“insubordinate”, “idle talkers”** and **“deceivers” (1:10)**. They were one’s who denied God by their actions, and were **“abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.” (1:16)**. Now Paul is telling Timothy how to combat against such actions and words.
2. **“...speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine...”** – The word **“proper”** means; **“to be fitting or right.”**¹ The word **“sound”** means; **“the state of being healthy, well”**² and the word **“doctrine”** means; **“teaching”** or, **“instruction.”** The Nelson’s Study Bible states:

“Paul views sound doctrine as the root that produces the fruit of sound practice (good works), such as faith, love, and patience (v. 2), as well as sound speech (v. 8). Right thinking is the raw material for right actions (see Ps. 119:11; Prov. 23:7; Rom. 12:2; James 1:13–15). Our actions will naturally reveal the direction of our thoughts.”³

3. **“...that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience;”**
 - a. **“...older men...”** – According to Dr. Bob Utley, in this culture it would refer to men over 60.⁴ This is related to the word translated **“elder(s)”** in both **Titus 1:5** and **I Timothy 5:1**. In the New Testament, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish whether the author is speaking of the office of elder or simply those who are older in age and mature. In this context, however, it seems most likely that he referring to older man who have a certain level of maturity.
 - b. **“...sober...”** means; **“to be restrained, pertaining to behaving in a sober, restrained manner... may be idiomatically rendered as ‘one who holds himself in’ or ‘one who always has a halter on himself.’”**⁵
 - c. **“...reverent”** means; **“pertaining to appropriate, befitting behavior and implying dignity and respect”**⁶
 - d. **“...temperate...”** means; **“to behave in a sensible manner; pertaining to being sensible and moderate in one’s behavior”**⁷
 - e. **“...sound in faith...”** – **“Sound”** means; **‘right, accurate; to be correct in one’s views’**⁸. In other words, having a right or accurate view of the faith in Jesus Christ.
 - f. **“...in love...”** – The walk of love is the command of the New Testament and is really what the essence of the **“fruit of the Spirit”** is. (cf. **John 13:34-35; Galatians 5:22-25**).
 - g. **“...in patience...”** – **“capacity to continue to bear up under difficult circumstances.”**⁹ Andreas Köstenberger writes:

“Titus is to teach these older men in the church (1) to be ‘temperate’ or clear headed... which is also required of elders and deacons (1Ti 3:2, 11); (2) to be ‘worthy of respect’ ..., which is also required of both male and female deacons (1Ti 3:8, 11); (3) and to be ‘self-controlled’...which is also required of elders (1Ti 3:2; Tit 1:8) and younger men (Tit 2:6), older and younger women (2:4–5; cf. 1Ti 2:9, 15), and all believers (Tit 2:12);... (4) Finally, older men must be ‘sound in faith, in love...and in endurance...; cf. 1Ti 6:11; 2Ti 3:10].’...All of the above-listed traits are marks of spiritual and personal maturity befitting an older person in the faith. Blessed is the church that has among its members older men who are models of dignity, respectability, and wisdom.”¹⁰

¹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 626.

² *Ibid.*, 267.

³ *Nelson Study Bible*, Earl D. Radmacher, Gen.ed. (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1997), 1935.

⁴ Robert James Utley, *Paul’s Fourth Missionary Journey: I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy*, vol. Volume 9, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 106.

⁵ Louw and Nida, 751.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 747.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 752.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 673.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 307.

¹⁰ *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Andreas Köstenberger, (Zondervan Publishing, 2006)

B. Verses 3-5 – “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 own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”

1. “the older women likewise...” – The second group of people the apostle Paul mentions are the older women. These would be women whose children would already be grown.
2. “...that they be reverent in behavior...” – Robert Utley writes; “This is a compound term of *hieros*, that which is holy or sacred...and *prepei*, that which is fitting or proper. Older Christian women are to behave in godly, holy ways”¹¹
3. “...not slanderers...” – “devilish, malicious, slanderous”¹² Thomas Lea writes:

“Those persons who cannot control their tongues in speaking lies, false accusations, and spreading malicious gossip (whether true or untrue) do the work of Satan himself. They cannot be slanderers and serve God.”¹³

4. “...not given to much wine...” – Not being addicted to wine. This was also required of deacons (I Timothy 3:8 and bishops (Titus 1:7).
5. “...teachers of good things...” – In context, this would be referring primarily to teaching the younger women about right doctrine and right living. Andreas Köstenberger writes:

“Older women who avoided slander and wine were sure to stand out in their immoral Cretan surroundings. The restriction of movement often brought about by advanced age makes older people (then as today) particularly susceptible to the temptation to fill their days with pastimes such as drinking or gossiping; this calls for godliness and self-control.”¹⁴

6. “...that they admonish the young women...” – The word “admonish” means; “to instruct someone to behave in a wise and becoming manner”¹⁵
7. “...to love their own husbands...” – This may mean that in the Cretan culture there was a problem with infidelity which was overflowing into the Christian family.
8. “...to love their children...” – It may seem strange that Paul is instructing Titus to have the older women teach the younger to love their children. Perhaps this means they were to be trained as to what loving their children actually looks like. David Campbell writes:

“Young mothers are to be trained ‘to love their ... children’. It is not love to so indulge our children that they always get their own way. Nor is it love to refuse to discipline them. Showing love means making wise decisions about appropriate behaviour and disciplining when there is disobedience. Young mothers may need help in this, and older women should be there to help them.”¹⁶

9. “...to be discreet...” – “of sound mind, sane, in one’s senses; curbing one’s desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate,”¹⁷
10. “...chaste...” – “pertaining to being without moral defect or blemish and hence pure”¹⁸
11. “...homemakers...” – “one who takes care of the home,”¹⁹ Dr. Bob Utley adds:

“The characterization of young women as obedient homemakers was the expected social norm of the first century Mediterranean culture. Does this message apply to married women in all cultures in all times? This is not an easy question! Modern Christians must allow some freedom of interpretation here without dogmatism”²⁰

12. “...good...” – “pertaining to being generous”²¹
13. “...obedient to their own husbands...” – The word “obedient” here means; “to arrange under, to subordinate; to subject, put in subjection”²² Dr. Bob Utley writes:

“The term ‘subject’ or ‘submit’ comes from a military term that referred to a chain of command. However, notice that Paul, in Eph. 5:21, links submission to being filled with the Spirit (cf. 5:18) and makes it a mutual responsibility of all

¹¹ Utley, 107.

¹² James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

¹³ *The New American Commentary*, 1, 2 Timothy, Titus, Vol. 34, Thomas D. Lea & Hayne P. Griffin Jr. (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 1992)

¹⁴ *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Andreas Köstenberger, (Zondervan Publishing, 2006)

¹⁵ Louw and Nida, 413.

¹⁶ David Campbell, *Opening up Titus*, Opening Up Commentary (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2007), 59–60.

¹⁷ Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (New York: Harper & Brothers., 1889), 613.

¹⁸ Louw and Nida, 745.

¹⁹ Ibid., 520.

²⁰ Utley, 107–108.

²¹ Louw and Nida., 569.

²² Thayer, 645.

Christians.²³

14. “...that the word of God may not be blasphemed.” – The word “blasphemed” means; “to speak against someone in such a way as to harm or injure his or her reputation”²⁴ Paul is saying that the way the young women behave is going to have an impact on how people receive the Word of God, particularly the Gospel.

“We have bought into the notion that older people have had their day of usefulness and ought to make way for the young. But the principle here is quite the opposite. With age and experience come wisdom, and many older women have discovered secrets of godly living in relation to their husbands, children and neighbors and in the workplace that could save younger women a lot of unnecessary grief. And when the unavoidable trials come to the young woman, who better to guide her through than an older sister who has been through it before? Somehow the church must see that younger women have contact with older women.”²⁵

C. Verses 6-8 – “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.”

1. “...sober-minded...” – “to be able to reason and think properly and in a sane manner—‘to be in one’s right mind, to be sane, to think straight, to reason correctly’²⁶
2. “...showing yourself to be a pattern of good works...” – Basically meaning that they were to be an example of good works.
3. “...in doctrine showing integrity...” – “the quality of integrity as an expression of moral soundness”²⁷
4. “...reverence...” – The older men were commanded to be the same (2:2). “behavior which is befitting, implying a measure of dignity leading to respect”²⁸
5. “...incorruptibility...” –
6. “...sound speech that cannot be condemned...” - “sound” This is the same term used in both verse 1 and 2 which means “healthy” (in contrast to the false teachers). The word “condemned” means;
“above criticism, beyond reproach.”²⁹
7. “...that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.”

“And let your instruction be sound *and* fit *and* wise *and* wholesome, vigorous *and* irrefutable *and* above censure, so that the opponent may be put to shame, finding nothing discrediting *or* evil to say about us.”

Titus 2:8 – Amplified Bible

²³ Utley, 108.

²⁴ Louw and Nida, 433.

²⁵ Philip H. Towner, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006)

²⁶ Louw and Nida, 351.

²⁷ Ibid., 746.

²⁸ Ibid., 746.

²⁹ Ibid., 435.