

# Marks of Godly Men

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Date: 16 June 2019

[ 0 : 00 ] But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.

And we drop down to verse 6. Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Let's pray. O God and Father, we pray that you would open our hearts, open our eyes, open our ears today. We know that you are the God who raises us from death to life. And so we pray that you would do this for us, that you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear, and hearts that are softened and pliable so we would understand, we would accept your word, and we would indeed live by it. We pray for your grace during this time, in Christ's name. Amen. Well, the title of the message today is Marks of Godly Men.

And what we're going to be discussing today is very closely tied to doctrine, sound doctrine. And so I was thinking of some examples that we could give to kind of quickly make this concrete to all of us, so that we could follow quickly and understand.

[ 1 : 26 ] And I was thinking about the different doctrines and different stories tied to doctrines that I've come across over the years. And there were many, many examples that I thought of.

I actually had trouble narrowing it down. But I thought of this one example. I thought of a gentleman by the name of Keith Giles.

Keith Giles has a website called KeithGiles.com. And he says many, many things on that website. And one of the things he says is that there is no hell.

And some people have been convinced by that, by what he has written over the years. And Keith Giles says, among other things, that if there is a hell, very likely it's not a hell that people would go to and be separated from God for eternity.

He says, based on his interpretation of the scripture, if there is a hell, and he puts a big if there, but if there is a hell, people would be separated from God and maybe suffer for a time.

[ 2 : 30 ] An unspecified time, but not eternity. And I thought about another group that's becoming popular. Actually, there are many groups, but they're related.

And these are the groups that link our salvation to race. And there are some people who actually believe, these are people of African descent.

They believe that only African descendants can be saved. And they will preach that people outside their race are actually the devil. And they actually have no soul to be saved.

And when I thought of those two examples, those would be two doctrines from two different people, two different groups of people. And when you think about those examples, you realize that doctrine really does matter.

Because it sets our heart, and it causes us to live in certain ways. I'm sure the people who are being convinced that there is no hell are probably living as though there is no hell.

[ 3 : 33 ] And there are consequences that go with that. And there are people being convinced that people who don't look like them, their African descendants, can't be saved. So imagine how they would treat others outside of their race.

Or think of what they would not do to someone outside their race. Someone they believe doesn't even have a soul. To them, that person would be just an animal.

So doctrine really does matter. And that's what, in part, our text talks about. So if we look at Titus 2, verse 1, right away, the first word should jump out of us.

The first word is, but. And I'm going to take you back to your primary school days, when the teacher used to teach you about conjunctions. Okay, so they taught us that but is a conjunction.

It joins two thoughts together. So we know that we've come in in the middle of two thoughts. Okay? We're about to get a thought, but that thought is connected to a thought that already came before.

[ 4 : 43 ] So, like a good student, I would make my primary school teachers very proud. I think we should go back just a bit, so we could understand the full context of what we're about to read.

And also, so that we would get the full meaning of the second part of a two-pronged point that is being made here. So if you turn back to Titus 1, let me just read verse 1.

Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect, and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness.

So right away, we know who is talking, who he's writing to, and the reason. We're told here that this is Paul, and he identifies himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

He's writing to the elect, those who are saved within Crete in this case, and he's writing to them through Titus. But the reason, this is what I wanted to emphasize, the reason why he's writing.

[ 5 : 58 ] He says he's writing for the sake of the knowledge of truth. In other words, he's imparting teaching to them, and teaching doctrine to them. And doctrine is the word of God, as told in scripture, that's rightly or correctly interpreted, to tell us what we should believe, and how we should act.

But he's not just giving them knowledge for the sake of knowledge. He's giving them knowledge for a purpose. And again, he's telling us what that purpose is in verse 1.

And he says, the purpose is so that they would have a result of godliness. In other words, that they would live godly lives.

So he intends for them to take this truth, understand it, and then live by it. Now, Paul is writing to Titus.

Titus had been on missionary journeys with him. And he's left Titus behind, in this case, in Crete, to teach the Christians there, and also to put in place elders in the church in Crete.

[ 7 : 16 ] So Titus is to put in place elders throughout the towns of Crete. But he encounters a problem. First Paul tells him in verses 5 through 9 the qualifications for these elders.

And the problem we see in verse 10 is that there are many people not just one or two, not just a few, but there are many people in Crete that are living contrary to these qualifications.

Alright? So Paul tells them in verses 5 through 9 how these elders are to look. And he says, This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained in order and appoint elders in every town as I directed you.

If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination, for an overseer as God's steward must be above reproach.

He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and discipline.

[ 8 : 36 ] He must hold firm the trustworthy word as taught so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

But in verse 10 we see that there were many who weren't doing that. There were many who were not that. Instead, Paul says that they were insubordinate and he calls them empty talkers and deceivers.

These were men who did not hold to sound doctrine. So Paul actually makes the point in verse 16 that they profess to know God and they say that they are Christians, but that was as far as their Christianity went.

Now, I guess in the Bahamian vernacular we would say that mouth could say anything. So they would say they're followers of Christ but their actual work, the works that they were doing, their actions betrayed what they were saying.

And that's how we know who someone is. Alright? Putting aside their words, look at their actions. And our actions tell us exactly where our affections lie and where our heart is.

[ 9 : 49 ] So these teachers were saying one thing and they were doing things contrary to what they were saying. And they became marked as ungodly men because of what they were doing.

Alright? So if we look actually at 5-9 again you see that these were the things that they were not doing. But instead they were marked as ungodly men.

So Paul has shown us clearly in just a few paragraphs that there are two types of doctrines.

There's a doctrine that men hold to or man-made doctrine I should say. There's a man-made doctrine that really is created by men. And they just make it out of nowhere.

They make it up or they use scripture and try to twist it to conform to what they want it to be. And then there's also sound doctrine which is as we said before scriptures that are correctly interpreted that tells us how we are to live and what we are to believe.

[ 11 : 09 ] So Paul is telling Timothy as he's telling us today through this passage that the godly man holds the sound doctrine.

And the godly man does not try to make the scriptures conform to his ideas. Instead the godly man conforms his ideas to scripture.

scripture. And that's where we pick up in Titus chapter 2. That's where the but comes in. So Paul is pointing to these ungodly men that we read about in chapter 1.

But he says Titus as for you you are to be different. He says where they are teaching false doctrines you are to teach the truth. And he says to Titus where they are not following up their words with the proper actions.

They're not following up their words with godly living. You are to follow up your words with godly living. And that's my first point.

[ 12 : 20 ] The first point is the godly man is shaped by sound doctrine. doctrine.

Also the godly man is marked by godly actions. Let's look at how the godly man is marked by godly actions.

So Paul moves from speaking in broad terms to speaking in more specific terms at this point. First he says broadly that we have to hold the sound doctrine. And then he specifically points to teachings for specific people in the church.

When we look at the teachings, I believe it's instructive that Paul first begins with the older man. Of all the people he could have started with, of all the groupings in the church, he chose to start his instructions in godly living with the men, the older men.

When we look at his teachings, I believe in instructive that he puts an emphasis on the older men. So the text implies that the older men have a larger responsibility in exhibiting good character and godly behavior.

[ 13 : 47 ] So we have to, and I'm including myself in the older men, that's why I say we have to be brothers examples.

You have to lead to lead, for example, if we are older men, because we have a larger responsibility for how we are to conduct ourselves in the body of Christ. I believe that one of the biggest feelings of older generations today is that we like to point at the younger generations, and we say what they're not doing right, and all the things that they're doing wrong, are not but we forget that we have a part to play in what the younger people are doing.

We've forgotten that we were responsible for teaching them the way that they should go, and we were responsible for being the examples to them so that they could know which way to go.

And so we are complicit in any of their failings. We often criticize young people, but we can't talk about the young people unless we talk about the older generation as well.

We are to lead by example. So Paul addresses the older men at the beginning. Secondly, I think it's also destructive if we look at the list of things that Paul says to the older men versus the list of things that he says to the younger men later on in verse 6.

[ 15 : 11 ] He has a lot more to say to the older men than he has to say to the younger men. Again, it shows the weight of the older men in the body of Christ. Christ himself told us that to whom much is given, much is expected.

So older men, we've been given more years, we've been given more experiences, and so more is expected of us. It's expected that over time we mature to the point where we can exhibit these godly marks that Paul is pointing to in Titus.

And I think if we consider what is given to the younger men and what is given to the older men, it's also instructive that this isn't a magical thing.

To be marked as a godly man isn't something that happens overnight. For the young men, they have one single thing that Paul says to them, to the older men, there are more and more things that are added.

And it implies that this is a process. It's not something that happens overnight the moment we are saved. It's a process, and the process is sanctification.

[ 16 : 29 ] sanctification. So in the sanctification process, Paul tells us how older men are the children of God. And he tells us how we can see evidence of our faith, and how others can tell that we belong to Christ.

He says, we as older men ought to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and steadfastness.

And one thing we should notice here is that Paul is not speaking in theory. He doesn't say to the older men that you should believe in being sober-minded, or you should believe in being self-controlled.

Okay? He says we are to be these things. All right? He's not talking about just having a head knowledge of what someone is supposed to do. Paul expects again that doctrine will lead to our actions.

It will affect us to the point that we live out what we believe. So again, this is probably a good time to read Titus 1 and 1 again. We point back to Titus 1 and 1.

[ 17 : 48 ] We're reminded of a two-fold phenomenon. first, we're reminded that Paul is giving doctrine.

He gives this for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of truth. But then he also expects a second thing.

He expects that knowledge to accord with godliness. So Paul, and also God, expects that what we believe, what we teach, will affect us to the heart and we will see true transformation.

So we are not only heard to be believers, but our actions also testify to what we are claiming. I'll give you a quick example.

We go into verses to remember. And today we did two verses. And if I were to pick Exodus, Exodus lays out for us what we have come to know as the Ten Commandments.

[ 18 : 55 ] But let's say I go through this with you today. And when I leave here, I see someone driving a luxury vehicle, something that's very nice, something I've always wanted.

In my heart I want it. I devise a plan to get it. I attack this person. You know, all 140 pounds of me, I attack this person. I hurt the person.

Maybe I even killed the person. But in the end, I get the car that I want and I drive off on it. Alright? That would be the example of what Paul does not want.

He doesn't just want to have a knowledge in our head of what the scriptures say. Because if I were to do that, then I would have failed.

It would be of no use to me to know Exodus 20 verses 1 through 17 and to God and be able to do what I just described to you. I would have broken at least three of those commandments.

[ 19 : 52 ] Maybe more if I really think about it. I would have covered it. I would have stole. I would have killed. And that is exactly the opposite of what Paul intends when he's giving these instructions to Titus and to the rest of the people in Crete.

Paul expects that doctrine will result in a true transformation. Now that's a hyperbole.

It's an exaggerated example. I hope you get the point. So similarly Paul is emphasizing that believers should not only be sound in their beliefs, but they actually must live by those beliefs.

He says the older men are to be sober-minded, meaning that they're to be even-tempered. We shouldn't be flying off the handle at every occasion we have a chance to, but we are to show that we are reasoned people and our thinking is to be tempered with the word of God.

He says we are to be dignified, meaning we are to carry ourselves as though we respect ourselves, as though we respect others and they should have a certain view of us because of it.

[ 21 : 12 ] Paul says we are to be sound in faith. We are to be strong in what we believe. By the time we are older and matured, we should be strong in what we believe. We should know what we believe and we should hold to it.

And he says we are to be sound in love. I believe that if we are sound in love, this helps us with the other marks of a godly man. Because if we are sound in love, we are guided by love and we look to help others and not to hurt them.

We ought to be steadfast, meaning that we are to resolve to stand in our faith. We shouldn't be strong in faith one day and the next day we're just blowing in the wind.

We ought to be steadfast. God's word in us.

We ought to do these things and we ought to teach them to the younger men. And Paul was not one who was just talking. He actually led by example.

[ 22 : 24 ] Now, just think about it. He is writing to Titus. Titus and in chapter 1 again, he identifies Titus as his true child in the faith. So Paul was a spiritual father.

He was actually leading by example. He was not just talking these things, he was actually doing them. And I think it's destructive that Paul had this spiritual son.

He had others like Timothy as well. And I recall that a few weeks ago, Lyndon pointed out that we had so many young men who are part of this congregation, part of this local church all the time in our midst.

And in counterculture, we always used to just think about how many boys we had. The boys were far outnumbering the girls.

And that's a great thing. It's a great thing. But it's also an awesome responsibility opportunity. An awesome opportunity. So older men, as we lead by example, we have to remember the younger men as well.

[ 23 : 37 ] Just think about it. Think about how you could be sowing into their lives. Do you take the time to now and then just talk and speak with them? Ask them about the things that they're facing right now.

can you remember the types of struggles you had at their age, whether you were a teenager or in your early or late twenties?

Is there something that you've learned along the way, some experience you can share with them that would make their journey easier? Is there something that you can say to encourage them and help them along the way?

That would be being guided by love. If we are guided by love, if we are steadfast in love, we'll be reaching out to the younger men. We're called to disciple others.

And we have a harvest right here in Kingdom Life Church. Let's think what we're doing with that. Our pastor must point out that just yesterday, Donovan Pepperon was baptized, a very recent convert.

[ 24 : 48 ] And shortly before that, his cousin BJ. And so we see God working in the lives of young men around us. But we have a part to play as well.

We're not just to leave them out there, defend for themselves, but we ought to be as older men, showing that we are marked by God, we are marked by godliness, and helping the younger men along the way.

And to the younger men, I see one or two here, there's a simple instruction to you. Just one thing Paul says, he says, be self-controlled.

And it sounds like a simple thing, but it's probably the hardest thing you could tell a young man to be self-controlled. Young men are infamous for being guided by their passions, for seeing something, they want it, they jump at it, they don't think about the consequences, often they don't even think about whether it's right or it's wrong.

And Paul says, if you're going to be marked as a godly man, that's not how you would be. Paul reminds us, younger men, that you're to be governed by scripture.

[ 26 : 13 ] We are to let scripture inform our own thinking and our actions. We must be self-controlled. So young men, even though you only have one instruction, you shouldn't be content with that one thing.

Remember, we talked about the process. You are to look at that list that's given to the older men, and you are the desire to have all those traits, all those marks, of a godly man.

You should be able to, at some point in your life, add one to another to another until you've checked all of them off of that list. So Paul says, be self-controlled.

And with that he means to find out what the scripture says is right and to live by that. And we can think of this in a similar way to what Paul says in Galatians 3 when he reminds us that the law was a tutor to God's people until we had Christ, until we could look to Christ.

So for the younger men, let self-control be a sort of tutor to you. You must cling to self-control. So meaning that you might be doing something or not doing something simply because you know that to do that or to not do that would be sin.

[ 27 : 34 ] but eventually as you practice that discipline a work is done in your heart and you really begin to have an affection for the things of God and you really want to do what's right until it becomes easier to do what is right and your affections and your heart is aligned with the word of God.

And so I said earlier that godly men are shaped and marked by sound doctrine. And just to summarize that point and say it in a different way to make sure that we're clear on it, I'll say it like this.

For the godly, our beliefs are shaped by scripture and we become marked and known as godly men by doing what scripture teaches.

I'm aware that among any crowd there may be those who, although you are in church, you're not believers. And if you're not a believer, then you can do things that are good and you can do things that are right.

But unless you're called by God, unless you've been called of darkness into light, there's no eternal value in doing these things.

[ 29 : 06 ] There may be momentary values, but we can never do anything good enough to earn the favor of God. And so you would not be among those who spend eternity with Christ.

if you're under condition, I'd urge you to cry out to God and ask him to do work in your heart so that you would experience true repentance and turn from your sin and truly look to God.

And for those who are believers, I'm going to urge you to truly live by sound doctrine let the scriptures inform your life not only no scripture not only no doctrine but to live by them and if we do that, if we live by sound doctrine and we see the marks of godliness in our lives, it will be for our benefit and it will also be for the glory of God so TM comes back that's great