

Being Fit For Good Works

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[0 : 00] Today, I'm going to talk about being fit for good works, or fitness for good works was the original thing I was thinking about.

! And our main text is going to be Titus 2, but before we jump in, you guys can turn there if you have a Bible or on your phone. Before we jump into the text, I'm going to pray.

All right, Lord, we thank you, God, for your word. Thank you, Lord, that it is God-breathed and profitable, Lord, for our teaching and instruction.

Pray, Lord, that you would fill me with your spirit now, and let me speak your words with power. In Jesus' name, amen. Okay, so, fit for good works. So, I was thinking about just our church and the different focuses that we have right now, even the three words that we got for this year, family, character, order, these things, these are kind of all things that help us mature to focus on.

And I believe that here in Titus, there's some things that will benefit us and help equip us in those three words, but also just to help us do the work of ministry.

[1 : 22] And when I say doing the work of ministry, that comes from Ephesians 4, that Jesus gave to the church all the different giftings. It says to equip the saints for the work of ministry.

So, this is kind of going to be a teaching for the goal of getting us equipped, not only to go outward, that is the main thing, because we're very much aware that we want to fill more of these chairs with people and evangelize the lost world, but also ministry to one another, that we can be equipped to be ministers to each part of the body, to our own children and family members, even from spouse to spouse.

Okay, so that's what my goal is today. A little bit of a backdrop. We're going to be looking at Titus 2, but right before the beginning of the chapter, Paul gives the qualifications for overseers or elders, and then he talks about these specific people called the Cretans.

And he talks about a prophet that was a Cretan saying that they're always liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons. Okay, like really strong, like, whoa, that's kind of crazy.

Okay, and he says that this is true. This testimony is true. He says in verse 13, Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in faith, not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.

[2 : 55] And then at the very end, right before chapter 2, he says, They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work. Have you guys ever said that about a group of people before?

That's pretty strong. So Paul's saying something, and he's warning against kind of a manner of life, way of living, way of thinking.

Okay? And he says that whatever way that they're living, it makes them unfit for any good work, he says.

So in Christ, if we've been born again, if you've been born again, you have the Holy Spirit, which by default makes you fit to do ministry.

But God has gifted the body with different giftings so that we might be more fit or more equipped, going back to Ephesians 4, to do ministry.

[3 : 52] And so that's the goal today, to hone in. Maybe we can walk away more mature, more equipped for the things that we're about to do in this church plan or thus far we've already done looking back.

And so at the end of the chapter, he says they're detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work. And then if you look down right as chapter 2 begins, Paul says to Titus, he's writing to Titus, but as for you, Titus, okay?

So he's like, the Cretans are this. And then he's speaking to Titus, who is also an apostle. He says, but as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.

Okay? What might that be? What is the sound doctrine that he wants Titus to teach? Well, he goes directly into it, okay? He says, older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.

Older women, likewise, are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They're to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.

[5 : 08] Okay, so I'm going to keep going. We're actually going to finish out the whole chapter, but I want you guys to think specifically about why Paul hones in on different groups.

He says, older men, older women, then he says younger women, and then younger men. Then we have the last little deal, bond servants, which isn't completely relevant to us today.

Okay, there's some parallels, but that's the last category. But he doesn't just say, to all Christians, say these things, right? At least not here. He says, if you're in this category of older men or older women, younger women, younger men, focus on these things.

Prioritize these things. Think about how these qualities either exist in your life or don't exist, okay?

Okay, so I want us to think about these qualities depending on where you fit, but also realize that if you're not in one or the other category, it's still profitable for you to understand this because we're doing ministry to one another.

You encounter a young man. You encounter a young woman. You encounter older men and women all the time. So it is relevant to you, even more so if you're one of those people. But listen closely to what Paul highlights for Titus to teach.

[6 : 38] He says, teach what accords the sound doctrine, okay? So he starts off with older men. And these are kind of a list of qualifiers for testing your fitness, right?

How fit are you to engage or maybe how unfit, right? If you've been out of the gym for a while and you need to look in the mirror, okay? This is kind of what that might be or whatever.

So he starts with older men. He says, older men, number one, are to be sober-minded, okay? A lot of these attributes can like, they kind of mesh and mix, but I'm going to try and break down most of them.

And so the first one is sober-mindedness. Obviously, there is a sober-mindedness that does not exist with, like, substance abuse, alcohol, drugs, those type of things.

And I don't really have much to say about that. But if you find yourself lacking sober-mindedness through one of those things, you must repent, okay?

[7 : 51] Drunkenness, being under the influence of drugs is not tolerated in the house of God, okay? We're supposed to be sober, sensible, clear thinking, okay?

So if you're going to those things, I think the word is simple, that you must repent and come to a sober place, even to think rightly about God, okay?

But there's another aspect, so there's that. There's another aspect of sober-mindedness. When I was reading just the definition that I think is also applicable to all of us, whether we struggle in that way or not, and the definition of being sober-minded means things like having a clear mind, having a rational mind or sensible mind, free from the influence of, you know, intoxication, these things, or strong emotions that could cloud judgment, okay?

You don't have to be under the influence to not be sober-minded, okay? There are many things in this life, your own emotions, how you feel on the daily, your own judgments that could be clouded simply because your mind is not sober.

You're not thinking rightly, okay? This kind of harkens back to when he says in the beginning, he says, teach sound doctrine. Teach sound doctrine isn't just like doctrine, period, but it's sound.

[9 : 18] It's sensible. It's rational. It's sober, okay? Okay, so older men are supposed to be this, right? They're supposed to have this mind. Men, are you clear in your mind most of the time?

Maybe you're not a slave to alcohol, but are you a slave to your feelings, emotions, you know? Are you clear on what God says? This is important to be sober about that.

You might say, yeah, I'm sober-minded most of the time. What about like when you're arguing with your spouse or something, you know?

And you say something that's kind of like, wow, that's irrational and not sensible, right? You kind of just have these knee-jerk, non-sober statements, right? You got to be sober-minded not only in the obvious ways, but also in the ways that creep in.

You know what I'm saying? Do you have unhinged, unbridled thoughts or statements? Maybe not even with your spouse.

[10:21] Maybe it's with your spouse. Maybe it's with other men that can make them feel uneasy, right? Too quick to cast judgment and give ultimatums, right?

A mind that's ruled by the Spirit in Romans, it says it's life and peace, okay? So when we think sensibly and clear, we're actually guided by the Spirit, right?

That's part of what getting a mind from the Spirit is like. You're not like extreme on one side, extreme always kind of, but there's a plumb line, right? Be sober-minded, okay?

And then next one is dignify. This is kind of the same, in the same vein. He says, older men are to be dignified, worthy of respect. Or being dignified means worthy of honor or respect.

And this seems to be lost in today's world, you know? It's hard to, like, point out a guy, not necessarily like an older man, although that's also true.

[11:30] But any man that's worthy of honor and respect, okay? You don't have to wear a suit to be dignified. There's plenty of men that wear suits who are very undignified, a lot of them, unfortunately, leading our country.

Dignity is the constitution of a man, a man's character, right? And where are the men who are worthy of that?

You know, Paul says to the men in the church, older men be dignified, okay? Worthy of that, okay? Do you get, you know, older men or just men in general, do you guys think about being dignified? You know? Is that a goal of yours? You know, he says to Titus, teach that. Teach that. You know, I think about so many older men and men in general that are caught in the sin of homosexuality or just sexual immorality in general.

Pastors caught in adulterous affairs, addicted to pornography, you know? And all of a sudden it comes to light, which it always does. Your sin finds you out.

[12:48] But there's this kind of shame associated with that because that person, if they're a leader, was in a place that should be esteemed or dignified. That person is given dignity with their position, pastoring, shepherding, their platform.

And then it seems to prove fraudulent in those things, right? Especially with sexual immorality, there's a shame that removes dignity, okay?

We need, like, men out there that are dignified that say no to sin, that don't fall underneath the shame and undignifying sins of our culture, okay?

We need older men to look up to. I think of, like, you know, there's, like, a handful of pastors I'm thinking of. Maybe John MacArthur's in there. Just faithful guys that you can't really talk bad about, you know?

It's like he's been going for 30 years or however long it is, and it's like he's not, you can't cast much reproach on him, right? That's an incredible thing. And a work of God, you know?

[13:57] A sanctifying work of the Spirit that keeps somebody dignified. Think about John Piper and other guys, but we're the guys that are going to be like those figures.

Much more like Jesus Christ, who was a carpenter, right? There's some dignity there, getting low and working hard, you know, for years. Pretty much most of all of his early life was just working. We don't know much about it, just that he was working, right? And yet he was the Son of Man, you know? Dignified and clothed with the approval of his Father in Heaven, approval and sonship, who has also become the Father of us all.

If you're in Christ, that's the dignity that's been bestowed on you through Christ, right? The dignity that comes from sonship. Meaning you actually have what it takes to be dignified, to strive for dignity through the Holy Spirit.

Another one is just like our culture, phones, TV, all these things. The subtle lure of meme culture and the comedic show that politics have become.

[15:10] Okay? The trivializing of the family and the head of the family, the father. It's kind of everywhere. The breakdown of the family.

Basically showing us that things like purpose and meaning, having children, getting married, respecting authority, loving one another. All these things are trivialized to a point where all the dignity is gone.

Okay? It's just all a joke. How much do you joke, you know? How much do you embrace the foolish banner of undignified speech? It's easy to do.

It's even more easy, especially if we're insecure about being dignified. You know? A couple of, you know, gay jokes, racial comments, racial jokes, making fun of people in charge.

All these things are easy to do because everyone else does them. But what it is sometimes is we're actually insecure about being the thing we should, being dignified.

[16:17] And so we just do what everyone else does. We just embrace the empty talk. Right? Don't do that. Like I said, this is older men, but all of us, all of us can relate to some of these things.

Right? Be dignified. Next, he says, self-controlled. Okay? Kind of flows along with each other. Obviously, being self-controlled is a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

I think it even says it for the women as well. This is just like, if you're a Christian, you must bridle your mind, your body, right? And be self-controlled. He says, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.

Okay? So we know that without faith, it's impossible to please God. But it's not just a faith that's like random. You know, plenty of people in this world have faiths. Right?

There's many world religions, but our faith is sound in Christ. We got to be sure of what we believe. And it's got to be sound or firm. Right?

[17:27] We have to know it. So he says, in faith, in love, you know, sound or firm in love, and then steadfastness. Which I was reading in 1 Corinthians 13.

You guys remember how at the end it talks about three things that abide, faith, hope, and love. It's almost the same thing here. We have faith, we have love, and then steadfastness.

Which steadfastness, if you think about it, steadfastness really just means to kind of hold firm under circumstances that would want you to move. Right? Keep going.

And when you are pressed to remain steadfast, one of the driving factors to overcome is hope.

Right? Like to remain steadfast, to have your eyes set, hopeful on the other end.

That if I endure this thing, I will reap a reward. Right? That's hope. And Paul says, these three things abide. In 1 Corinthians 13, 13, he says, faith, hope, and love abide, and the greatest of these is love.

[18:39] Older men are supposed to be sound in all those things. Right? Or mature in those things. So moving on, we have...

Older women, likewise are to be reverend in behavior, not slanderers, or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good.

Reverend in behavior. I think this is one of the words for bellicose, isn't it? Reverence. Nowadays, well, what does reverence mean?

Reverence is basically similar to dignity. It's like showing solemn or deep respect. Right? So he says older women are supposed to have reverence, but not just reverence as an idea, but in their behavior, how they live.

Right? Showing deep and solemn respect in what direction? Obviously, towards God. There's always a Godward element. Right? But Paul kind of highlights the practicals or the normal life functions of older women, women in general.

[19:57] And it has a lot to do with your husband, your spouse, if you're married, your children, if you're dealing with your children. Okay? It says they're supposed to be reverent in behavior, do self-controlled, or, sorry, not slanders or slaves to much wine.

They're to teach what is good. Teach to who? And so train the young women, okay? Teaching the young women to love their husbands and children. Okay? So they're supposed to teach that.

If you're older, Paul's assuming that you've been around the block with these things. Either you're married and you understand what it means to love your own husband.

Or have children, what it means to raise children. And you're supposed to teach that. Teach what is good. But reverence in behavior specifically, I was thinking about this and like, you know, there is something jarring to me about, you know, a woman who's very loud and maybe obnoxiously so, putting assertive and dominating, right?

And irreverent. There's something irreverent about that. Now, obviously I'm not saying that, you know, a woman is not strong or things like these.

[21:26] But there is a type of spirit in a woman that needs to have reverence, not just in thought, but in actual behavior, how you actually function.

You know what I'm saying? So if you're a soldier in the military, you have to have this to whoever's above you, your commanding officer, right? So if you're a woman and you're married, then you

have a head and that's your husband.

An ultimate head, which is God. Do you have a quiet spirit about you that says, I respect my husband and I treat him with a deep and solemn respect in my behavior?

Now, I'll leave it to you guys to get into the weeds about the specific, you know, examples of your life that you might run into those not deep, not solemn moments.

But one thing I was thinking about, and this is later on when you speak to the young women, is teach them to be submissive. It is really easy to submit to somebody that you agree with, to follow somebody that's easy to follow, but the rubber really meets the road when you don't want to follow them, or they're not easy to follow, or you disagree with them.

[22 : 49] But hear me out and say that there is something so potent and filled with the spirit when you actually, in those moments, submit out of reverence for God and the person that God has given you, your husband.

Okay? This kind of attitude shines. Now, obviously, if your husband or someone else would lead you into sin, then you should not follow them into sin. But most of the time, some of these arguments that go on between husband and wife are not overt sin, but things like, I don't like that, and I do like that, or their preference, their opinion, their, you know, a method or a way of doing things, like, I don't like your way.

Okay? And so the question is, what do you do there? You know? What do you do, wife, when you don't agree with your husband? Well, if it's not sin, I think the answer from the text is clear.

You're supposed to submit with a quiet spirit, reverent spirit, with deep and solemn respect, even if you don't agree. Okay? As much as that sounds terrible at different times, the spirit of God really shines through those moments and actually can change your husband in different parts of scripture, it says, like through your own conduct.

Okay? This is really crucial. I'm going to get to why in a little bit here. But reverend in behavior, okay? Not slanders, not slaves to much wine.

[24 : 33] Okay? No gossiping, no backbiting, no slandering, right? They have all those thoughts reserved to themselves, not loud about that.

Obviously, there's a difference between maybe you're not that way in this setting, you know, to one another, but how are you at home? You know? Are you just kind of like, oh, so-and-so, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, you know, to your husband?

Or so-and-so, blah, blah, blah, to one of your good friends? Don't be that way. You know? Put to death those evil suspicions. Let's pray on the last sermon.

Okay? So older women are to teach what is good to the younger women. That's the next one.

Okay? To love their husbands and children.

To be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands. So there's two things for younger women about their husbands. Number one, they should love them.

[25 : 38] And last one, to submit to them. We just kind of talked about that, like the dynamic of like how it's easy to do it when everything's fine and you're all agreeable. But really, I think submission of the godly sort shines the most when you don't agree or when it's not easy to follow.

Self-controlled, pure, working at home.

Especially nowadays, mothers training young girls can be like a dynamic with the pressure of wanting to become a career woman or work outside the home.

Obviously, I'm not saying that careers per se are bad for women or even that like education, these things are not bad. But there's something to training up your daughters to keep and love to work at home.

Because ultimately, if you get married, that's going to be most of your life. Is making your home a hospitable place? A place for the kingdom of God, you know, to come?

[26 : 51] A place that is a home to your husband, largely providing, right? All these things are aims for the older women to teach to the younger women, right?

To be pure, to be self-controlled, right? Pure in the way that we speak. That means that there's differences to how you train your daughters. Like, they're not going to speak like the boys, right? They're going to speak differently. They're going to dress differently, obviously. But they're going to do so in a way that's both self-controlled and pure, okay? And then their actual work ethic, they're going to be directionally towards the home.

Teach the younger women to love their husbands and children. And submissive to their own husbands. Okay.

Okay. Going down to the younger men here. I realize there's only one attribute for the younger men, it seems like.

[28 : 06] It says, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. I think that's pretty clear. Because most of the time, every issue comes back to being not self-controlled.

They're lacking self-control. I mean, if you think about young boys. Max, Charlie, you can get this. Young boys, especially even like really early on. Sometimes, like I see it with Leon.

Leon's only three. But there's just like knee-jerk obedience to their passions. You know? Like, boys will obey their passions kind of on a whim unless they're bridled by their parents and taught by another to say no.

Okay? Just on a parenting level, this is really good and still really young. We're trying to do this with Leon right now. Saying a lot of no's to him when he just wants to just do what he wants.

And here's the reason why. Sometimes it's easy to look at a kid and think he's cute just because he, you know, gets into crazy stuff or makes crazy jokes or whatever.

[29 : 11] Right? It's easy to kind of let that stuff fly. But the reason we need to crack down on it is because one day that kid is going to be a teenager. And as soon as testosterone floods through his body, if he obeys his passion, it's going to be very bad.

Okay? He needs to learn how to bridle himself. And a lot of that is the duty of parents now to step in and implement that. To implement being self-controlled.

Okay? There is a lot of discipleship among younger men now because none of that existed when they were growing up. Okay? You're having to teach men who are in their 20s, late 20s, sometimes even 30s, how to just bridle their own body and their speech.

Or even with all the deconstruction that's happening, how to bridle your own mind. Every day, it seems like you can wake up with an irrational, not sensible mind.

Right? All these things, parents, you want to teach your children. Trust in God, you know, that he'll ultimately do the work. But it's extremely valuable because you're looking forward in steadfastness to reaping those things later.

[30 : 26] Okay? So Paul says to be self-controlled. Period. Pretty straightforward one right there.

And he says, Like I said, He's talking to Titus here as apostle and teacher, but all of these attributes kind of illuminate that idea.

Is our life guilty of reproach? Is our speech, could it be condemned? You know what I'm saying? If an opponent were to come in and examine you and say, You know what?

I'm not really sure if this dude lives for God because every time he just gets talking, it looks like the rest of us. Right? God has saved us in Christ for good works.

And like I said in the beginning, we should train ourselves looking at this passage, whatever category you fall into, we should train ourselves to be fit for these good works.

[31 : 51] Okay? All these things, whichever ones you fall into, saying that, Lord, you've saved me by your grace, not by any of my works. Right? We believe that we're saved by faith alone, apart from any works that we've done.

But we also believe that Scripture teaches that we're not saved by a faith that remains alone. Okay? In Ephesians it says we're actually created for his workmanship. Now it's important, and I think Chris is going to hit this next week, to not get those backwards.

You know, you don't prove your faith, you don't start working really hard to prove that you have faith. Right? When you're born again, you have that faith. Your faith is proven. Right?

And that's why we work. God has called us to that. And these are a list of things that I believe would be great for us to focus on so that we're equipped for the work of ministry.

You know, we're inviting people into our home. What kind of home are we inviting them into? Wives and husbands, you know, younger men, children, right? Are we being pure and self-controlled?

[33 : 00] Or have we let some aspects of that slide? I know that's easy to do in my own life. And, um, there's an important reason for all this.

And we kind of see it, or we definitely see it when, uh, at the end of verse, what is it? Five, I think.

The young women, it says to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind of submissive. So that what? That the word of God may not be reviled. Or I think the NIV says maligned.

So the word of God may not be maligned. And if all those things are like conduct things, like how we're in our life, are we self-controlled? Are we pure? Are we working at home? All these qualities. If all those things say something about the word of God, and that whatever they say determines whether or not the word of God is reviled, then this is extremely important for us as believers.

[34 : 04] Amen. The word of God dwells in us. You know, that's, that's a prayer of Paul. He says, let the word of God dwell in us. Either our life speaks the truth about Christ, or it lies about Christ.

And I would urge us to look at these qualities and say, Lord, help us not malign your word by the way we live. Help me have a healthy fear that says, God, your word dwells in me.

Make me a worker fit for the works that you have prepared for me. Okay. Okay. Okay.

Lastly, stretching it out. I was trying to figure out how to talk about this, but the last category is bond servants. And our modern example, maybe in different countries, we don't really have bond servants in America.

It's essentially like slaves, no rights, no freedoms. But in Paul's day, he urged them with specific things. But I think there's a lot of parallels, even with our workplace, you know, as an, as an employee to employer.

[35 : 16] Paul says to bond servants, be submissive in everything. Well, pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering or stealing, showing good faith. So that in everything, they may adorn the doctrine of God, our savior.

Or the NIV says, so that the doctrine or the teaching about God is attractive. I love, I love that phrase. Does the way that you work in your workplace, make God look attractive?

Not that God necessarily needs us to make him look attractive, but he does call us to live like he is that, right? Does, does the way that you work, do you, are you submissive in everything?

You know, again, this is the bond servants. So there might be areas where in everything can be tweaked, but well-pleasing, not argumentative, showing good faith, right?

This is a, uh, attribute that we take not only into our homes, but also into our workplace and beyond. And then, um, probably the most, uh, or probably the reason why everything above is, uh, relevant to us and why we do it begins in verse 11.

[36 : 40] This is kind of all's gospel exhortation about why all these things are relevant. It says in verse 11, for the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions.

The NIV says training us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for a blessed hope in the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession, for zealous for good works.

It's not just the Pharisees that are zealous for good works, everybody. We, we, we as believers should also be, uh, the NIV says to be eager for good works, right?

Um, if the grace of God has appeared and saved us, not because of our works, but because of the finished, completed work of Jesus, then that means that from our hearts will, will grow more and more eagerness for good work, for these qualities, right?

This is kind of a test also to see if we're in the faith. Do we desire any of those things? Right? And I admit some days are harder than others.

[38 : 12] Some days you wake up, you don't have much desire. But the truth is, God, through the Holy Spirit, will sanctify us. He'll grow greater desire in us, right?

And that ultimately, he wants us to be zealous for these things. Um, if you guys are wondering if any of these things are actually important, I mean, it's the word of God, right?

But he ties all this up by saying to Titus, declare these things, exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Okay? So, there's an element of the gender specific exhortations in here that we should lay to heart. Okay? Um, like I said, these can be interchangeable, but I think this text outlines, uh, especially with Titus speaking to a specific group of people, if you're a man or woman, how you ought to behave, how you ought to think, how you ought to live.

And we should lay them to heart. The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, to teach us to say no. You know, it's not just, not just, uh, saying no, or a life of refrain per se, right?

[39 : 33] God wants some active, not just negation, in our life. He wants active obedience, zealous for good works, right? He wants to replace our lawless evil deeds, ways of thinking, with a frame of mind that is actively Godward.

That's toward God. Um, okay. Last couple points, uh, specifically for Christchurch.

Um, obviously there's many ways in our home that we can, uh, make it better. Um, different practical things that we can do to bring more order, uh, different things that we can show honor and respect.

But I think, uh, with this group of people, I was praying and thinking, Lord, how do we, what does it look like to be fit for good works?

And a couple of things came to mind. One is that how we speak, uh, period, whatever station that we're in, either to one another, to our bosses, at work, online, you know, uh, should be keep in keeping and without reproach.

[40 : 49] Um, in James chapter three, uh, James talks about bridling the tongue. I'm just going to read a short passage.

He says, we put bits into the mouth of horses so that they obey us. We, we guide their whole body as well. Look at the ships also, though they're so large and driven by strong winds, they're guided by a very small rudder, wherever the will of the pilot directs.

So also is the tongue. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great is the forest set ablaze by such small fire?

The tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staying the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life and set on fire by hell for every kind of beast and bird of reptile and sea creature can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue.

It is a restless, restless, evil, full of deadly poison. And with it, with it, we bless our Lord and father. And with it, we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.

[42 : 08] From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be. So does the spring pour forth the same from the same opening, both fresh water and salt water.

Can a fig tree, my brothers bear olives or grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water. I'm going to stop there and say, there's many analogies in here, but how we speak out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

Okay. When we think about one another, when we reason all these things, all that we think about, however it makes its way into our heart, we will say, okay, I believe this body needs to be built up and encouraged.

Right. Do you use your mouth? Do you use your tongue to build somebody up, to encourage them?

Right. We have many trials. We have enough trials, right, in our own lives.

And God would have us to tame our tongue and use it for the good. That's one thing. How we speak to one another, how we speak in general.

[43 : 16] And the other thing is really simple. What we do in our spare time when no one's looking, you know, like being, being diligent to be disciplined, working on the things that we need to work on, not making excuses, shying away from the things in our lives that the Lord wants us to grow out of.

Right. Leaving sins behind, not putting it up on the shelf to grab later, but actually putting to death the deeds of the flesh. And sorry.

And starting to aim at things that actually build up. Right. If we, if we do this, I believe that God will produce by the spirit more and more sanctification. Making us more and more fit for good works.

And that when lost people come into our midst, they will come into workers ready to receive them.

Right. Ready to experience the kingdom of God.

Ultimately, Jesus said that the church is like city on the hill meant to shine. And so I want to exhort us this morning to look at these qualities, ask ourselves, whichever area we fall into, older women, young women, young men, these things, Lord, what, what would you have us to focus on?

[44 : 41] Obviously these things should be focused on, but Lord, what in my life needs to change? I'm just going to read this end part one more time.

Titus 2 11 says, for the grace of God has appeared. It offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions.

Okay. This, these are a lot of things in here, a lot of things to focus on.

More than likely the Lord isn't going to have you focus on all of these at once. It's probably going to be one thing right now that the Lord would have you to learn from.

I would say pray into that. But also after I just said a bunch of stuff, there's a temptation that will come in. I believe shortly after of anxiety to say, Oh Lord, like how do we need this elephant here? [45 : 45] You know, how do, how do we, how do we attack all these things? How do I get better in all these areas? And two things I would leave with us. Number one, focus on the thing that God is highlighting.

Don't even worry about all those other things. And in regards to anxiety, God in Christ, when Jesus was in that boat in the midst of a storm, he is able to make the winds and the sea obey him.

Okay. Believe that God in your life, with all your anxieties, with all you're trying to figure things out, um, can say, be still, you know, your soul and the wave of your heart.

He says, be still. Okay. God wants to lead you to himself. He's gentle and lowly and to work on these specific things, but he's not standing behind you with a whip, ready to crack you and, and get you into shape all at once.

Right. He slowly sanctifies us. Sometimes, sometimes we move right out of sin immediately. Right. But it's no good to be anxious about God growing you.

[46 : 59] God wants you to enjoy him and, uh, be zealous for good works. Amen. Amen. Amen.