

The Needed Example of Older Saints - part 3

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Date: 03 November 2024

Preacher: Pastor Ken

[0:00] Please turn to Titus 2 in your Bibles this morning.! This is part 3 of Titus 2 verses 1-10.

And there is a lot remaining in Titus. I mean, it's only a short three chapters, but there's so much to dig out and grasp. And as we're returning to this letter from Paul to young Titus, I want to remind you that this chapter focuses on the character of believers in the church.

Chapter 1 focused on the character of the leadership and the qualities that were expected to be possessed by those who are in leadership positions in the church, particularly that of elder.

And chapter 2 focuses on the character of the people, those within the church, those in the pews, even those in the pulpit as well, those in leadership. So let's go ahead and read Titus 2.

And we'll read verses 1-10. I will read, you will follow along. I've had that confusion before. But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.

[1:48] 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 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.

Father, thank you for the reading of your word this morning, and I pray that you give us understanding and conviction through your Spirit. In Jesus' name, amen. So older men and women in the church has been the focus the last few weeks.

[3:17] Now, I have not received any negative comments or any sideways glances or anything that made me have to be concerned for my life as I've walked down the hill to my home.

So by the grace of God, you have either been gracious to me in how I have handled this topic, or you've just merely forgot to do anything to me about it after the fact. And either way, I am thankful and grateful.

But as we've gone through these verses, So we focused, you know, remember verse 1 a few weeks ago, the importance of sound doctrine, and that Paul was telling Titus, now he says in verse 1, teach what accords with sound doctrine, and that word teach isn't just the teaching ministry, a pulpit ministry or, you know, a class that you're teaching in, but the word teach actually means you're conversing.

It's the topic of conversation. It is what you are talking about regularly with one another. What you as a, what, no, we as elders and teachers in the church are conversing about regularly with those who are in the congregation, those who are in the flock that we have care over.

And then we saw that older men and older women we see in the church are to be respected and looked up to as examples.

[4:45] And it starts in verse 2 with older men. And, you know, it gives the list of qualities and characteristics that are to be present in men who are older, who have age and hopefully with age maturity.

And as such, due to their age and maturity, they're to be considered like parents, men like fathers, women like mothers in the congregation. And when you consider that fact and that mindset, we

know that parents were to play a pivotal role in the raising of children and the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

And turn with me to Deuteronomy 6. I forgot that I was going to read this. I was going to have you turn there before. Turn back with me to Deuteronomy 6. Don't lose your spot there in Titus.

Deuteronomy 6, the fifth book of the Old Testament.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and then Deuteronomy, the last to be penned by Moses.

Deuteronomy 6 and verses 5 through 9 show the pivotal role that a parent plays in the life of a child in their upbringing in the instruction of the Lord.

First there's verse 4, which is referred to as the Shema. This is the declaration by Israel. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Then verses 5 and following.

[6:16] You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. So there's the expectation by God through Moses for his people Israel.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. In verse 6, And these words that I command to you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise.

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorpost of your house and on your gates.

As I was reviewing this passage in preparation for today and as we look at the role of older men and older women in the church and that their role is very much like parents in the congregation or I suppose maybe for some like grandparents in the congregation depending on the age gap between the individuals.

And as I was reviewing this, it was like one of those light bulb click moments. Notice, right?

Remember what verse 1 in Titus 2 said.

[7:46] Teach, right? I just talked about that. Teach what accords with sound doctrine. I said that is a conversational tone. That is the idea that you're making it of importance.

You're talking about it with one another. It is the central focus and importance in your lives and in your conversation.

Well then, when you read Deuteronomy 6, 5 through 9, which if you've been in church and been in church a while, you know that we go to that often to talk about parental responsibility in the home and the need for parents to raise up their children.

But notice what Moses writes. So he gives the command to love the Lord your God with your whole being. And he says, In these words I command to you shall be on your heart.

You shall teach them diligently to your children. It's not just something that is just kind of brought up just like every now and then as the moment strikes, as you just feel like maybe talking about God, as you feel like maybe just talking about the Word of God.

[8:56] But no, parents have the responsibility to teach them diligently to their children. He says, You shall talk of them. You shall converse of them.

You shall, as Paul writes in Titus, you know, the teaching of sound doctrine, that conversation. You shall talk of them. When? When you sit in your house. When you walk by the way.

When you lie down. When you rise. At any moment, at any time, it should be what consumes or should be the central focus of your conversation is the most important aspect of any conversation in the home.

For a parent bringing up their children to know and love the Lord, the Word of God, and loving the Lord, and teaching the commands of God diligently at all times.

You're conversing. You're talking about it. Then verse 8, You bind it as a sign on your hand. There are frontlets between your eyes. It just shows the obvious nature. Now, in Israel, Israelites took that literally.

[9:56] They actually did bind things to their frontlets of their eyes and to, you know, on their hands, you know, the Scripture being bound to them. And, you know, and so for us, we would take that today.

I mean, I suppose if you want to go and, you know, have a bracelet that's got Scripture on it or I suppose you want to do the tattoo thing, whatever, people do that. But, like, you could take it literally that way or you can see it that it's supposed to be so evident in you and on you and from you that there's no denying what is of most importance in your life.

that you love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and might. Especially as you're, as a parent, bringing up your child.

And they're become so evident. And then verse 9, you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. The Word of God permeating and penetrating every aspect of the family and the home and wherever you go.

It is the conversation. It is the focal piece. It is to be reminded about it. Now, as a parent, I can say I do not perfectly follow such expectation and though I get excited about it and like I said, that was a light bulb moment like, wow, didn't I think of this before a few weeks ago?

[11:22] I know I brought it up but it's just like it really hit with conviction. and I would like to say that more often than not I'm talking about God and His Word in the home but that's not always the case.

You know, sometimes, I love it when there are moments in life that we're going through, we're living life, we're driving along or, you know, we're out somewhere walking around and something comes up that brings the opportunity to talk about God or it's just like one of those blatant like, you know, don't miss this sign and this opportunity, Ken.

You know, don't be so dense to forget what this is about, what life is about, you know, bring this up to your kids and I would love to say I do that perfectly but I don't but that's the expectation.

God wants His people to love Him so much that they can't help but talk and speak of Him and His Word and that's what Titus was expected to do according to verse 1 of Titus 2.

And as the, and talking about the older men and the older women in the church, you know, they act as parents in a way, like in helping raise up a church that knows the Lord and loves the Lord to such an extent.

[12:40] And so that's why the older men according to verse 2 were to be sober-minded and dignified and self-controlled and sound in faith and sound in love and sound in steadfastness.

Their character mattered. And then as we're going to look at here in verse 3 and following about the women today, their character mattered and there was a purpose for it because, because their character is to be godly, a godly character so that as they are instructing younger men, instructing younger women, they would see that it can indeed be lived out and they can see how it is lived out. But coming back now to this, this concept of older men and older women as parents in the church and, you know, how God looks at parents not just as responsible for bringing up their children to know and love the Lord, but we see throughout the law that reverence for parents was of most importance to God.

Exodus chapter 20 verse 12, one of the ten commandments and the first with a promise is what? Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

So, even though there are over 613 commands to do or not to do in scripture, we like to say, oh, there are ten commandments.

[14:06] Well, yeah, there's ten, there's ten, you know, in Exodus 20 that we recognize as the ten and one of them is honor your father and your mother. It was of importance to God that the children would take care to honor their father and mother.

you know, we can go, it's a whole other sermon, probably sermon series to go into what does it look like to honor your parents? But ultimately it's to have reverence and to revere them and, you know, to love and care for them, right?

So, it was very important to God. In Exodus 21 verses 15 through 17, God, you know, said capital punishment should be carried out for striking or cursing a parent.

For a child who hits or who curses a parent, right? Exodus 21 15, whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death and whoever curses his father or mother shall be put to death.

Now, we look at it through Western Americanized eyes and we say, whoa, that's extreme, that's too much, that's a lot. Well, yeah, that is a lot, isn't it? It shows how important that is to God that he would apply such a punishment among his people that, you know, that the father and the mother to be honored and revered and any disrespect in that way should be severely punished.

[15:38] Unfortunately, the United States of America is a different story and as I was thinking about this, I just really came to the conclusion that there is no reverence for parents in our country and I think about it in the way that our society and our culture looks at men and women and their roles.

Women are celebrated for killing their babies and men are vilified for being controlling dictators. And then as I consider what is happening in schools and other areas of our society, the government is constantly increasing its efforts to have influence over our children.

Ultimately, denying parents their rights in many ways and we can have that conversation another time if you don't know or are unaware of those ways.

But secrets being kept from parents between teachers and kids, things of that nature. So the parental influence, the parental units, the home in that regard is not revered by any stretch in this country.

Certainly not by our government. In fact, the lasting, and this took some deep investigation, but the lasting impact of second and third wave feminism in America is lessening the truly unique and honorable role that a woman plays in society and specifically in the home.

[17 : 15] Martin Lloyd-Jones had remarked as a preacher in England years ago, 70 years ago now, said, the protagonists of feminism think they're exalting women, but actually they're not doing so.

Men and women are different and are meant to be different and a truly Christian woman always recognizes this. When you consider the cultural war on biblical truth when it comes to women, it's brought a measure of confusion even into the church.

And it's in this area particularly that older women can help younger women understand their God-given purpose. John MacArthur's comment about Titus 2, their own examples of godliness give older women the right and the credibility to instruct younger women in the church.

And the obvious implication is that older women must exemplify the virtues that they encourage or that they're to teach that Paul lays out in Titus. So the character of the woman matters as much or maybe even more so than the teaching of the woman.

Because if you're saying one thing and doing something else, what do you refer to that person as? Come again? A hypocrite. Right?

[18 : 31] So if you've got somebody saying one thing and doing something opposite or different, oh, you're a hypocrite. That's not alright. And so Paul saw it's very important for men and women to consider their character, consider the life that they lived and how they lived it to the glory of God.

God. And so in verse 3 you've got to come to the example of the older woman. And this is going to take us, by the way, into next week and the week after as we complete and get through Titus these very important issues of character in the church.

But verse 3, older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior. That word likewise. Now we've already seen older men have already been given instructions how they're to conduct themselves. and women are not off the hook. They too, like the men, are to be reverent in their behavior. The Greek word for reverent has the root meaning of being priest-like and refers to that which is appropriate to holiness.

Older women are to be godly examples of holiness. Leviticus 11, verse 44, we see where holiness is the expectation of God's people.

[19 : 45] Leviticus 11, verse 44, God says, for I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore and be holy for I am holy.

Command that is repeated again in 1 Peter. Be holy because I am holy. 1 Peter 2, verses 9 and 10, but you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession.

Peter writing about the church that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people but now you are God's people.

Once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy. So talking about the believer is called out of darkness into light to proclaim his excellencies.

So we are to consecrate ourselves. We are to be holy. Particularly in verse 3, women. But as I have said many times as we have gone through this, it may be applicable, it may be directly speaking to one group but the application is universal.

[20 : 55] And in this regard, the application is universal. It is not only women who are to be reverent. That would be an awful church to be a part of. Not that women being reverent is an awful thing but can you imagine all the belligerent, dumb-headed men that we'd have to endure and deal with more than normal.

But men and women are to be reverent. They are to be priest-like. They are to be examples of holiness. One example that stands out to me in Scripture is Anna at the temple when Jesus, after

Jesus is born, right?

In Luke 2, verses 36 and 37, a passage we'll be exploring even more as we come closer to Christmas. And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phenuel of the tribe of Asher. Look at that, Asher. Anyway, I did not put that in there for that purpose. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin and then as a widow until she was 84.

So for a significant number of years, she was only married for seven years before her husband died and then she'd been a widow ever since. She's 84 years old.

[22:11] She's an older woman and says she did not depart from the temple worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day. Though she was advanced in years, she was still a devout believer who was reverent in her behavior.

She served as a good example for young women. And this is exactly what Paul wants to, it's not just, not only for the Jewish people, not only for them, it's to be brought into the church and expected to be present there as well.

And there are occasions in the church where older ladies may need to be reminded of their testimony. Older men do. But we see, particularly in Philippians 4, verses 2 and 3, where Paul writes, I urge you, Odeia, and I urge Syntyche to think the same way in the Lord.

Indeed, I ask you also, genuine companion, help these women who have contended together alongside of me in the gospel with also Clement and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are in the book of life.

Paul writing to the church at Philippi about two women who are apparently contentious in their battling and butting heads all the time or frequently enough that Paul said, this has got to stop.

[23:26] This cannot happen. This should not be happening in the church. So he's appealing to who he's writing to in Philippi. He says, help these women get it right.

Because two women who don't get along in a church are a poison and it's toxic to it. There's no church that can be healthy and have contention. Especially among older women who are to be the examples, godly examples, but yet through their actions show that they are not.

So Paul addresses them publicly as being in discord, but also commends them for their work and commitment to the gospel. So they're not women who are just coming in and destroying everything. They're well-intentioned. They love the Lord. They love the gospel. They share the gospel. They're taking part in that ministry, but among themselves, personally, they're fighting and that's not good. That's tearing the church apart. It's toxic. And so when someone needs to be corrected, it must be done in a respectful way. And particularly older men as fathers and older ladies as mothers.

[24:38] And I didn't just come up with this terminology because I thought it would fit well for a sermon. It's what Paul says in 1 Timothy 5, verses 1 and 2 when he says, do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father.

Younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters in all purity. These are terms that Paul uses. I just pick up on them and expand on it a little bit.

So if you're an older man or an older woman in the church, in this church, you are to be considered and revered as a parent. And as a parent, you have a tremendous responsibility in your character and in your teaching.

opportunities. Coming back to Titus 2. So women are likewise to be reverent in behavior. And it says, not slanderers.

Do you know what that Greek word slanderer is? Of course you do. It's diabolos. It appears 34 times in the New Testament that we translate it as a name for Satan.

[25:49] Diabolos. Nothing is more Satan-like than slander. Satan is the great deceiver and he is the accuser. And we know, and when you think of personalities and typically how things play out, men tend to be more rough or violent in their action.

I don't know how many guys here, young folk, maybe particularly so, you get angry, you get upset, something's getting to you and you haul off and you punch a wall.

I know I cannot possibly be the only person in this room that has ever done that, only male in this room. It was dumb.

And looking back, I'm like, man, I wasn't as manly as I thought I was. That brick wall was a lot harder than I thought it would be. No, but that, you know, men tend to act out in action their anger and their frustration.

Women tend to be more rough or violent in their words. And so that's why Paul is warning that an older woman is not to be a slanderer.

[27:03] And we know that Satan is a malicious slanderer. He slanders night and day. John 8, verse 44, you are of your father the devil and your will is to do your father's desires.

And he was a murderer from the beginning. And does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character for he is a liar and the father of lies. This is who Diabolos, Satan, is. And so Paul is telling the women, do not partake in Diabolos as in speaking slander and false accusations and lies and hurtful words.

Don't be Satan-like. Older women may have a lot of time on their hands because they have less to occupy their time. And that can lead to someone being given over to talking a lot.

And that talking a lot can become gossip or criticism or fault finding or slander. Paul says that's the devil's work.

[28:09] Older women should not vent their depravity through their speech. I would like you to turn to James 3 real quick. Keep your spot there in Titus. James, you go to the right, go past Hebrews, one book, and you got James, and you got chapter 3.

The most comprehensive section of Scripture as it relates to the tongue in your speech.

It actually starts in verse 1. I was going to read verses 2 through 10, but I might as well read verse 1. Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers. Well, that's a concern.

Like, I've always, I've always looked at this as being a, like a true, like just, that's your occupation or that's kind of what you're expected to do. Like, I come up here, I'm a teacher.

No, Ian comes up here as a teacher. Josh comes up here as a teacher. We're teaching Sunday school classes. And like, I've always thought of it that way. But now in light of Titus, older men and older women are also to be teachers in the church.

[29:20] Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body.

If we put bits into the mouths of horses so they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. Verse 4, look at the ships also. Though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they're guided by a very small rudder wherever they will, wherever the will of the pilot directs.

Verse 5, so also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire. And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness.

The tongue is set among our members, staining 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 evil full of deadly poison. With it, we bless our Lord and Father, and with it, we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.

[30:40] From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be. we keep in mind the destructive capability of the tongue.

And we understand better why in Titus 2, Paul warns that older women are to not be slanderers with their tongue because of the destructive nature of it.

And moving on in verse 3, they're not to be slaves to much wine. Knowing what we know about the trials of getting old, which we looked at a few weeks ago in Ecclesiastes 12, we can understand that it was not uncommon, I'm speaking of ancient cultures, particularly as Paul engaged with and is writing to, it was not uncommon for older people to turn to alcohol as a means of enduring the pains, frustrations, and loneliness of old age.

It was common. And even today, people turn to the bottle in order to cope with life. They're looking for answers, they're looking for a solve to take the pain away and help them forget.

And Paul warns older women not to be enslaved, that they're not to be held and controlled against their will to wine. When it is depended on, alcohol can become more of a prison than a means of escape.

[32:24] The 2023 National Institute of Health survey on alcohol use disorder, which we would refer to as alcoholism or being an alcoholic and all that, the survey indicates that in 2023, 28.9 million people, ages 12 and older, had AUD in the past year.

28.9 million people, ages 12 and older, who had some form of addiction or dependency on alcohol.

I really didn't know what to focus more on, the 28.9 million, the fact that they had an alcoholic addiction and dependency or the fact that the stat starts at age 12, all of it very concerning. And we hear over and over again in our society, in our culture about the rise of the mental health crisis. And we see that this is one way in which people seek to solve their hurt and their pain through alcohol.

alcohol. So that's a very sad thing. And what's horrible about this in a church is an older believer who becomes so addicted brings dishonor to the Lord's name, brings damage to the reputation of the church and more often than not leads others into following his or her ungodly example, the dependency on alcohol to ease the pain.

[34 : 01] So Paul says, there to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers nor slaves to much wine. And then finally, they see that they are to teach what is good.

And we will dive into this next week as Paul moves from the character of the older saint to the active teaching ministry of the older saint. As that character is possessed in the church by individuals who have lived their life and have grown up into Christlikeness and now they take on the responsibility as being parents in the church of younger believers and bringing them up.

This is Discipleship 101. This is what the Great Commission is all about. Go make disciples of all nations. It's not just about sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and how you can be saved and forgiven for your sins.

Yes, that's the start of it. But as we come together as a church body and as believers and as we are exposed and confronted by the truth of the word of God and as God's spirit is convicting us and guiding us we have older saints in the church who are leading younger saints and that's what discipleship is.

It's bringing them up. It's sharing life together. It's sharing instruction together and experience.

Warren Wearsby, I like this quote and I'll end on it. Salvation is God's gift to us because Jesus died for us on the cross.

[35 : 26] Discipleship is our gift to him as we take up our cross, die to self and follow the Lord in everything. And so we'll pick that up next week with teaching what is good and what that looks like in the church.

Let's pray. Father, I thank you for your word today. Lord, I thank you for Jesus Christ whose life has been given that we may be saved, that we may be delivered from the power of sin.

We do not have to be enslaved to sin anymore because of Jesus Christ. Thank you that our faith in you brings reconciliation in our relationship with you.

We can know you truly and have eternal life. Lord, I just pray that as we hear these messages, we're analyzing the text of scripture, Lord, I pray that we would take seriously our role and our character as it relates to your word.

Lord, I pray for older folk in this church who have been Christians for many years. Lord, I pray for them in their maturity in the faith. I pray for them, Lord, that they would take on the important responsibility to be encouraging and building up the younger Christians, the young men and young women around them.

[36 : 41] Lord, and I just pray that this would be a church where that discipleship is actively taking place. Lord, that we would see people, yes, come to know you as their savior, but not just stop there, but Lord, to grow up in righteousness, to grow up in your word and your commands, that love would permeate this church, Lord, love for one another, care for one another, compassion for one another.

Lord, genuine Christ-likeness and Christ-like growth taking place, Lord, that we may glorify your name and we may boldly proclaim the truth of the gospel as we go into this world, as we live our lives, we're in our workplaces, we're living in our homes.

Lord, I pray that of greatest importance would be our conversation about who you are and what we learn about you and your word. Lord, I pray that that would start here, that would start in our midst, that would start in our church, with our older and our younger people engaging one another and building each other up and encouraging one another, Lord, and we would take it from here and that we would share that love and that care and that compassion with a world that is so desperate, Lord, the world that needs hope, a world, Lord, that is turning to everything but you for answers and to to solve their pain, Lord.

And I just pray for our opportunities, Lord, that we would indeed pray for, we would engage these people, we would share your love and show who you are to those that we engage with each day.

Pray in Jesus' name, amen. Come up, Tony.