

# Portrait of a Godly Woman

**Text:** Titus 2:3-5

## Introduction:

1. This chapter: The Apostle emphasizes the things that “become sound doctrine”, that is, the life and practice that is to accompany sound doctrine. “Christianity is primarily indeed, a doctrine, but only that it may be in the true sense a life; and the two can never be kept apart from each other in the public teaching of the church without imminent peril to both.” (Fairbairn)
2. The Apostle brings a challenge to each group within the church concerning their Christian duties. At the climax of the passage, we are reminded that godly Christian living as commanded in this passage is all made possible through the grace of God (Vs. 11-14).
3. There is a challenge and encouragement in this passage for every Christian woman:
  - For the older women in the assembly in relation to their behaviour and their ministry to the younger ladies.
  - For the younger women in the assembly in relation to their high calling and ministry in their homes.
  - For prospective brides and mothers that they might know the godly list of ideals they are to aim and prepare for.

## I. THE EXHORTATION TO THE SENIOR LADIES (Vs. 3-4a)

They are exhorted concerning...

### A. Their Character Generally (Vs. 3a)

1. “the aged women” = older believers mentioned first because they are to be examples to the younger believers. They help set the moral tone of the church.
2. “behaviour as becometh holiness” = ‘become’ means “to be becoming, seemly or fit.” It refers to a life that is consistent with their Christian profession. “Healthful doctrine should manifest itself in certain distinctive ways among the older women of the congregation.” (Kent)
3. 1 Tim 2:9-10 *“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (**which becometh women professing godliness**) with good works.”*
4. This is a broad principle that encompasses a woman’s whole manner of life. It includes things like modesty, submission to the husband’s headship in the home etc...

### B. Their Conduct Specifically (Vs. 3b)

1. Their Tongues – “not false accusers”

- a. Means “not slanderers”. Literally, not devils!
  - b. The Greek word is ‘diabolos’ (δίαβολος) which is used 34 times in the N.T. of the devil. Anyone who speaks false accusations among the saints is doing the devil’s work!
  - c. They are to be careful not to fall into the common trap of older ladies in becoming gossips and busybodies.
2. Their Tastes – “not given to much wine”
- a. They are to abstain from intoxicating beverages, and by extension of the principle, other ungodly substances.
  - b. Principle is one of self-control. She has sanctified and dignified tastes.
  - c. Cloud: “Paul was referring to the exceedingly weak wine of those days and not the wine and beer of our day.” The following quotes by Norman Geisler and Robert Stein are insightful:
    - i. Geisler: “Many wine-drinking Christians today mistakenly assume that what the New Testament meant by wine is identical to wine used today. This, however, is false. In fact, today’s wine is by biblical definition strong drink, and hence is forbidden in the Bible (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35). Therefore, Christians ought not to drink wine, beer or other alcoholic beverages for they are actually strong drink and are forbidden in Scripture. Even ancient pagans did not drink what some Christians drink today.”
    - ii. Stein: “...to consume the amount of alcohol that is in two martinis today, by drinking wine containing three parts water to one-part wine (the biblical ratio), a person would have to drink over 22 glasses.”
3. Their Teaching – “teachers of good things”
- a. Older ladies in the church are not to teach men (1 Tim. 2:12; 1 Cor. 14:34-35) but they can teach children (2 Tim. 1:5 & 3:15) and other ladies (Titus 2:3-5).
  - b. Every senior lady is teaching and influencing the younger generation in the church in some way by their life and words. The question to ask is, “What am I passing on to the next generation?”
  - c. She is to teach ‘good’ things. These things are outlined Vs. 4-5. To properly qualify to teach these things, she must first exemplify them herself.
  - d. Note: Context is the local church. This teaching ministry is vital in the local church. Ladies meetings are important!

## II. EXHORTATION TO THE JUNIOR LADIES (Vs. 4b-5)

The young ladies in the assembly are to be exhorted principally by the elderly women in the assembly. Paul has more to say to these young women than to any of the other groups as follows: (outline adapted from John Phillips):

### A. Discerning (Vs. 4a)

1. 'teach' = means to school or train.
2. '**sober**' = circumspect. It means "to make sane or sober-minded, to recall a person to his/her senses" (D.E. West). Also translated 'vigilant' in 1 Tim. 3:2.
3. It refers to sober mindedness and spiritual and moral vigilance in all areas of one's life. (Cloud)
4. "It refers to a woman who is not caught up, for example, in worshipping Hollywood and pop stars. It refers to a woman who is not giddy after the sensual products of the fashion industry." (Cloud)
5. Note: Soberness is a prominent theme in this chapter – S. Vs. 2, 4, 6, & 12

### B. Devoted (Vs. 4b)

Note the emphasis on the home (See Titus 1:11).

1. To their Husbands (Vs. 4)
  - a. She loves Him – unconditionally (1 Cor. 13:4-8) & physically (1 Cor. 7:1-5). The word 'love' in this passage (Titus 2:4) refers to a relation that is more emotional and that implies more passionate warmth of affection. (Trench) It conveys the idea of tender affection. (Phillips)
  - a. She obeys Him (Vs. 5)
    - i. Ephesians 5:22-24 "*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.*"
    - ii. 1 Cor. 11:3 "*But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and **the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.***"
    - iii. Application to singles: Develop a biblical mindset on these matters before entering into marriage.
    - iv. Illustration: Rebekah an illustration of a woman NOT in submission to her husband.
2. To their children
  - a. The last days are marked by an absence of "natural affection" (2 Tim. 3:3)

- b. She views her children as blessings from God - Psalm 127:3-5  
*“Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.”*
- c. She loves them enough to discipline and train them (refer Proverbs)

### C. Discreet (Vs. 5a)

- a. ‘discreet’ = comes from same root word as ‘sober’ in Vs. 4. “The Holy Spirit is thus emphasizing to the women the importance of sober mindedness, of spiritual and moral vigilance. The woman must be discreet by what she allows herself to think about; by what she reads; by what she watches; by the conversations she has.” (Cloud)
- b. ‘discreet’ = The literal sense is, separate, reserved, wary, hence discerning. It means prudent; wise in avoiding errors or evil, and in selecting the best means to accomplish a purpose; circumspect; cautious, wary; not rash. Gen. 41:33 “Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man **discreet** and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.” (Websters 1828)

### D. Decent (Vs. 5b)

- 1. ‘chaste’ = clean, innocent, modest (Strong’s). It comes from the same root word as ‘holy’. The word is translated elsewhere as ‘pure’ (Phil. 4:8; 1 Tim. 5:22). It has “reference to thought, act and demeanor, whether in look, speech or even in dress.” (D.E. West)
  - a. The word refers to moral purity, a purity that is possessed inwardly and expressed outwardly in one’s actions and adornment.
  - b. 1 Tim. 2:9-10 *“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in **modest apparel**, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; **But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.**”*
  - c. 1 Peter 3:3-4 *“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be **the hidden man of the heart**, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”*
  - d. Note: Ladies have a profound influence on the moral atmosphere around them either for good or evil by virtue of their natural beauty. Natural beauty without godliness is of no value. Prov. 11:22 *“As a jewel of gold in a swine’s snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.”*

- e. Note: It is the primary responsibility of the older women to train the younger ladies in this area. This is not going to happen if the older women are immodest themselves!
- f. John Phillips:

“Chastity has gone out of style these days. We live in the day of the “adult” movie, the marching sodomite, and the demanding feminist. It is the age of “the new morality” based on relativism and humanism. The so-called new morality is just the old immorality but now openly espoused by the media, the schools, the courts, and often the government. Pornographic books, child molestation, syndicated crime, indulgence in drugs, and the senseless pursuit of the demon-haunted occult world characterize our society. Most of the old familiar landmarks of morality and common decency are gone...The pressure is on to conform to the world’s wanton ways. More than ever, young women need the counterbalancing influence of older women who remember a different, more decent, more disciplined age.”

- 2. ‘good’ describes the woman’s life overall. Contains the idea of kindness. *“She will do him **good** and not evil all the days of her life.”* (Prov. 31:12)

#### **E. Domesticated (Vs. 5c)**

- 1. Her Ministry – a home keeper
  - a. “keepers at home” = working at home, caring for the house, domestically inclined (Strongs). Lit. “workers at home”.
  - b. Comes from two Greek words, ‘oikos’ (house) and ‘ouros’ (to guard) Implies **both** domestic and spiritual care of the home
  - c. 1 Timothy 5:14 *“I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, **guide the house**, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.”* Note: “guide the house” = literally means “a house despot, lord or ruler”. She manages the home.
  - d. Challenge: the dangerous inroads of feminism, the working woman and the confusion of roles in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- 2. Her Motivation – the honour of God
  - a. “that the word of God be not blasphemed” = the motivating goal for the above instruction (ladies both young and old). Living contrary to the Word of God hinders the cause of Christ and is a bad testimony to the unsaved world.
  - b. A godly lady’s life is a wonderful adornment and testimony to the truth of the Gospel.

#### **Conclusion:**

- 1. Do you have a Biblical mindset as a Christian woman or have you imbibed the 21<sup>st</sup> century, feministic philosophy of womanhood? Christian ladies need to view their role of being wives, mothers and home keepers as a **high calling**.
- 2. Older ladies: What sort of example are you setting for the next generation? Have you embraced the ministry of mentoring the younger ladies?