

“Duties for Older Women”
Titus 2:3
(Preached at Trinity, March 12, 2023)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. After charging Titus to ordain qualified elders he spent the remainder of **Chapter 1** describing the false teachers that were plaguing the churches throughout Crete.
Titus 1:10 NAU - "For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers"
Titus 1:16 NAU - "They profess to know God, but by *their* deeds they deny *Him*, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed."
2. In other words, the greatest defense against false doctrine is the power of sound doctrine. Paul instructed Titus to ordain elders in every church in every city that they might preach and teach sound doctrine and refute those who contradict.
3. As we enter chapter 2 Paul speaks to Titus personally and particularly.
Titus 2:1 NAU - "But as for you,"
The work of Titus delivered a great contrast to the false teachers. Instead of the false doctrine that subverted whole families, Titus was to deliver sound doctrine. This is a universal charge to the church. Titus had to preach things that were consistent with sound doctrine.
 - A. Titus had to first focus his attention upon his own life and his own doctrine. No man can lead others who does not first lead himself. Titus' life and doctrine was to be such as others could follow.
Titus 2:7 NAU - "in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified,"
 - B. But sound doctrine was not the focus of Titus and the other elders alone. Sound doctrine is church business. This is Christian business. It involves the entire Christian community. Sound doctrine leads to Godliness. Sound doctrine must always be translated into sound behavior. Doctrine and practice must never be separated. True doctrine will always instruct a person unto godliness.
4. Paul breaks it down among the various groups in the church.
Older men, older women, younger women, younger men, bondservants
Last week we looked at **Verse 2**—the duty of older Christian men. Paul addresses men as distinct from women.
Titus 2:2 NAU - "Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance."
5. In **Verse 3-5** Paul gives God's standard for women. These are the virtues that God sees as lovely in a woman. They are radical by today's standard. Few believe these things today. But they are God's standard, and it is a high standard. These virtues should be the goal of every Christian woman.
6. Paul begins by directing our attention upon the older women in the church.
Titus 2:3 NAU - "Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good"

I. “Likewise”

A. Women are different and distinct from men, yet they are charged with the same high duties as the men. Paul uses the feminine form of the word used to designate “older men.”

"Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior"

1. Although men and women are different in function, there is no difference regarding our relationship with Christ and His charge upon us to live in holiness.

Galatians 3:27-28 NAU - "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

2. The word for “reverent” (ἱεροπρεπής) is from two Greek words: πρεπής is the same word translated “fitting” in **Verse 1** ἱερός refers to something sacred.

In other words, their lives should be fitting or consistent with that which is sacred or holy.

3. Christians, both men and women, are charged with behavior consistent with holiness.

KJV - "behaviour as becometh holiness"

What is holiness?

The Greek word is ἅγιος which is used 233 times. It is the word used to describe the “Holy Spirit.” It is also the word translated “saint.”

The Hebrew word is קָדַשׁ It means apartness, separateness

a. God has set his people apart for His own possession. For His own use – they are consecrated

b. God set Israel apart from the defilement of the pagan nations. This principle still holds today.

2 Corinthians 6:16-18 NAU - "Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

¹⁷ "Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord. "And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you. ¹⁸ "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty."

c. In terms of our relationship with God, He expects His people to be of one mind with Him – loving what He loves, hating what He hates – measuring everything by His standard.

B. Paul lists some characteristics of holiness in **Verse 2**

"temperate, dignified, sensible"

1. The godly woman also (likewise) takes life seriously.

She is “reverent in behavior”

2. She’s aware of the impact her life is having upon others.

- II. "Not malicious gossips" - literally this means not slanderers.
- A. The tongue is the hardest and slowest to change in the Christian life
1. James described the difficulty
James 3:4-8 NAU - "Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. ⁵ So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! ⁶ And the tongue is a fire, the *very* world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of *our* life, and is set on fire by hell. ⁷ For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. ⁸ But no one can tame the tongue; *it is* a restless evil *and* full of deadly poison."
 2. Men and women have different besetting sins
 - a. For men it is the eye – men have to guard their hearts against lust. They have to maintain strict control over their eyes. Job made a declaration that is wise for every man.
Job 31:1 NAU - "I have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?"
 - b. For women it's the matter of the tongue. They have to guard what they say and to whom they say it.
 3. Jesus described the heart as a great storehouse of words.
Matthew 15:18-19 NAU - "But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. ¹⁹ "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders."
 - a. Godly men and women learn how to keep it under lock and key.
 - b. We must be able to guard our words. To speak only those words that are edifying.
Ephesians 4:29 NAU - "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a *word* as is good for edification according to the need of *the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear."
 The word for "proceed" is ἐκπορεύομαι- to flow forth like a river It's like a dam bursting. The valve must be carefully controlled.
 - c. "but only such a *word* as is good for edification according to the need of *the moment*"
 In other words, it is necessary for us to speak the right thing at the right time and learn the virtue of remaining quiet.
- B. Paul says godly older woman should have gained mastery over their tongue. This is particularly important regarding the spread malicious gossip
Titus 2:3 NAU - "Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips"
1. As James said, the tongue is full of poison - a dangerous weapon
 2. Gossip is of the devil - in fact it takes his name - the word translated "malicious gossips" here is διάβολος - the same word elsewhere translated "devil" We could say that a godly woman is not a devil.

3. She should neither speak gossip nor receive it. She is not a slanderer. This is godly behavior.
4. Compare this to those whom God considers ungodly - **1 Tim. 5:11-15**
1 Timothy 5:13 NAU - "At the same time they also learn *to be* idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper *to mention*."

III. "Not given to much wine" - the word here means "enslaved"

- A. Alcoholism destroys both the body and the mind
but this verse points beyond just being addicted to strong drink
- B. A godly woman is not enslaved by bad habits – she is self-controlled
The world's standard is to try and fulfil every desire that enters the mind
God's standard is to deny ourselves and deny our lusts that we might live holy lives.
1 Corinthians 6:12 NAU - "All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything."

IV. She is well fed from the Word so that she is able to teach others. Like Titus and the older men, the older woman is careful to speak the things that are fitting for sound doctrine.

- A. She teaches according to God's standard.
 1. This is the context of this entire section of Scripture. Paul is stressing the importance of sound doctrine.
 - a. In **Chapter 1** Paul pressed the importance upon the choosing of elders.
Titus 1:9 NAU - "holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict."
 - b. Paul uses a word that literally refers to good health.
False teachers were teaching words that damaged and did not promote spiritual health. Paul stated they needed to be corrected.
Titus 1:13 NAU - "For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith,"
 - c. **Chapter 2** opens with an emphasis on these sound words.
Titus 2:1 NAU - "But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine."
 - d. In **Verse 2** Paul stressed that the older Christian men, mature men would be sound in faith.
 2. Now Paul is placing the same quality upon the older women. They too are sound in the faith. This is expressed in how she interacts with others, particularly with the younger women. She is a teacher of "good things."
 3. She puts a high focus on being a teacher and example to the younger women. All of us should feel a burden for the next generation.
 4. Although the official leadership in a church is confined to men, godly woman who serves with meekness demands the respect and honor of both men and women.

5. The godly woman deserves the praise of all
Proverbs 31:30 – “Favour *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain: *but* a woman *that* feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.”

Conclusion:

1. We must never diminish the treasure of the older women in our church. They must never diminish their influence. Their life and example is of great importance.
2. Paul describes her instruction to the younger women as "good things." They are words that build and edify. They are words that put God's standards on display. God's people, older men, older women, younger women, younger men should all put the holiness of God on display in this world.