

Sermon to the Saints of God assembled at Topeka, KS: Sunday, March 16, 2025

Sober, Sober, Sober – Titus 2

Part 6

Titus 3:14 *“And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.”*

Today we will resume our examination of Paul’s instruction to “speak thou the things which become sound doctrine”, ministering continual and specific provocation to practical godliness within the church, according to each member’s need and circumstance.

Titus 2: 1-10 *“1 ¶ But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: 2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. 3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; 4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. 6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. 7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, 8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. 9 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; 10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.”*

Our goal is to examine and apply the practical instruction that the Holy Spirit provided for each of the demographics in the passage. As a reminder of what we have covered so far:

- Aged men – Sermon 5/12/2024
- Aged women – 12/8/2024
- Young women – 1/26/2025
- Young men – Sermon 6/30/24 + 10/20/24
- Preachers - Today
- Servants - Future

Today we will continue our examination of Titus 2:1-10, by considering Paul’s instructions to preachers.

Preachers

- **Titus 2:7,8** *“7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, 8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.”*
- At first glance, these verses seem to flow together with verse 6, which is addressing Young Men: *“Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.”* However, the subject subtly shifts in verse 7, to “thyself”. Remember, Paul is writing this letter to Titus, who is ministering to the fledgling churches on the aisle of Crete. Although Paul is speaking directly to Titus, these are not just a personal instructions, but rather, they apply to every minister of God that would teach the flock. Ministers are bound to teach proper doctrine, and to live according to that teaching, as Paul said of himself: *“But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life ... ” (2Timothy 3:10)*
- While the primary application here is to the elders in a church, we can all draw from these instructions, seeing that we all speak the word of God in some way, and therefore want to represent our King appropriately.
- In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works:
 - “Good” – Greek (2570) “kalos”. This is the same word found in the instruction to aged women, who are to be “teachers of good things”.
 - Strongs: excellent in its nature and characteristics, and therefore well adapted to its ends; Beautiful by reason of purity of heart and life, and hence praiseworthy; Affecting the mind agreeably, comforting and confirming.
 - This instruction is all about being a good example. An example of faithful labor, diligence, charity, service, watchfulness, patience, submission, etc. We are to live our lives in a consistent pattern of good works. We are sinful flesh and blood, who will certainly fail at times, but the overwhelming trend of our lives must be consistent with the doctrine that we teach. Without this pattern of good works, we can neither walk pleasing to God, nor can we reasonably expect to teach others, because people will not emulate what you say, as much as they will emulate what you do.
 - **1Peter 5:1-4** *“1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”*
- In doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity:
 - **Uncorruptness**
 - Greek – compound word (1) “a” + (1311) “diaphtheiro” (dee-af-thi’-ro)

- Strongs: 1) To change for the worse, of minds or morals; 2) To destroy, ruin, kill
- Notably, our first instruction regarding doctrine is framed in the negative. It could say something like “purity”, but instead we get “not corrupting”. My friends, our flesh can only do one thing when it encounters something that is pure and whole: corrupt it! Our dark hearts tend toward malice, pride, lust, etc. Therefore, we have to approach the scriptures with a prayerful heart, that the Spirit of God will work in us to war against the flesh, and bring forth truth from the spirit. Consider God’s words to Jeremiah: *“Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.”* (**Jeremiah 15:19**)
 - Some particular dangers:
 - Take care that worldly wisdom doesn’t creep into our minds and words, infecting pure doctrine. When we preach, we often explain concepts in our own words, and draw upon illustrations, which can be very helpful. But we have to be careful that we don’t subtly shift and distort the actual scriptures. When in doubt – stick to the scriptural words.
 - Take care that we don’t expound scripture in order to prove our own point, rather than follow the scripture, and the spirit, to the truth.
 - Take care that we don’t avoid preaching a scriptural truth because it is convicting me of my own sin. The answer is not to avoid the scripture, but to get right with God about the sin, and speak true to the scripture.
 - Take care that we don’t avoid preaching a scriptural truth because it would rock the boat, or cost me something.
 - Take care that we don’t use the scriptures to pander, curry favor, or pursue some worldly gain.
 - Take care that we don’t engage in academic, beard stroking exercises, like the Athenians who were always looking to tell or to hear some new thing. (**Acts 17:21**)
 - Take care that we aren’t speaking beyond what the scriptures tell us, and what we clearly understand, in order to sound smart, or to make the scriptures more interesting and attractive to the flesh.

- Take care that we aren't trying to substitute style for scriptural substance; that we aren't trying to manipulate an outcome with our words, rather than speaking sincerely and trusting God.
- **2Peter 3:16-18** *"16 As also in all his [Paul's] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. 17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. 18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."*
- **Gravity**
 - Greek (4587) "semnotes" (sem-not'-ace)
 - Frequently translated as "honesty".
 - Strong's: 1) the characteristic of a thing or person which entitles to reverence and respect, dignity, majesty, sanctity 2) honour, purity
 - We are to treat the word of God with dignity and reverence. We cannot make it into something light and lewd; earthly and sensual. It is not our personal tool to manipulate, or barter with.
 - **2Corinthians 4:1-7** *"1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; 2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."*
 - **James 3:13-18** *"13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. 14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where envying and strife is,*

there is confusion and every evil work. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

○ **Sincerity**

- Greek (861) “aphtharsia” (af-thar-see’-ah)
 - Translation in other verses: Immortality, Incorruption
 - Strongs: Incorruption, Purity, Sincerity
- There is clearly an overlap here with the concept of “uncorruptness” that we already covered. Let’s focus on the English word “sincerity”:
 - **Philippians 1:14-17** *“15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: 16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: 17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.”*
 - This passage ties sincerity and love together. We are to bring forth doctrine from a sincere desire to please God, because we love Him, and therefore love our brethren, our neighbors, and our enemies.

• Sound speech, that cannot be condemned:

- “Sound” - Greek (5199) “hugies” (hoog-ee-ace’)
 - To make one whole; to restore to health
 - Every other occurrence of this word is translated as “whole”, and speaks to Jesus performing miracles, and making a person whole.
- So then, our preaching is to be made up of words that are wholesome, and able to provide health and healing to the soul that hears the words, if the Lord will cause it to be fruitful in them. For our speech to be sound, it must be rooted and grounded in truth, and in love.
 - **Ephesians 4:11-16** *“11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to*

the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

- We must begin with truth. Remember, truth is the first piece of the Christian's armor - *"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth ..."* (**Ephesians 6:14**) If we do not speak the truth of God, then we are lost before we get started. Simple, sincere, direct, unvarnished truth. Truth cannot be sacrificed to a false, flesh-pleasing sense of "love".
- At the same time, truth must be maintained and preached from a pure, broken, humbled heart of love for God, and love for our neighbor. As those who have received, and rejoice in the mercy of God, we desire that same mercy for others, as God would allow. We preach, with a hope that God would give the increase, and would effectually work faith and repentance in the heart of the hearer. If this is not the sincere desire of our heart, and purpose of our labor, then the truth of our words is irrelevant, because they are preached in arrogance, and will not please God. This is true when we preach within the body, and without.
- My friends, we are sin-sick, wretched, diseased creatures. Our vile flesh seeks to pollute the precious word and Spirit of God that is in us. We have a continual war to fight, such that we are not speaking in a way that gives vent to our malice, pride, lust, fear, etc.
- The machinations and stratagems of our own dark hearts can only bring forth more of the disease that infects them – there is no cure to be found there! We must bring forth from the truth of Jesus Christ – the Word of God. No matter our intention, every form of man's wisdom that manipulates the Gospel, promises a cure, while still being infected with the very poison that has caused the disease!
 - **1Corinthians 2:4,5** *"4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."*
- Beyond our preaching, our private conversation ought to be sound, and not full of filthy and foolish talking.
 - **Ephesians 4:29-32** *"29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."*

- If our preaching is sound – if it is brought forth in the truth and love of God – then it cannot be condemned! No matter how much the world rages at it, their raging is against God! On the contrary, if we infect our preaching with fleshly words and motivations, then we introduce opportunity for Satan to accuse, such that we bring shame upon the name of our God.
- That he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you:
 - If we preach a faithful gospel, then the people of this world will certainly mistreat us and speak evil of us, because they mistreated and spoke evil of our Master. If we preach a proper doctrine from a proper spirit, and live according to that doctrine, then they will have no other evil thing to say. It is shameful to ourselves, and to our Lord any time we give His enemies opportunity to accuse us for any other reason.
 - **1Peter 3:14-17** “14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: 16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. 17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

1Timothy 4:6-13 “6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. 7 But refuse profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation. 10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. 11 These things command and teach. 12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”

I love you all. Amen.