

The Books of Titus, Philemon, and Jude

Lesson 3: Sound Doctrine for Every Age and Station -- Titus 2:1-10

Think of a household where everyone knows their part and plays it well. The grandparents carry a quiet dignity that steadies the whole family. The parents pour themselves into the next generation. The young find mentors who have walked the road ahead of them. Even the work gets done with a kind of joy, because everyone understands that their ordinary tasks somehow matter. There is a beauty to a home like that, an order that is not stiff but life-giving. In Titus 2, Paul paints a picture of the church as exactly that kind of household, where sound doctrine works its way into every age and station until the whole family adorns the gospel.

Paul begins with a simple charge to Titus: “But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine” (v. 1). That little word “but” sets him against the empty talkers of chapter one. Over against teaching that puffs people up and tears homes apart, Titus is to teach the kind of truth that produces healthy, well-ordered lives. And then Paul gets wonderfully specific. He does not leave “sound doctrine” hanging in the air as a slogan. He spells out what it looks like for older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and even servants in the workplace.

What is striking is how ordinary it all is. Paul does not call these believers to spectacular feats. He calls older men to be sober and sound in faith, older women to teach the younger by example, younger women to love their families, younger men to be self-controlled, and workers to be trustworthy and honest. This is the unglamorous, daily stuff of a life well lived. And yet Paul says these ordinary things have a cosmic purpose: that the word of God may not be reviled, and that in everything we may “adorn the doctrine of God our Savior” (vv. 5, 10).

That word “adorn” is the surprise hidden in the passage. It pictures a jewel in a setting that displays its beauty. Your patience at home, your honesty at work, your self-control when no one is watching, all of it is a setting that either displays the gospel’s beauty or dulls it. Paul is telling these Cretan Christians, and us, that there is no such thing as an insignificant Christian life. The way you live your most ordinary day is preaching a sermon about the God you serve. As you read these verses, ask which sermon your life has been preaching.

Group Discussion: Paul gives different instructions to older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and servants, yet all of it serves one goal: that “the word of God may not be reviled” and the gospel may be adorned (vv. 5, 10). Why do you think God designed the church to grow through these everyday relationships between generations and stations, rather than only through programs or preaching? Where have you seen this kind of person-to-person discipleship at work?

Personal Reflection: Paul says our ordinary conduct can either cause God’s word to be reviled or beautifully “adorn” it (vv. 5, 10). Think honestly about the people who watch your life most closely, at home, at work, among neighbors. What sermon about God has your life been

preaching to them lately, and what is one way you could let it adorn the gospel more clearly this week?

Read Titus 2:1–10

Study Questions

1. Paul tells Titus, “teach what accords with sound doctrine” (v. 1), and then describes ordinary, godly living rather than abstract ideas. What does this reveal about the nature of “sound doctrine,” and why does Paul refuse to separate right belief from a rightly ordered life?
2. Paul calls older men to be “sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness” (v. 2). Whatever your age, which of these qualities do you most want to be true of you as you grow older, and what choices today are quietly shaping the kind of older person you will become?
3. Paul says older women are to be “reverent in behavior” and to “teach what is good,” so that they may train the younger women (vv. 3–5). What does this passage reveal about God’s design for older saints to disciple the next generation, and why is this kind of example-based teaching so powerful?
4. Paul envisions older believers actively pouring into younger ones. Who has played that role for you, and whom might God be calling you to invest in now? Name one specific younger or less mature believer you could intentionally encourage or mentor in this season.
5. Paul instructs younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, “that the word of God may not be reviled” (vv. 4–5). How does this passage present God’s design for the home and the distinct, honorable roles within it, and how is this rooted in love rather than mere duty?
6. Paul repeatedly calls for “self-control” across every group in this passage (vv. 2, 5, 6). Where in your own life is self-control most lacking right now, your tongue, your appetites, your reactions, your screens? What would it look like to surrender that specific area to the Spirit’s control this week?
7. Paul tells Titus to urge the younger men “to be self-controlled,” and then adds that Titus himself must be “a model of good works” with “integrity” and “sound speech that cannot be condemned” (vv. 6–8). Why does Paul place such weight on the teacher’s own example, and what does this say about how Christian truth is meant to be passed on?
8. Paul tells Titus to show himself “a model of good works” so that opponents will be “put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us” (vv. 7–8). Where is your example being watched, perhaps by children, coworkers, or skeptical friends? What is one area where your example could give an opponent of the faith less to criticize?
9. Paul instructs servants (workers under authority) to be submissive, well-pleasing, honest, and trustworthy, so that “they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior” (vv. 9–10). How does the gospel transform even our work and our relationships with those in authority, and what does it mean that ordinary faithfulness can make the gospel attractive?

10. Look back across these verses. Paul has shown how sound doctrine reaches into every age, every relationship, and every workplace, turning ordinary faithfulness into a display of the gospel's beauty. Name one specific way you sense Jesus forming you through this passage. What is the single truth from Titus 2:1–10 that you most need to carry into this coming week?

Now or Later

Reflect on these passages: 1 Timothy 5:1–2, treating older and younger believers as family; Ephesians 5:22–6:9, ordered, Christ-centered relationships in the home and workplace; Colossians 3:17–24, doing all things, including work, as for the Lord; 1 Peter 2:11–12, keeping our conduct honorable so others glorify God; Matthew 5:14–16, letting our good works shine so people glorify our Father.