

Message #6

Titus 2:1, 6-9, 15

When we were in Florida, we were in a discussion with a couple who had gone to church on Super bowl Sunday, who were very impressed with what the minister did. The minister loved football. In fact, he told the congregation that he would rather be a football coach than a minister. So in the service he had the entire congregation get down into a football stance and then pop up and yell. He had them do this multiple times and most in the congregation thought it was great. But what the people thought and what God thought are two different things. What the Scriptures reveal is that God was not pleased with this because it was pathetic and irreverent. Frankly, when that minister gets before Jesus Christ one day, he will wish he was a football coach.

What is the best and most effective and most Biblical way to reach a wild and lost world for Jesus Christ? What is the best way to really make a difference in a world gone spiritually and morally insane?

Titus was wrestling with that on the island of Crete. He was facing about 160 miles of a licentious, tropical environment. There were over 100 cities on the island and Paul had left Titus on that island to do a work for God. If ever there were a man interested in reaching the world with the grace of God, it was the Apostle Paul. After all, in his 30 plus years of ministry, he travelled over 6000 miles to take the grace of God to all kinds of people in all kinds of places.

Paul wrote Titus a letter to help him do a work for God. Paul wanted churches planted in every city on the island. But what is so interesting about this is what he didn't tell Titus to do.

- 1) He didn't tell Titus to come up with a massive door-to-door calling and visitation program.
- 2) He didn't tell Titus to come up with a slick advertising or gimmick campaign.
- 3) He didn't tell Titus to come up with some Friday night beach evangelism blitz.
- 4) He didn't tell Titus to work with businesses in the community and form a social outreach.
- 5) He didn't tell Titus to get some local musicians to form a band to entertain the beach crowd.

What Paul did tell Titus to do was this:

TITUS WAS TO TEACH EVERY BELIEVER THAT HE/SHE IS TO BE A SPECIFIC DEMONSTRATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD REGARDLESS OF AGE, GENDER OR OCCUPATION.

Paul said, Titus, you teach the people that the best way to reach the world is by you living your life in a way that reflects God's grace. In this chapter, Paul will spell out exactly how Titus was to do that in his own life and he also establishes how we are to do that too.

Now there are different groups of people who are to demonstrate God's grace in this chapter. Remember Crete was a wild place and Paul wanted believers to reflect God's grace and in this text, he tells them how to do it. The way we reflect God's grace may not be what one would naturally think. Today, we will look at the first type of person who is to reflect God's grace:

TYPE #1 – The grace of God is to be demonstrated by the minister. **2:1, 6-9**

Now Titus was the key minister and key leader Paul left on the island of Crete and it was important that he demonstrate God's grace in his own life. He was not to just tell people what to do, but he had a responsibility to demonstrate God's grace himself.

In fact, in Greek the pronoun "you" (**2:1**) is emphatic. Paul is specifically singling out Titus and telling him you have a responsibility to demonstrate God's grace in your own life. You cannot just tell other people what to do; you need to do this also. To be a leader you must model the faith.

Paul specifically lists two ways Titus was to demonstrate God's grace:

Way #1 - The minister is to demonstrate God's grace by his speaking. **2:1, 7, 15**

A minister has a responsibility to speak. Like it or not, that is his job. He has the responsibility to preach and teach the truth of God. As one writer said, the minister "must stand in stark contrast to false teachers" (Knut Larson, *Titus*, p. 358). Now the word "speak" when used in this context refers to verbally communicating Biblical instruction. It is the job of the minister to speak. Paul specifically brings out four speaking responsibilities:

(Speaking Responsibility #1) - The minister is to speak sound doctrine. **2:1**

Paul starts right here. A minister has a responsibility to speak, preach and teach sound doctrine. That adjective "sound" refers to doctrine that is true and healthy as opposed to doctrine that is not true and will make one spiritually sick. This word has to do with healthy teaching that will leave people in good health, spiritually speaking (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 454).

Paul believed that a critical key to establishing a church that would make a difference in a wild and bizarre and sinful world was teaching sound doctrine to it. This certainly is not your average marketing strategy today. Paul believed a key to straightening out the world was a strong minister who taught the truth of God.

It is the responsibility of the minister to carefully teach the Word of God and sound doctrine. Paul always places a very high priority on teaching (I Tim. 1:3; 4:11, 16; II Tim. 2:15; 4:1-2). In the mind of Paul, teaching was a primary responsibility of a minister. It is actually a way that he demonstrates God's grace. It is the way God changes people and it is the way God transforms places.

One of the critical matters pertaining to the early church was the matter of "sound doctrine" as it pertained to the grace of God. The island of Crete featured all kinds of religions that had their works systems. So teaching what was sound and true in regard to grace would be revolutionary. Now the grace doctrinal system Titus was to teach was a total "not works" system (Titus 3:5-7).

One would think that since Crete was such a wild place, they would need to hear a works message. Paul told Titus, you teach what is sound and you teach grace.

This idea of teaching is so interesting because this is so foreign. Here Titus was on an island and Paul didn't say your first job is to become a buddy of the lost world or come up some novel idea to interest and entertain the world. **Paul says your first responsibility as a minister is to speak and teach that which is sound.**

One big problem that exists in our day is that ministers are being trained who do not know sound doctrine. This is why, in 1924, Lewis Sperry Chafer founded Dallas Theological Seminary. Ministers were telling him we don't know the Scriptures. So Dr. Chafer started a school with the sole purpose of teaching men the books of the Bible and the Doctrines of the faith. It is the job of a minister to teach sound doctrine.

(Speaking Responsibility#2) - The minister is to speak exhortation. 2:6, 9, 15a

The Greek word translated "urge" is the idea of coming along side of people and challenging them or persuading them to move in the right ways of God. Titus had a job to urge people to walk in the true ways of God. A minister must have an "urging" ministry.

It is clear that a primary responsibility of a minister is to verbally communicate the truth of God. There will be times when that truth will step on toes. There will be times the truth will build one up. At times this can be a positive exhortation. At times it can be a serious reproof or rebuke.

(Speaking Responsibility #3) - The minister is to speak reproof. 2:15b

This word "reprove" is strong. It is a word that means you rebuke someone with the idea of bringing him under conviction (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 144). A minister does have the responsibility to take the Word of God and show people that they are out of line. He is not just to pat people on the back and tell them God loves them just the way they are. This is a serious negative confrontation that is strong that is designed to bring one under conviction.

(Speaking Responsibility #4) - The minister is to speak authoritatively. 2:15c

When you listen to some religious leaders speak, you don't know what they believe and at times you don't even know what they are talking about. Some ministers are so wishy-washy they don't dare stand for anything or stand against anything.

A minister has a responsibility to speak. The minister is to authoritatively speak. This word is a strong word which means to speak in a very commanding way (*Ibid.*, p. 175).

The job of the minister is to speak in a way that is authoritative and commanding. There ought to be authority in the ring of the voice of one who is preaching.

Way #2 - The minister is to demonstrate God's grace by his modeling. **2:7-8**

A minister who will make a difference has the responsibility to model his faith in his life. He has the responsibility to back up his doctrine by his lifestyle. He is to be an example of the grace of God. There are some traits that are to characterize a leader who will make a difference in a wild world:

(Trait #1) - The minister is to show himself to be an example. **2:7a**

The participle "show yourself" is a middle voice participle, which means the minister has the responsibility in and of himself to do this. The Greek words mean that the minister is to present evidence to others that he himself is an example or type of one who has experienced the grace of God. He was to lead the way in his own behavior and ministry.

An effective minister who will influence others has no problems showing himself to be an example of one who has experienced God's grace. He does not pretend to be some holier than thou pope. An effective minister can relate to sinners and show them how God's grace can transform their lives.

(Trait #2) - The minister is to show himself to be an example of good deeds. **2:7b**

There are about three different adjectives in Greek translated "good." The one used here primarily has to do with a goodness that is externally manifested (*Ibid.*, p. 2, 228-229). The minister is to be one who is a good person externally. He is to demonstrate an observable and noticeable commitment to God and His Word. He is to be one who lets his light shine as an example of one who loves the Lord and loves the Word.

Now the specific qualifying area where the good is to be evidenced or manifested is in "works." That word specifically has to do with work in the sense of employment (*Ibid.*, p. 178). So a minister is to manifest that he is good worker at what he does. He has the responsibility to manifest externally that his work is at a high level.

Now keep in mind that Titus is on the island of Crete where many people don't want to work and, in fact, don't work. One way Titus could be an example was by taking his work seriously. Specifically, we may contextually conclude this must show his work at a high level and good level in his ability to handle the Word of God in a variety of contexts, including his own life.

When we do our work well, it is a testimony to others. When you take your work seriously and do your best at it, people will see it.

(Trait #3) - The minister is to show himself to be an example by purity in doctrine. **2:7c**

Not only is the minister's teaching and doctrine to be sound, it is also to be pure. That word "pure" means the teaching and doctrine is to be uncorrupt (*Ibid.*, p. 71).

Doctrine must remain free from any distortions. It must be free from human men's traditions and human opinions and views. This is a problem with many denominations. Their doctrine is not pure to the Word.

I understand this to mean that the teaching is to be exegetical (take out of text what is actually there), not eisegetical (read into a text what is not there) and it is to be doctrine that is sound and pure.

False teachers corrupt the Scriptures. False churches are not pure in doctrine. They use bits and pieces of verses here and there to try and sway an audience. Titus was not to be like that. He was to accurately and honestly handle the Word of God.

A minister is to accurately handle the Word of God. He is not to corrupt any text or manipulate a text for some corrupt reason.

When we were on vacation, a minister was asked about what he thought about deportation of alien criminals. The man asking the question did so in view of the fact that a Catholic priest said it was wrong and cited Romans 12:17 that says, "never pay back evil for evil to anyone." Fortunately the minister was well-grounded in the Word of God and he said that is true as an individual we should not pay back evil for evil, but if you keep reading the text you come to Romans 13 that says government has the responsibility to protect the citizens and punish those who do evil (Rom. 13:3-4). There was a minister who knew doctrine and knew the book of Romans and demonstrated a great purity in doctrine. He did not manipulate Scriptures; he accurately told what was there.

(Trait #4) - The minister is to show himself to be an example by being dignified. **2:7d**

This word dignified is one that means a minister is to be reverent. He is to be very serious and grave when it comes to the things of God (*Ibid.*, p. 404). There should be a reverent dignity to the minister and the ministry. The church should be a reverent place in an irreverent world.

Now when you are in a world that is given to lying, licentiousness, laziness and lawlessness, the church is to be a place that is dignified. People should know that is a place that is a very reverent place.

There should be a dignity to the pulpit. There should be a seriousness about handling the Word of God. There should be a dignity to the minister.

(Trait #5) - The minister is to show himself to be an example by using sound speech. **2:8**

This has to do with the words a minister uses. A minister has a responsibility to use whole, sound, healthy words. The words are to be "beyond reproach," which means he is not to use words that are open to rebuke, words that are irreprehensible (*Ibid.*, p. 16). A leader should not use bad language or corrupt language.

A minister should be dignified in his speech and not use language that is bad. He should never use language to sway an audience in an irresponsible or unbiblical way. Some ministers think it is cute and shocking to use curse words in the pulpit. It is an offense to God.

The reason for it is so that opponents will be put to shame. That word “shame” is significant because what this means is that if a minister used his speech to communicate what is true and sound and right, there will come a day when all those who opposed him will be put to shame. When the minister leaves there is nothing bad the people can say about him and his teaching and his words.

That shame may come in this life, but if not, certainly in the next life.

When people come to church they should see a demonstration of the grace of God in the people of God. They should say they don't act like they used to. They don't talk like they used to. They don't pursue what they used to.

These are people who are serious about Jesus Christ and the Word of God. There is a dignity to them and a reverence to them.

That is what God wants in our lives and in the life of this church.