

# **21<sup>st</sup> Century Men of Grace:** **God's Pathway to Eternal, Life-long Usefulness** **Titus 2:2-8**

One day each of us get to stand in front of Jesus who loved us, died for us, bought us, and asked us to live as His servants the rest of our lives.

He has already told us what He wants to say to each of us: "Well done, good and faithful servants" (Matthew 25).

He has already told us that everything in life we do, say, or think is either good or worthless (II Corinthians 5), and that the good He rewards and the worthless He burns (I Corinthians 3).

So, how do we stay on course with living the good that pleases Him, the good that He rewards, and that lasts forever?

That brings us to the end of our study of the Titus 2 passage. God has written out the actual way for us to APPLY what He desires in our lives. His desires are an APP for Pleasing Him. This APP, when downloaded into our hearts from the APP Store of His Word, comes with all the grace needed to make it operate in any place and under any conditions.

## **God's Application for: Everyone, Everywhere, and Anytime**

The APP of Grace-prompted Titus 2 living has operated for 2,000 years in every geographic area, and among every type of people.

It has been tested and found to work in the highly civilized, and brutally paganism of the Roman Empire. From this place and culture God called out a church filled with individuals that responded to God's Word and passed the truth onward in such a way that it has reached to us.

The desires God has for men and women of grace worked in the Dark Ages in Europe, during the Colonial Times in America, across the jungles of Africa when pygmies and cannibals were bought by Christ's blood out of the darkness, and in the Modern World of today.

The Gospel of God's grace: that saves us, cleanses us, and changes us from the inside out into a life with the power to daily choose ways that please God works anytime, anywhere, in anyone who desires to conform their life to God's desires spelled out in His Plan, the Bible.

I wonder, is there anything more vital in your life today than to know what God desires from you today, and surrendering to do His will?

I can't think of any higher calling, or any greater opportunity.

## **God's Plan is For EVERY Believer**

Today we begin the conclusion of a year-long study of Titus 2 by summarizing all we have seen into two parts.

- First, God's 12-Part Plan for growing 21<sup>st</sup> Women of Grace.
- Second, God's 12-Part Plan for growing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Men of Grace.

Listen to God through His Word, open your heart to His truths so simply spoken that Jews who trusted Christ, alongside Roman slaves who came to faith, and newly saved pagans from every strata of Roman culture all heard, understood, and applied God's desires to their world: and LIVED for Him!

That is why we are here today. They understood these truths in God's Word 20 centuries ago, and lived them, shared them, and raised up the next generations right down to each of us today.

The God of the Universe has told us that His focus is upon Christ's Church at this time in Redemptive History. God is calling out for Himself a people, chosen, and precious; and they are being built into His Church.

The way to be useful to God, and to gain eternal rewards that please Him is to follow His pathway that has been expressed from each leader and teacher given in God's Word to His church. Listen to these words from them I have put into 21<sup>st</sup> Century terms:

- Paul said: I beg you don't waste your life, remember the only way to keep everything from being wasted is to present your life one-day-at-a-time as a gift to God (that's Romans 12).
- Jesus said: as long as you live, where ever you go, tell believers what I left written down as my desire for the way they live (that's Matthew 28); and remind them that the way you show that you love me is when you keep all My commandments I have left for you to do in My Word (that's John 14).
- Peter said: since everything is going to get dissolved, burn up, and destroyed, live for the One who makes all you do in His Name last forever (that's II Peter 3).

As we open to the book of Titus this morning, never forget that is the context: Paul, guided by the Spirit of God, was writing a letter to Titus, the missionary church planter sent to the island of Crete.

The book of Titus captures the pattern God gave for every believer as the goal and direction of their life. Being a Titus 2 person of godliness should be the desire of every parent for their child; and every partner for their mate; and of every believer for their own life. The key is to remember that:

## The Pathway of Usefulness to God

There is nothing greater in life than to be useful for God! As we stand with our Bibles opened to Titus 2:1-8, listen to the very voice of God speaking not to a select few, but to every man, woman, and child here today:

“1 But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: 2 that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience;

3 the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things— 4 that they admonish

the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

6 Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, 7 in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, 8 sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.”

### Pray

## God’s 12-Part Plan for Godly Men of Maturity

As we look at the slides on the screen we start with the men of Crete, saved by grace, who were to be personally trained by Titus in the 12 areas that God considered paramount for the survival of His Church.

As we read through these descriptions of the highly useful men of Christ's church, ask yourself, “Is this the direction of my life?”

v.1 But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine, v.2a that the **older men** be:

“Sober” as this Greek<sup>1</sup> word **nephalious** is rendered in the KJV and NKJV; or “Sober-minded” is the way that the ESV renders it; and “Temperate” is the

<sup>1</sup> Strong’s number 3524

rendering you find in both the NIV and the NAS. The only church-wide curriculum for men starts with this word God chose that communicates the quality of: **MAINTAINING A BALANCED LIFE IN AN OBSESSIVE-COMPLUSIVE WORLD.** In other words, they choose to live a life a life balanced by God's Word in an unbalanced world. These men choose to abstain from becoming un-intoxicated by comfort, convenience, security, work, sports, and amusements.

***Do you want to obey God's call to balance your live by being a man of the Word?***

"Reverent" as this Greek<sup>2</sup> word ***semnous*** is rendered in the NKJV; or "grave" in the KJV; or "worthy of respect" in the NIV; or "dignified" as both the ESV and NAS translate it. This word God chose communicates the quality of: **GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT GOD IN AN AMUSED WORLD.** These men think deeply about God in an amused, shallow-thinking culture. That means they are not entertained by sensuality, never amused by vulgarity, and they won't treat God's Word superficially.

***Are you willing to invest the time on a regular basis to show that you are cultivating a serious pursuit of God in a world so amused that it has no time for God?***

"Temperate" as this Greek<sup>3</sup> word ***sophronas*** is rendered in the KJV and NKJV; or "Self-controlled" as we find in the ESV and NIV; or "Sensible" as translated in the NAS. This word was chosen by God to communicate the third quality He wants to see in His highly useful and rewarded men, which is: **LIVING WISELY IN A FOOLISH WORLD.** God wants older men whose lives are yielded to His control. God wants us to live in such a way that our lives demand an explanation from a watching world. This man's life is characterized by the defining qualities of the Greek word ***sophronous*** which means, "self-controlled, restored to one's senses, earnest living". God wants a man whose life speaks louder than his words; whose character is noticed and prompts other men to examine their own lives and seek to emulate his joy, his peace, and his walk in the Spirit, in evident and practical ways.

***Are you asking God to shape you into His Titus 2 older-man-in-the-faith's life-pattern for others to use in shaping their own lives?***

"Sound in faith" as these Greek words ***hugainos pistei*** are rendered in the NKJV and KJV/NIV/NAS/ESV: This means God wants the men of Christ's Church always **GUARDING A HEALTHY MIND IN A SICK WORLD.** God wants older men with healthy minds. **Sound** is from the same verb (***hugain***) used in Titus 2:1 for Biblical doctrine, and refers to things that are healthy, proper, whole, and as they ought to be.

<sup>2</sup> Strong's number 4586

<sup>3</sup> Strong's number 4998

***Are you eating God's Word (Matthew 4:4) and exercising yourself into godliness (I Timothy 4:7) so that your mind is guarded and kept by the Word of God that is our armor of protection?***

"[Sound in] love" as these Greek words ***hugainos agape*** are rendered in the NKJV, NAS, ESV, and NIV; or "[sound in] charity" in the KJV. This word means God wants the men of Christ's Church always: **STAYING TENDER HEARTED IN A CRUEL WORLD.** God wants men who have His love overflowing within, making them personally loving towards others, not bitter. Christ's prime emotion, most recorded in God's Word is compassion. Love in our hearts makes us compassionate in our responses. These godly men are not fault-finders, nor unsympathetic. They are open to new people, new ideas, and not frozen in their old ways. They grow more and more tender toward the views and the mistakes of those around them—instead of getting more and more inflexible and intolerant.

***Do you spend enough time in Christ's Presence that you are changing more and more to be like Him (II Corinthians 3:18) and living out His tender-hearted compassion for those around you each day?***

[sound in] patience is how this Greek<sup>4</sup> word ***hupomone*** is translated in the NKJV and KJV; or by these words in the other main English translations: "steadfastness" in ESV; "endurance" in NIV; and "perseverance" in the NAS. This word expresses God's desire that all of the men in tune with His plan for their life are **FINISHING HOPEFULLY IN A DESPAIRING WORLD.** God wants men who persevere through all the hard times life will always bring—and then model that triumphant hope Christ alone can bring.

***Patience is a gift that gets strengthened by use and weakened by neglect. Are you allowing God to exercise your life into healthy, strong patience so that those around you see that is an area that you are growing in on a regular basis?***

v. 6 Likewise exhort the **young men**:

"to be sober-minded" is the translation of the Greek<sup>5</sup> word ***sophroneo*** which is translated "sober minded" in both the NKJV/KJV; and "self-controlled" NIV/ESV; and "sensible" in the NAS. The very first desire God expresses for every younger man is that they be exhorted, lovingly encouraged, and gently led to firmly resolve to **Live A Restrained Life In A Lust-Filled World.**

***How is your life as a young man? O you reflect God's ownership of your time, or your body, of your mind and schedule? Are your appetites under His control or are you driven by your body's desires? God wants***

<sup>4</sup> Strong's word number 5281

<sup>5</sup> Strong's number 4993.

***you to feel His ownership by surrendering your body back to Him (Romans 12:1-2; I Corinthians 6:19-20) every day.***

v. 7 “in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works” as the NKJV/KJV renders the Greek<sup>6</sup> words ***panta parechomenos tupon***. These words are also translated “in everything set them an example by doing what is good” NIV; ESV “show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works”; NAS “in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds”. All of these translations point to a godly young man who is: **Following Christ In A Christ-less World;**

Paul here tells Titus to make his life a model, a template, and a pattern. Live out these truths for other young men like you to follow. So this list that follows is what Titus was to exemplify, model, and teach by example to every young man. And once Titus was off the scene, others like godly older men of the faith were to keep that discipleship ministry going.

***Is your life a template for others to model? Do you live as an imitator of Christ? That is what we are all called to do, and when we do, the Lord uses us to inspire and encourage others in how He can be followed. Are you ready to get that unfading crown that comes when we are an example to the flock?***

“in doctrine showing integrity” is how the NKJV renders the Greek<sup>7</sup> words ***didaskalia aphthorian***. Or as the NIV/ESV says “in your teaching show integrity”; or as the NAS says “with purity in doctrine”. This is the call to the personal integrity of **Believing Right so that I Behave Right;** or of **Maintaining Godly Integrity In An Hypocritical World;** The word that the Holy Spirit guides Paul<sup>8</sup> to use is actually a negative form of a descriptive word for being morally corrupt. Paul is here stressing that a young man’s convictions are to be based on God’s Word (doctrine) and are to not to be hypocritically corrupted (or have integrity) by a lifestyle that doesn’t match up with his beliefs. This is much more than just saying that you believe the truths of God’s Word, it means that this godly young man lives out those truths by God’s grace.

***Do you behave like you believe God’s Word? Is your life as a young man built upon the Doctrines of God and do those who watch you see that you have the solid foundation of truth that leads to righteous behavior? Does what you live square up with what you say you believe?***

“reverence” is the Greek<sup>9</sup> word ***semnotes*** rendered as “reverence” in the NKJV); “gravity” (KJV); “dignity” (ESV); “seriousness” (NIV); and “dignified” (NAS). God desires every younger man to **Stay Focused on God in a World**

<sup>6</sup> Strong’s word number 53.

<sup>7</sup> The Greek text is: en te didaskalia (1319) aphthorian (90).

<sup>8</sup> Writing also about the vital need for integrity in our personal lives, Peter uses a related form of this word when he says that false teachers promise “freedom while they themselves are slaves of *corruption*; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved” (2 Pet. 2:19).

<sup>9</sup> Strong’s word number 4587.

**of Distractions.** This fourth quality of "reverence" is God's appeal to younger men to abandon the distractions of life that will steal so many years of their lives. God says don't get into time-wasting habits. Get your eyes fixed on me (Hebrews 12:1-2), and lay aside those easily besetting sins that will distract you from really knowing me.

***How is your focus on God? Are you "lost in electronica", living a world of endless electronic media and constant visual stimulation? Can you think deeply about God and abstain from distractions that want to make God seem so far away? If so, you are on the path that God desires for you of seeking Him first, as more important than everything else (Matthew 6:33).***

**"incorruptibility"**<sup>10</sup> [The NKJV also footnotes this word saying the: NU-Text omits incorruptibility.] So, we could say that all five versions have the word (or a member of the exact word family) that we are studying this morning; they just have it in different places and in a differing amount of occurrences. If you have KJV it is "sincerity"; if you have NAS it is "purity"; if you have NIV it is "integrity", and if you have ESV it is also "integrity". This is a strong call from God to every young man to live an un-corroded life. God wants holiness and purity and so he asks that every young man be lovingly called to purity.

**Keeping an Uncorroded Life in a Decaying World**

***How's the corrosion prevention system doing in your life? Are you allowing the power of Christ's Cross to set you free from the chains that sins and lusts so quickly can forge in a young man's life?***

v. 8 "sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you". (NKJV): Healthy Communications in a Sick World; Speaking Words of Life in a World of Death;  
**Healthy Communications that bring life in a World of Death.**

The word "sound" in v. 8. This word is **hugei**, an adjective form of a Greek<sup>11</sup> verb we have seen several times already in Titus. The Greek verb **hugaino** (Strong's # 5198) is always used in reference to "sound" or healthy, correct, orthodox doctrine. We can see this word in Titus 1:9, 13; 2:1, 2. But this adjective form **hugei** is used 11 x in the New Testament (Matthew 12:13; 15:31; Mark 5:34; John 5:6, 9, 11, 14, 15; 7:23; Acts 4:10; and Titus 2:8). This use in Titus 2:8 is the only time this word is used for communication; all the other ten times it is used in the Scriptures it is an adjective that describes people who have been healed. It is almost as if God is saying that we need God to make our communication healthy. We as sinners are sick in the

<sup>10</sup> Strong's word number 861. Word study of the root of this word in the Greek NT: **5351 phtheiro** (from phthio, "perish, waste away") properly, waste away, corrupt (deteriorate); (figuratively) to cause or experience moral deterioration i.e. decomposition (break-down), due to the corrupting influence of sin. [This root (pht-) literally means "waste away" (degenerate), "moving down from a higher level (quality, status) to a lower form.] corrupt, defile, destroy. Probably strengthened from phthio (to pine or waste); properly, to shrivel or wither, i.e. To spoil (by any process) or (generally) to ruin (especially figuratively, by moral influences, to deprave) -- corrupt (self), defile, destroy. Forms of this word in the New Testament: (ephtheiramen) 1 x; (ephtheiren) 1 x; (phtharein) 1 x; (phthareisontai) 1 x; (phtheirei) 1 x; (phtheiromenon) 1 x; (phtheirontai) 1 x; (phtheirusin) 1 x; (phtherei) 1 x.

<sup>11</sup> Strong's word number 5199.

communications department, and every other department for that matter. Only a Divine touch can restore us to speech that pleases God.

***Young men, are you like Isaiah when he saw the Lord High and Lifted up (Isaiah 6)? Then let His Glory shake your world, let His Holiness make you feel undone, and then ask Him to heal your communication. Only a touch of Christ's work on the Cross, a burning coal from His altar can cleanse, heal, and make healthy our communication. Do you want His touch? That is His desire today for every young man in His Church: Healthy Communications that bring life in a world of Death.***

There is the APPLication for every man in Christ's Church.

It is simply stated, but immensely hard to do. So God packed into the app all the power (called grace) that is needed.

All we as men need to do is WANT to obey, ASK for the grace to start, and SURRENDER each day to the Word of God applied in our daily life by the Spirit of God.

The Lord God who wrote the Book explains to us a plan for living. He reduces every choice, every decision, every plan, every goal in life for a believer down to one of two types.

Either that plan, thought, or action was good, and God saves it forever, or it was bad and God burns it because it isn't worthy of Heaven, eternity, nor His Presence.

Today say yes to the Lord and allow Him to shape you into a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Man of Grace.

How about saying yes in a song, number 372, just the refrain:

O Jesus Lord and Savior, I give myself to Thee;  
For Thou in Thine atonement didst give Thyself for me;  
I own no other Master, my heart shall be Thy Throne;  
My life I give henceforth to live: O Christ for Thee alone.