

The School Of Grace Is Now In Session

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[0:00] if you would open up your Bibles to Titus chapter 2, I'm going to read right now the whole chapter. Hear the word of God.

Titus chapter 2. But as for you, Titus, teach what accords with sound doctrine. 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 are 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.

Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and in a sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

Bond servants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything. They are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

[1:22] For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all unrighteousness, all lawlessness, and to purify for himself a people for his own possession, who are zealous for good works.

Declare these things. Exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. I've been singing a song all week long. School's out for summer.

Summer. If you're a student in the room, or a teacher in the room, on the count of three, give me a school out.

Hooray. One, two, three. I knew it. Now, if you're a parent in the room, on the count of three, give me a one, two, three. Help me.

One, two, three. Help me. It's a game changer, isn't it? School may be out, but there's another school that is in session.

[2:44] It's the school of God's grace, and it's never out of session. There are no grace graduates of this school.

And in fact, as long as we as Christians are alive, and Christ is yet to return, we are being trained in the school of God's grace.

We're in grace school, and it's in session. Now, maybe school doesn't do anything for you. Think of gospel school as a grace apprenticeship. Jesus is going to bring about hands-on training for you in godliness.

How to live out the reality of the gospel in the everyday grind of life. So, older men, if you're 40 and up, you need training in the school of grace.

Jesus has personally enrolled you. You're not done yet. Older women, 40 and up. I'm not going to ask you to raise hands. You're enrolled in the school of grace.

[3:55] Jesus is looking to get something very specific done in you. Young women, under 40, God has work to do in you.

It's not over yet. Jesus has given himself for you to do a work in you. And young men, under 40, God has a unique work for you.

He's going to train you to say no to something in order to say yes to something else. The school of grace is now in session.

Jesus is looking to show us, train us, how to live out lives in our households in a way that's shaped by the gospel. We've been making our way through the book of Titus.

Titus, as I mentioned a few weeks ago, is this well-seasoned minister of the gospel. He is an apostolic representative of Paul.

[5:00] And Paul left him in the island of Crete midway through the first century. And Titus' marching orders were to establish the churches in Crete on the foundation of sound doctrine, healthy doctrine, the doctrine of the gospel of God's grace.

Now, doctrine simply means teaching, what the Bible teaches about something. And it's actually more than that. It's a truth claim, what the Bible claims to be the true and real nature of things. And so when the Bible teaches something, it's making a claim on the truth of who God is, who He really is. And when the Bible speaks about men and women in our sinfulness, it's talking about our true nature as men and women in our sinfulness.

And when the Bible talks about salvation, being in Jesus alone, there's no other name under heaven by which men and women can be saved. It's talking about the true nature and reality of salvation.

And then when the world to come, it's talking about the true nature of it. So in this book, what this says is God speaking definitively and authoritatively on varieties of issues.

[6:23] And it's vital for us. Doctrine is to a church as food is to your body. Now, if you are eating junk food and taking in empty calories, your body will eventually suffer for it.

You might get a little plumpy. Or you may come down with diabetes, cholesterol, off the charts, heart disease. If we as a church take in the equivalent of doctrinal junk food, empty calorie teaching, our body will eventually suffer for it.

You see, doctrine matters. What the Bible says about things, it matters. Because what you believe inevitably shows up in the way that you live your life.

It's a cause and effect relationship. What I believe is causal to how I live. Effect. God's designed us that way. He's designed us to live out of what we believe is true.

This is design. And so, back in the first century in Crete, here's what was going on. There were some false teachers that were exerting influence on those early Christians in those early churches.

[7:48] And we see that they're hypocrites. Look at Titus 1, verse 16. The Apostle Paul says of these false teachers, they profess to know God, but they deny Him by their works.

Classic hypocrisy. But their hypocrisy was also having an effect. Look at verse, chapter 1, verses 10, 11.

For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers, and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. Those are the false teachers. They must be silenced since they are upsetting whole families, whole households by teaching for shameful game what they ought not to teach. They were teaching things that were unhealthy for the churches in Crete. doctrine does the body good. Doctrine does the body good.

False doctrine, junky doctrine, does the body bad. And so Titus is to, in chapter 2, instruct households of what it looks like to live out the gospel.

[9:05] It's corrective. These false teachers have upset the faith of whole households. Now, Paul is saying, Titus, set the record straight. Show how the different people, age and gender, within a household are to live out what God is calling them to by the power of the gospel.

And so what we see in chapter 2 is this. Verses 1 and 15, it's called an inclusio. They're bookends to the content.

If you look at verse 1, Paul says, but as for you, Titus, teach what accords with sound doctrine. Show them how to live their lives that's been shaped by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And then look down at verse 15. Declare these things, exhort and rebuking with all authority. Let no one disregard you. That word declare in verse 15 and the word teach in chapter 2, verse 1, it's the same word.

It forms bookends to the content. There's urgency here. Paul is saying, you've got to teach them this, Titus. And what the content is is this.

[10:18] Verse 2 through 10, it's exhortation after exhortation to different people within a first century household of how to live their life.

And then what Paul does is he takes these exhortations to gospel living and then he grounds them in theological doctrine in verses 11 through 14.

And so we have a cause and effect. It's just the effect comes first. The effect of living out the gospel is verses 10 through 10, 2 through 10, gospel lifestyle.

And then the cause of it all is found in 11 through 14, the theological reality. We have, as Brian so well put it last week, we've got the fruit of the gospel in verses 2 through 10, and then we've got the root, the gospel, in verses 11 through 14.

And so my task this morning is to exhort you, to call you to lifestyles that are in keeping with the gospel, and then to ground you in the gospel itself so that you are enabled to live it.

[11:36] So let's begin with verses 2 through 10, the effect of the gospel, the fruit of the gospel, exhortations of what gospel living looks like as applied to older men, as applied to older women, as applied to younger women, and applied to younger men.

I'm not going to address bond slaves this morning, and here's why. In August, I'm going to preach a two-part series on the gospel at work, and I'm going to preach out of Colossians 4 for one of those sermons, and we're going to get into understanding how first century slavery is a little bit different than what we experienced in our country, but the application is going to be on how we work.

We're not going to address that today, though. We're going to address it later in the summer. So I'm going to focus on applying what gospel living looks like for older men, older women, younger women, and younger men, and then ground it in the gospel.

So let me walk you through this. Okay? We're going to make haste because I know it's hot. And the fireworks, the finale, is 11 through 14.

Older men, 40 and up, this is what God is calling you to. This is the life you're to live. You're to be sober-minded, which means clear-headed. You're to be dignified, which means that you are a man of integrity, that your life matches your profession, that there's minimal gap in between, that you're self-controlled, which means prudence.

[13:14] What you believe governs the way you live. And that particular trait shows up in every one of not just older men, older women, younger women, and younger men.

And then there to be sound. This is the word that we looked at a couple weeks ago, which means healthy. So where do we get hygiene from? Older men are to be healthy, vigorous, vibrant in their faith in God.

Healthy, vigorous, vibrant in their love for others. Healthy, vigorous, vibrant in their steadfastness. Their ability to endure hardship.

This is what God is calling to you, older men. To live like that. And do you know why he starts with older men first? Older men were the heads of the homes.

They were setting the thermostat of a household by the way that they were living their lives. They were setting the tone in their homes. And so Paul starts with these men because these men are going to exert the greatest influence in a household.

[14:31] Now if you're an older man in the room and you're having this experience right now, I'm kind of okay on the dignified part but everything else I'm a mess.

There's good news for you. That's why you're in the gospel school. That's why you are in the school of God's grace. This is what God is calling you to.

And you need God's grace to experience and live this out. Older women. Verse 3. They're to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not slaves to much wine.

They're to teach what is good. That word reverent in behavior was used of Old Testament priests about how they conducted themselves before God. And so you can talk about an older woman as a priestess of her home.

And the question of an older woman whose reverent in behavior to God is she's asking the question will this, whatever it is, will that honor God right now? Will this be pleasing to Him?

[15:40] They're not slanderers. The Greek word underneath that is the word we get diabolical from. It means slanderer. To throw people under the bus with your words.

To talk bad about people. And what God is saying, an older woman, she's to be reverent in her behavior, live to God, and she's not to speak that way about other people. And she's not to be enslaved to much wine.

She's not to be enslaved to anything because she's enslaved to Jesus. We'll see that in a little bit. But in verse 3, we see that she's to teach what is good.

In fact, she's to say no to being a slanderer and to say yes to teaching what is good to the next generation of women coming up in a church.

And what is good, you've got to understand, she's to teach what is good not in the world's eyes. She is to teach what is good to the next generation of women what is good in God's eyes.

[16:45] Older women, this is what God has called you to. It's called to live your life like this. And it's in light of what God in His grace has done for you. This is your calling.

In verses 4 and 5, we see the younger women. And it's connected to the older women because the older women are to teach what is good and therefore train the younger women.

That word train is a really interesting word in the original language. It literally means to self-controlify. That would be the literal translation of it. To train them up. Older women are to disciple younger women in a church to show them how to live for God.

It's right there. By the word, that word teach in verse 3, it's the only place in the New Testament that word shows up. And it's a word that describes kind of an informal teaching, an informal influencing of other people.

So imagine an older woman saddling up next to a younger woman over coffee and sharing life and that younger woman has all sorts of questions about, hey, how am I supposed to live out my marriage?

[17:56] How am I supposed to parent my kids? How am I supposed to keep my house when I'm also working on the side? What does this look like? And that older woman teaches what is good to her. And then what you see is seven virtues for younger women.

They are to love their husbands. They are to love their children. They too are to be self-controlled. They are to be pure, sexually pure. If they're married, faithful to their own husband.

If they're not married, they are to be celibate unto the Lord. They are to be working at home. Do you see that in verse 5? Now you may hear that and you may ask in the question, does that mean I can't work outside the home?

That's not what Paul's saying. Here's what Paul's saying. To be industrious at home. To prioritize the home.

If you look at 1 Timothy 3, 1 Timothy, Paul is telling Timothy to address a problem in the Ephesian church. It was women who were neglecting who were neglecting their homes and being busy bodies doing everything but caring for their homes.

[19:12] And so it's a corrective. It's saying, hey, prioritize the management of your home. It's not saying you can't work outside of the home. In fact, Proverbs 31 would argue against that as well.

they're to be being industrious at home, they're to be kind, to be blessing to others, and they're to be a submissive to their own husbands.

And so this section to young women begins and ends with talking about the relationship to their husbands. At least four of these virtues has to deal with their home life.

And so what we see God's will is is that older women are to be teaching younger women to prioritize their homes. And we know this is good because Paul has said older women teach what is good to these younger women.

It turns out that loving your husband, loving your children, being industrious in the home, being submissive to your husbands, that's good in God's sight.

[20:23] Now to be submissive doesn't mean that you're a doormat. We talk about the relationship between men and women around here as men and women are of equal value in God's sight, but God has purposefully designed and given them different roles in the family and in the church.

And so we talk about marriage around here as a dance where the husband is leading the wife in the dance and the wife is letting her husband lead and sometimes helping him because sometimes when Jenny and I are at a wedding reception and I'm dancing with her what I end up doing is I end up doing my left hand circle move where I just end up kind of just going in the same direction and she starts getting kind of nauseous and so what my wife does is she helps me to correct and go the other way for her sake.

so younger women older women when we talk about submission to our husbands your husbands it's a good thing it's a dance Paul goes on and talks to now about younger men more effects of the gospel more fruit of the gospel what we see in older men and older women and younger women fruit of the gospel doctrine having effect and now young men we go from talking about seven virtues in a younger woman because women are multitaskers and they can handle it but now we get to men young men and it's one thing because that's all they can handle and what is it?

self-control self-control thoughtful restraint of your desires prudence your head is governing your life and what's going on in your head is gospel doctrine and that is exerting influence so that you you manage your life in a way that's aimed at God you see young men in particular have a tendency to want to immediately gratify their desires I see it I want it I gotta have it and then you get it and often times you regret it and what the gospel does in a young man is that he sees something he wants something he remembers the gospel and then he says I'm gonna wait on it God uses self-control and growing young men in his self-control to form character and to get them ready to lead in the home and in the church young men

Proverbs 25 28 says a man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls it's a picture of being plundered and devastated and I've seen this time and time again where men have been plundered and devastated by their own unchecked desires so young men learn self-control it is gospel 101 for you in the school of grace Paul doesn't leave these young men alone in first in fact in verses 7 and 8 he says Titus show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works specifically to the young men show them how to live Titus pastors elders life group leaders of Christ the King Church show the young men of our church how to live out the gospel now if you're a young man looking for a godly example we got them here young man we got them here brothers there are men in this church that would be happy to saddle up next to you and show you how to follow

[24:47] Jesus and grow in self-control in 9 and 10 Paul turns his attention to another member of the household in the first century bond servants so we're not going to spend time here but what he does do is he shows them he tells them how to live out the gospel as they are serving their masters it's got great application for our lives at work what we see going on here are life after life age and gender in a first century household of how to live out the gospel and if we ended the sermon right here I wouldn't serve you well because chances are you'd be tempted to do something like this okay I'm a younger man I need to go get self-control and I'm going to self-out my self-control I'm going to trust myself to live this out it's kind of like this could you imagine this we all get out of here and we all go down to the end of the marina and we're all on that lookout point standing over the water and we look down and we see scuba divers in the water crystal clear and we're like oh man it was so hot in church it was like 98 degrees

I want to jump in but one of those scuba divers they come up and it's a complete surprise you're like what is going on the scuba diver comes up and he's got his oxygen tank on and he's got his breathing apparatus in front of him but yet he's not using it he dives down and he's holding his breath swim down swim down swim down I can't take it anymore and he comes back up and he comes out of the water yeah I gotta go down again and do it and all the while he's got his oxygen tanks on his back man he could stay under he can be experiencing the goodness of the underwater world only if he knew how to breathe in that oxygen we as Christians can approach the Christian life and living out our roles like we're trying to hold our breath like this depends on me so I hold my

breath and try to be the best older man

I can be and I can't do it God saves us from ourselves that's why the word for is in verse 11 for the grace of God has appeared you've got grace on your back Christian you don't need to hold your breath and try to get through yourself God has grace for you he's got this grace tank on your back that he is glad to open up and show you how to breathe in grace and live out your life and so we move from these effects of the gospel this lifestyle all these virtues and we turn the corner with verse 11 to now establishing this lifestyle on the basis of the gospel it's a pivot and what we see in verses 11 through 14 are two particular gospel truths that are designed to enable you to live out your calling first gospel truth verses 11 through 13 we are now on

Jesus time we're on Jesus time in verse 11 Paul points back to the past and he says for the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men grace has already showed up and of course he's talking about the first coming of Jesus the incarnation his living a perfect life dying on a cross and being raised from the dead the first coming of Jesus and then in verse 12 he goes from saving grace to training grace for the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation for all people training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled upright in godly lives now in this present age and then if that's not enough verse 13

God's aiming grace God's waiting grace waiting for our blessed hope the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ do you see what Paul does here we are so inclined to get on our own time we're so you know you know what I just got out of school and I gotta go back to school so I'm living in between getting out of school and going back to school well that's true but what Paul is saying here is you're also living between the appearances the first appearing of Jesus literally an epiphany and the second appearing of Jesus when he comes in glory another epiphany maybe you're an older man and you're like I'm at the end of my life and my body's failing might be true but you live between the appearances you're on Jesus time now if you're an older woman you're kind of like oh my life isn't what

[30:57] I thought and you can get bitter and you can slander and you can turn to wine Jesus remember you're on Jesus time now you live for him his grace has showed up we're on Jesus time now think about it there's coming a time when Jesus comes back and when he comes back he's coming back in glory everyone will see it at the same time every knee shall bow every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord he's coming back back in glory and what verse 13 says about him is phenomenal waiting for our blessed hope he is our happy hope waiting for our blessed hope the epiphany of the glory of our great God and Savior

Jesus Christ Christ Jesus is God in the flesh and he's coming back see what happens here Paul gives us a little paradigm shift you live your life now in light of what Jesus has done of what he's doing and what he's gonna do and it's all about Jesus it's all about his grace saving grace training grace and his waiting grace for the glory of Jesus to be revealed when you start understanding the timeline you're on as a Christian it affects the way that you live it informs the way you live your life now as an older man as an older woman as a younger woman and as a younger man changes the way that you are an employee do you know what happens when people realize that they are on Jesus time it's verse 12 we're in the school of grace in between this first coming and his second coming we've been enrolled in the school of grace and he is actively teaching us to say no to ungodliness to say no to worldly desires so that we can live for him self-controlled upright godly lives that's what he's doing in our lives now he wants us to live for him and live out our roles for him regardless of your age or gender and do you know what happens when we do verse 5 oh I'm in 2nd Timothy verse 5 when older women teach younger women to prioritize their home the word of God may not be reviled you know what happens look at verse 8 that an opponent may be put to shame having nothing evil to say about us you know what happens look at verse 10 so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior when we're in the school of grace and God is doing work in us by his grace it ends up having an effect not only in us but those who are watching us we're all on Jesus time now did you know that in the heyday of Britain's naval dominance the main clocks on every British vessel was set to London time so that no matter where in the world you were if you were on a British naval ship you were all on the same time brothers and sisters in

Christ whether you are a man or a woman whether you're older or younger whether you're employed or unemployed all of our internal clocks are set on Jesus time he's come he's training us he's coming back we're all living in between the already and not yet and we're all pupils in the school of God's grace the school of God's grace is now in session God but that's the first gospel truth we're on Jesus time let me give you the second gospel truth we see this in verse 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works in verse 14 Paul circles back to the first coming of Jesus in verse 13 he was talking about the second coming of

[36:21] Jesus the glorious appearing of our God and Savior Jesus Christ every knee bow down every tongue confess but in verse 14 Jesus where Paul circles all the way back to the first coming where Jesus didn't come in glory but he came as a servant to give his life as a ransom for many and that is exactly the language he uses in verse 14 who gave himself for us Jesus gave himself for us the second gospel truth is we are now Jesus people we live this way 2 through 10 because we are now Jesus people we're his possession he gave himself for us to redeem us from sin from all lawlessness when you hear the word redeem you may be thinking coal's cash and redeeming them at your local coal store in the first century that word redeem means to purchase someone back from slavery and to redeem you used a purchase price it's called a ransom and so what

Paul is saying here to us is that those who put their faith in Jesus have been redeemed by the purchase price of Jesus his life and his death it set us free you've been redeemed by his death redeemed from the power of sin all lawlessness think about this Jesus died on the cross over 2,000 years ago and that payment for sin is as powerful and effectual today over two millennia later than it was the day after Jesus was raised it's just as powerful and so when Jesus redeems someone he redeems them from the full power of sin which means you're no longer enslaved to sin which means by

God's grace you can say no to sin and the reason why you can say no to sin is because sin no longer owns you Jesus does but not only did he give himself up to redeem us from the power of sin he gave himself up to purify us for himself his blood that he shed on the cross cleanses us from all of our sins each and every sin we have ever committed and each and every sin that we will commit and just in case you're wondering if you think about your past sin as like a cherry stain on your white shirt that will never come out not so with the cleansing power of Jesus he cleanses all of your defilement of sin he cleanses it thoroughly and fully and

I'm convinced that some of you this morning need to hear that you've been cleansed by the blood of Jesus and he cleansed you for himself to take you as his own to claim you as his part of his people you are his possession now we the church are Christ's new people for his own possession do you know what it means to be repoed repossessed repo man when someone falls off paying for a car they've got a loan from a bank a bank hires a repo man to go and basically steal the car back so that the bank takes back ownership of the car Jesus is the ultimate repo man we were under an ownership of sin that was mean and awful delinquent and

Jesus came and he repoed us back to himself and has repurposed us to live for his glory and has dropped us into the school of grace and so do you know the effect of that is those of us who have been repossessed by Jesus were zealous for good works it's right there at the end of verse 14 eager to live for Jesus older men because you are on Jesus time now because you have been bought by the blood of Jesus purified for him you are to be sober minded dignified self controlled sound in faith and love and steadfastness older women because you've been redeemed and purified by the blood of Jesus be reverent in your behavior not slanderers not enslaved to much wine but teach what is good in the sight of

[42:02] God to the younger women of our church and younger women Jesus gave himself for you so don't live according what the world says is good about your body about your success live according to what God says is good and younger men you've been repoed by Jesus so say no to the ungodliness and worldly desires of the non-Christian world around you don't buy it and say yes to live out the good works that God has prepared in advance for you to do don't settle for mediocrity young men press into

the school of God's grace get to the front row raise your hand and say Jesus train me up so I can live my life for you this morning Titus 2 has shown us that we are in constant need of God's grace each of us has been called to a high calling according to our age and gender that none of us in our own ability can achieve and that's why

Jesus has enrolled us in the school of his grace he's promised to not only be with us but to supply all of our needs his grace is sufficient you don't need to hold your breath anymore Christian you breathe in deep the rich gospel air that he's provided for you and the place to start is not yourself it's with the gospel and so to that end for this Sunday and Sunday only I've got six books it's called the gospel primer this is designed to help you to get the gospel on the forefront of your mind so that you can live out the gospel in the grind of your life so if you're interested in getting these I'll be happy to hand it to you after we wrap up the service but let me close by saying this not only can the gospel shape our lives the gospel must shape our lives it's

God's grace to us let's pray together God in heaven do a work of grace do what only you can do make us a people who stand out from the rest of this world because it's your grace actively at work training us to say no to ungodliness and to say yes to living for you in this present age amen as your
so