

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

Titus 2:1-3 . 4/10/16 © 2016

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

INTRODUCTION

1. There is a ministry for everyone in the church.
2. If you are a born again follower of Jesus Christ, then you have a ministry because you have the Holy Spirit who gifts you for ministry.
3. But unfortunately for some, they think when they reach a certain age there's nothing left.
4. In fact, in today's modern church, many are pushed aside.
5. Instead of learning from the more matured saints they are treated as castaways.
6. When I planted a church we had almost all young people.
7. From the 12 years of pasturing then, I've learned that the church needs older men and women.
8. Young people are fickle and lack commitment and stability.
9. Many of you have been in this church for a long time and have stuck it out through the hard times and disappointments.
10. I know Jim Wright has been here about 46 years!
11. Paul has something to say to older men and women in Titus chapter 2 that I want us to hear this morning.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

Titus 2:1-3 . 4/10/16 © 2016

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

12. In fact as we look at “The Ministry of Older Men and Women,” I want us to see first the kind of people they are to be—their character.
13. Please take God’s Word and turn to the book of Titus.
14. Last week we looked at verse 1 where we learned that Titus is to speak in his everyday conversation things that are healthy.
15. We saw that contrasted with the false teachers at Crete who taught things that were diseased and unhealthy.
16. Now in verses 2-10, Paul tells Titus what should be the character of a healthy church.
17. Having completed the subject of pastors in chapter one, Paul now directs his attention to the congregation which he identifies as “older men” (v.2), “older women” (v.3), “young women” (v.4), “young men” (v.6), and “bondslaves” (v.9).
18. This morning we are looking at the first two groups: older men and older women.
19. Let’s look first at *the older* men in verse 2.

I. The Older Men (v.2)

Paul says in verse 2, (NKJV) ² that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience.

The words “older men” (*presbutēs* (πρεσβυτης)) refers to men who are “old in years”¹ not those who are elders in the church.

Paul uses the Greek word presbutes which is similar to the one used translated “elder” (presbuteros).

Paul used the term presbutes for himself in Philemon 9 when he was over 60 years of age. It refers to those of advanced age.²

William Hendriksen says, “The greybeards should have the same moral characteristics as the elders and the deacons.”³

Paul gives 4 characteristics for “older men” in the church.

¹Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, c1984). Tit 2:2.

²John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997, c1997). Tit 2:2.

³William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary : Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953-2001). 363.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

Titus 2:1-3 . 4/10/16 © 2016

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He says first...

A. They Are to Be Discerning in Conduct (v.2a)

The word translated “sober” (NKJV) “temperate” (NASB) (nephaleos) comes from nepho, which means “to abstain from wine” (Strong) or “to be free from the influence of intoxicants” (Vine).

D. Edmond Hiebert says “the word has a wider connotation. They are to be sober and fully rational, in possession of the full use of all of their faculties, in thought, word, and action.”

A sober person is one who has “restraint in indulging desires” (Rienecker). He “avoids extravagance and over indulgence” (MacArthur).

So this word “describes an attitude of mind that leads to prudence and self-control in life. It is the opposite of frivolity and carelessness that are based on ignorance.”⁴

The **sober** older man is able to discern more clearly which things are of the greatest importance and value. He uses his time, his money, and his energy more carefully and selectively than when he was younger and less mature. His priorities are in the right order, and he is satisfied with fewer and simpler things.⁵

⁴Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996, c1989). Tit 2:1.

⁵John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 73.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

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1. Because they are of an advanced age doesn't mean they are not to have discernment in their personal life.
2. You are to continue in the things of God regardless of age.

Moses was 80 years old when God called him to lead Israel out of bondage in Egypt and to the land of promise. But, like his poor speaking ability (Ex. 4:10–12), advanced age did not excuse him from the Lord's work.

At the age of 83—after having traveled some 250,000 miles on horseback, preached more than 40,000 sermons, and produced some 200 books and pamphlets—John Wesley regretted that he was unable to read and write for more than 15 hours a day without his eyes becoming too tired to work. After his 86th birthday, he admitted to an increasing tendency to lie in bed until 5:30 in the morning!⁶

- a) Paul says in Romans 12:3 (NASB) For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have ***sound judgment***, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

⁶John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 71.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

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- b) Peter tells his readers in 1 Peter 1:13-16 (NASB) ¹³Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep ***sober in spirit***, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, ¹⁵ but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; ¹⁶ because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."
- c) He says in 1 Peter 4:7 (NASB) The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and ***sober spirit*** for the purpose of prayer.
- d) He also says in 1 Peter 5:8 (NASB) Be of ***sober spirit***, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

The next word Paul uses to describe “older men” is the word “reverent” (NKJV) “dignified” (NASB).

He says...

B. They Are to Be Reverent in Character (v.2b)

The word “referent” (semnos) is translated “dignified” in the NASB. It “points to serious of purpose and to self-respect in conduct” (Moule).

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

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Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

In the Greek world it was used “as an attribute of the gods or divine things. It meant ‘lofty.’ When it was used of objects it meant ‘majestic,’ ‘splendid,’ ‘magnificent’” (Kittel) or of things *worthy, honorable, noble* (PH 4.8).⁷

1. He is serious about the things of God

a) This word is also used of a deacon in 1 Timothy 3:8 (NASB) Deacons likewise *must be* men of ***dignity***, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain.

b) It is also used of a deaconess in 1 Timothy 3:11 (NASB) Women *must* likewise ***be dignified***, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.

2. He has his mind fixed on what is good

Philippians 4:8 (NASB) Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is ***honorable***, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

⁷Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, Baker's Greek New Testament library (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000). 347.

“Temperate, dignified.” Now he uses the word “temperate” and says...

C. They Are to Be Self-Controlled (v.2c)

The word translated “sensible” (sophron) refers to “curbing one’s desires and impulses, self-controlled.”⁸ It “presents the concept of a well-balanced, properly regulated mind; a person discreet and prudent” (Hiebert).

Older men “should have the discernment, discretion, and judgment that comes from walking with God for many years. They control their physical passions and they reject worldly standards and resist worldly attractions.”⁹

They “should be the balance wheels in the congregation, keeping its course steady” (Hiebert).

1. He controls his desires and impulses

- a) Proverbs 25:16 (NASB) Have you found honey? Eat *only* what you need, That you not have it in excess and vomit it.
In otherwords, have self-control. Don’t gorge yourself. Eat only what you need.

⁸Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, c1984). Tit 2:2.

⁹John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 73.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

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Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

- b) Self-control is the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23 (NASB) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, **self-control**; against such things there is no law.

Not only does he control his desires and impulses but...

2. He has discernment and discretion due to his years of walking with God

- a) Genesis 5:22 (NASB) Then **Enoch walked with God three hundred years.**
- b) Genesis 47:8-9 (NASB) ⁸ Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many years have you lived?" ⁹ So Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The years of my sojourning are **one hundred and thirty**; few and unpleasant have been the years of my life, nor have they attained the years that my fathers lived during the days of their sojourning."
- c) Hebrews 11:20-21 (NASB) ²⁰ **By faith** Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come. ²¹ **By faith** Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and **worshiped, leaning** on the top of his staff.

“Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible,” and fourth, “sound in faith.”

That is...

D. They Are to Be Healthy in their Relationship with God
(v.2d-f)

To be “sound in faith” means “they are to be sound in health, without internal weakness, in regard to the trilogy of virtues—‘faith, love, patience’” (Hiebert).

They are to be “sound in faith,” “sound in love,” and “sound in patience.”

We already saw the word “sound” mentioned in verse 1. It is the word *hugiaino* which means to be “healthy” (BAGD).

Kenneth Wuest says, “It is used of those whose Christian teachings are free from any admixture of error. The word here speaks of true and incorrupt doctrine.”¹⁰

Paul says then that “older men” are healthy in three ways:

1. They are healthy in their trust of God

The word “faith” (*pistis*) has the “sense of ‘confidence,’ ‘certainty,’ or ‘trust’” (Kittel). It occurs here with the article referring not to initial

¹⁰Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, c1984). Tit 2:2.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

Titus 2:1-3 . 4/10/16 © 2016

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

trust in Christ for salvation but of the body of truth that comprises the Christian faith.

Older men who have been through 50, 60, 70, or more years of life are to be **sound in faith**, having learned that God indeed can be trusted in every way. They do not question His wisdom or power or love, and they do not lose trust in His goodness and grace or lose confidence in His divine plan and divine wisdom. They do not doubt the truth or sufficiency of His Word or waver in their divinely assured hope that His sovereign plan will be fulfilled.¹¹

Age makes some people callous, bitter, and cynical. Those who are healthy in faith are thankful, optimistic, and good company.¹²

2. They are healthy in their love for others

The love that Paul speaks of here is agape love. It is that “sacrificial love” that Paul speaks of in Romans 5:8 when referring to God sending Christ to die in our place as an expression of the love that He has for the elect.

¹¹John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 74.

¹²William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995). Tit 2:2.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

Titus 2:1-3 . 4/10/16 © 2016

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

It says, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

They are to be healthy in their love toward God, toward His people, and toward those who do not yet know Him. They love by bearing one another’s burdens and thereby fulfilling the law of Christ (Gal.6:2).

They have learned to love when their love is not deserved and to continue loving when it is rejected and even when they suffer because of it. They lovingly forgive and they lovingly serve.

The godly older man believes and practices the truth that we are to “love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God” (1 Jn.4:7).

He knows that “the one who does not love does not know God, for God is love” (v.8) and that he has “passed out of death into life, because [he loves] the brethren” (3:14).

He has come to know and believe “the love which God has for us,” that God is love, and [that] the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him” (4:16).

He is not afraid, because “there is no fear in love; [and] perfect love casts out fear” (v.18).

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

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Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

He knows that he is able to love because the Lord ‘first loved us’ (v.19) and that the marks of our love for God is the keeping of “His commandments,” which “are not burdensome.”

3. They Are Healthy in Their Perseverance in Trials

The word “patience” (hupomone) literally means “an abiding under” (Vine). It comes from the preposition hupo, which means “under,” and meno, “to abide.”

- a) James 1:2-4 (NASB) ² Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.
- b) Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:10 (NASB) Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance.

Older men “are to exhibit the ability to endure hardship, to accept disappointment and failure, to be satisfied despite thwarted personal desires and plans.

They have learned to graciously live with such difficulties as physical weakness, loneliness, and being misunderstood and unappreciated.

They do not lose heart when things do not turn out the way they had hoped and expected, but have the perfect confidence “that God causes all things to work

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

Titus 2:1-3 . 4/10/16 © 2016

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28).¹³

Older men are then to “be strong and robust in their personal faith, tender and mellow, rather than bitter and vindictive, in their love, and characterized by patience” (Hiebert).

Now we come to the second group...

II. The Older Women (v.3)

Paul says in verse 3, “the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good.”

“Older women” is the feminine form of presbutis which refers to “those who no longer had child-rearing responsibilities, typically around age 60 (cf. 1 Tim. 5:3–10).”¹⁴

Genesis 18:11 (NASB) Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing.

According to Genesis 17:17 Sarah was “ninety years old” at this time. This is certainly the exception. Women then and today usually stop having children much earlier.

¹³John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 74.

¹⁴John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997, c1997). Tit 2:3.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

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Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

Paul says older women “likewise” (hosautos), “in the same way” are to be...

A. They Are to Be Holy in Conduct (v.3a)

“Reverent” (hieroprepes). This is a different word than the one used for older men. It means, “holy” (Kittel), “priest-like” (MacArthur), “as is befitting or becoming sacred persons” (Hiebert).

“There is to be about their life that reverential spirit of consecration consistent with the fact of their spiritual priesthood” (Hiebert).

1. This is to be their disposition

Older women are to be godly examples of holiness.

- a) 1 Timothy 2:9-11 (NASB) ⁹ Likewise, *I want* women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, ¹⁰ but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to ***godliness***. ¹¹ A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness.

- b) 1 Peter 3:1-6 (NASB) ¹ In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any *of them* are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, ² as they observe your ***chaste and respectful behavior***. ³ Your

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

Titus 2:1-3 . 4/10/16 © 2016

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; ⁴ but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. ⁵ For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; ⁶ just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

2. This is to be their demeanor

The word “behavior” (*katestema*) means, “demeanor or deportment” (Strong). “It means, primarily, *condition* or *state*...the *state* in which one habitually bears himself — his *deportment* or *demeanour*.”¹⁵

This word “describes a state of mind” (Rienecker).

Paul now mentions two bad influences and says...

B. They Are to Be Free From Bad Influences (v.3b)

The first is...

¹⁵Marvin Richardson Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2002). 4:340.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

Titus 2:1-3 . 4/10/16 © 2016

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1. “Slanderers” (NKJV) “Malicious gossips” (NASB)

This is the Greek word *diabolos*, which means “slanderer, or false accuser” and is used thirty-four times in the New Testament as a title of Satan, whom Jesus describes as “the father of lies” (John 8:44).¹⁶

As it is used in this context it refers to “speaking evil or making accusations against others” (Hiebert).

Peter said in 1 Peter 2:1 this is to be put aside. He says, “Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.”

“Old age is at times intolerant, censorious, even bitter, forgetful especially of the days of youth; but Christ’s aged saints must use their voice for better things than these” (Spence).

The second negative is...

2. “Not “given” (NJKV) “enslaved” (NASB) to much wine”

Douloo is the word “enslaved.” It means “to be held and controlled against one’s will.” (MacArthur).

¹⁶John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 76.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

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Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

Kenneth Wuest says, “The tense speaks here of a confirmed drunkard.”¹⁷

As many of them have done throughout history, older people on Crete sometimes turned to drink as a stimulant and a means of ameliorating (making better) the pains, frustrations, and loneliness of old age.¹⁸

The “wine” (oinos) was “fermented wine”

The last characteristic of “older women” is that they are...

C. They Are to Be Teachers of What is Right (v.3c)

“Teachers of good things” (kalodidaskalos) “does not refer to formal instruction, but rather the advice and encouragement they can give privately, by word and example.”¹⁹

“They are the natural teachers in the home, and they are to teach that which is noble and attractive by precept and example” (Hiebert).

¹⁷Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, c1984). Tit 2:3.

¹⁸John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 76.

¹⁹Fritz Rienecker and Cleon Rogers, *The Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1976, 1980). 653.

The Ministry of Older Men and Women

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Their instruction then “is that which is noble, excellent, and lofty” (MacArthur).

In this context, it includes the **teaching** of **what is** holy and godly. Having taught their own children well, older women now have the responsibility for **teaching** younger women in the church and encouraging them to also be righteous and godly wives and mothers (vv. 4–5).²⁰

1. A godly women is to be preoccupied with teacher her children and then passing it on to younger mothers.
2. She is to be the example to the younger mother of what it means to love your husband and children.
3. She is not to be preoccupied with the pulpit ministry or the place of leadership in the church. She is to be preoccupied with the home.
 - a) 1 Timothy 2:11-15 (NASB) ¹¹ A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. ¹² But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. ¹³ For it was Adam who was first created, *and* then Eve. ¹⁴ And it *was* not Adam *who* was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. ¹⁵ But *women* will be preserved through the bearing of children if they

²⁰John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 77.

continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.

- b) Proverbs 14:1 (NASB) The wise woman ***builds her house***, But the foolish tears it down with her own hands.

CONCLUSION

1. If we are going to impact the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the church must be sound.
2. Every person, regardless of age, must be examples of righteousness to the unbelieving world.
3. When you become advanced in years your life is to be an example of what it means to have a mature faith.
4. We'll consider the remaining two groups next time.
5. If you're here tonight and haven't made a commitment to follow Jesus Christ, I want to encourage you to do so now.
6. Jesus took your sin in His own body and provided a way for you to be forgiven and granted eternal life.
7. I would love to talk to you more about this after the service.
8. Let's pray.