

## Sound Doctrine re: Younger Women and Men

Call to Worship: Psalm 8

1st Scripture: 1 Timothy 2:8-15

2nd Scripture: Titus 2:1-8

Hymn #133- *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

Hymn Insert- *The Power of the Cross*

Hymn #493- *Who is on the Lord's Side?*

### Introduction

In exhorting Titus to contend with the false teachers who have infiltrated the church/es at Crete, last time, we found him providing Titus with sound, biblical doctrine, that was to be used to instruct the older men and older women in the church, concerning the godly characteristics that they were to pursue and maintain (verses 1-3).

This morning then, we continue on with additional characteristics that Paul lists, which are especially to be pursued and maintained by the younger women and younger men in the church.

### I. A Critical Contextual Preface

Before we look at the various characteristics listed here, there is an important contextual observation that must be highlighted.

We spoke last time about the importance of the older and more mature Christians having the responsibility of teaching and setting an example for the younger and less mature Christians. Notice again, that the list of characteristics attached to the younger women (vs. 4-5), is prefaced by these words, “that they (that is the older women, just spoken about in verse 3) admonish the young women to...etc.” And then in verse 6, we find Paul commanding Timothy to, “Likewise, *exhort the young men* to be sober-minded, in all things *showing yourself to be a pattern of good works...etc.*”

Now, what do we find here? It is interesting to note, that while Titus is responsible to have teaching oversight over all of the brethren, he is to especially command the older women to admonish the younger women, while he is to exhort the younger men. In other words, brethren, when dealing with the day to day, more personal ministry of the brethren, it ought to be the case that older women are working with the younger women, and older men with the younger men.

Now, I believe that there are at least two significant reasons, for why Paul orders things in this way.

1) Certainly, ideally, more mature, older women would be better equipped to admonish the younger women, because of their former experience, having once been younger women. They've travelled the path, which the younger women are now on. Generally, they have experience in being a young wife, having reared children unto maturity, being a homemaker...etc, all things which Paul addresses in the character list, associated with younger women. They know the pitfalls, the twists and turns, pains and challenges that young women face, and hopefully, they've come to understand how to prayerfully and biblically address them.

2) In general, it is not wise for men to work with women, especially in any private sense. The temptation toward falling into sexual sin is far too risky. And so, ideally, women should be working with women. This doesn't eliminate the pastoral responsibility of working with women, altogether, because pastors are called to shepherd the whole flock, and not just the males. However, pastors would be wise to strive to avoid counseling alone with women, as much as possible. And again, ideally, older, more mature women ought to train to fill that gap, as Paul here clearly implies by this command.

All of that said, let us now consider the non-exhaustive list of characteristics that Paul assigns to the younger women and men.

## **II. Younger Women** (Read vs. 4-5)

And so, the older women are to admonish the younger women:

1) To love their husbands. Following their personal relationship with God, wives (and husbands, for that matter) are to be most concerned about their relationship to their spouses. First and foremost, before considering any other ministry in the church or outside the church, above all else, wives are called to fix their attention on properly loving their husbands. And to be sure, there are many women, who will commit themselves to doing all kinds of services to others; maybe in a philanthropic sense, ministering to the poor, serving in the church, leading Bible studies among women...etc, and yet, give little to no time, to loving their own husbands and strengthening their marriages. And this is a great dishonor to God, and it virtually defiles

every other good work they do. Because God is saying, “Your husband, the one to whom you are joined, must and ought to be your first concern, from the horizontal standpoint.” Not your other family members, not your friends, not your church brethren, no, not even your children, but your husband first.

And so, it is important that the older women; those who have set the example already, “admonish (teach, correct, rebuke, exhort, encourage) the younger women, first, to love their husbands. This love entails every form of emotional, spiritual and physical support, which would indicate to the husbands that their wives truly love them. It is a regular, daily, “husband focused” love, doing all that would support, encourage, help and improve the husbands wellbeing, out of love for Christ.

2) To love their children. Following being exhorted to love their husbands, the younger women are to be admonished to love their children. That is to say, they are to be encouraged and exhorted to give proper attention to the caring for, rearing, educating and disciplining of their children. A woman can get lost in all of the responsibilities that are attached to rearing children; the job never ends, and so, they will need encouragement from other women, who have travelled that path, to know that the role of a mother is an honorable roll, which God holds in high esteem. And some mothers can be tempted to think that they are missing out on life, because they are consumed with changing diapers, making meals, helping with school work...etc, and they need to be admonished unto continuing onward with this great and precious responsibility, delegated to them by God, unto the care of His little image bearers, who need to be trained to fear, love and serve God, in the midst of a dark and wicked generation.

3) To be discreet. This is the same word used back in verse 2, where the older men are commanded to be “temperate.” And again, it is also used back in 1 Timothy 8, listed among the elder qualifications as “sober-minded.” And it will be used again, in verse 6, as a character charge committed to the young men.

And so, again, the sense then, that is given, would involve doing all that it takes to keep the mind sharp, focused and sane. Over and over again, we find this charge given to the people of God, to do all on their part to maintain a sound mind; to keep the mind free of anything that would altar it in such a way that would limit self-control. If, in keeping with Romans 12, we are

not to be conformed to the world, but transformed by the renewing of the mind (by the Word of God), then we can see how important this universal character trait is, brethren. God's greatest work in our sanctification begins with the mind, and through that Avenue, the rest of the life is changed. And so, the mind must be protected and preserved for God.

4) To be chaste. That is, to be pure. A woman of God is to guard her mind and her body from the profanity and immorality of the world. Having been redeemed in Christ, she must stand out in humility, with a gentle and quiet spirit, turning away from the impure and profane examples that entrench the common culture. And yes, while that would include fidelity to her husband and chastity in her virginity, it would also include the general demeanor of speaking with pure lips (and not like a truck driver), dressing modestly (not exposing her body), seeking to grab the attention of God, who delights in the quiet, inward person of the heart, and not perverted men, who lust after the flesh.

5) To be homemakers. Literally, this means good housekeepers, "stayers at home," and domestically inclined. Our culture makes this very difficult, especially with the cost of living on Long Island, but it is an ideal, nonetheless. Married women, if possible, should be caretakers of the home, caring for their own children and seeking to be a support and help to their husbands. Now, I recognize that this is not always possible, but husbands, if there is any way that you could survive with your wife caring for the home, especially if you have children, you ought to strive to do what it takes, to have less even, so as to allow for that. It is definitely the biblical ideal. I realize that saying these things may make some of you uncomfortable, and believe me, in my flesh, I would rather not say them. But, I have to say what I believe the text states. These commands assume what is ideally right, proper and best.

6) To be good. Here, the Greek word for "good," which is "agathos," actually means "good." It is just the general term that is used very often in the NT. And so, the older women are to admonish the younger women to be good. To think, speak and do what is right, proper and helpful. To do what is good and beneficial, and that which will promote the joy and well being of others, within the parameters of God's moral will.

7) To be obedient to their own husbands. To honor, respect and obey their husbands, in all things, again, within the parameters of God's moral will. To seek to submit to their husbands as the church is called to submit to Christ.

And all of these things; all of these godly characteristics, which the older women are to exemplify and teach and admonish the younger women to pursue and maintain; all of these godly traits, which are counter-cultural and in contention with the false teachings of the false teachers, are especially to be sought after, "so that (vs. 5) the word of God may not be blasphemed." You see, this is not about Paul being some male chauvinist pig. This is about the will, design and desire of God. And it is good! And a woman who contends with these virtues and characteristics is not so much in contention with men, as she is with God. To reject these characteristics is to reject the Word of God. And to refuse to pursue them, as a professing Christian, is to present a picture to the world that is contrary to God's will, and which, will lead others to speak against and blaspheme the Word of God.

### **III. Younger Men** (Read vs. 6)

"Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded..." (vs. 6). Interestingly enough, in this context, Paul leaves Titus with this one charge, regarding the younger men. This, in no way, diminishes the responsibilities of the younger men, or implies that they have less character responsibilities than the women. It's just that in this particular context, he leaves the emphasis on this one virtue. To be sure, there are many, many, commands given to men and all Christians throughout all of the Scriptures, but here, he simply emphasizes the need for Titus to exhort the younger men to be "sober-minded." [Eph. 5- husband's charge is much lengthier than wives]

And once again, this is the same exact term, which the translators chose to translate as "discreet" for the younger women. And so, again, the sense then, that is given, would involve doing all that it takes to keep the mind sharp, focused and sane.

### **IV. Titus's Example**

Finally, Paul charges Titus, himself, to be an example to all. "...in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility,

sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you” (vs. 7-9). [Note: Perhaps, adds to young men list, but definitely universal in its ultimate scope]

Titus is not merely to command these things to the men and women, he himself must set an example; he must be a pattern and a template that all can follow. His life must match up with his teaching, so that he can say, “Do as I do,” and not simply, “Do as I say.” He was to be a pattern of good works, with respect to his active life. And furthermore, he must remain consistent and uncompromising in his doctrine/teaching. His actions and words must pave a way that the church can follow.

Notice, in doctrine, “showing integrity (purity with an uncompromising commitment to the Word of God, as it is stated and taught, at all costs), reverence (honoring the Word of God and its teachings, as the supreme authority over your life; respecting it, by obeying it and teaching others to do the same) incorruptibility (with sincerity, not allowing the truth to be compromised or changed under any circumstances) sound speech that cannot be condemned (maintaining consistency in properly interpreting and teaching the word of God, as it is truly revealed, such that no one can legitimately accuse you of hypocrisy), that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.” In other words, interpreting and teaching the Word of God without compromise, clearly, as each text dictates, within its context, and living accordingly, so that, no one can charge you with hypocrisy. Your life must line up with your doctrine. Even as what you believe dictates how you live, your life ought to be consistent with what you profess to believe, so that, no one can charge you with any evil. Teaching and standing upon the truth will leave the opposition with no legitimate ground to accuse you of any evil.

Next time, Lord willing, we will consider Paul’s charge to Titus, regarding bondservants and masters.

## **V. Closing Thoughts and Applications**

1) While there is certainly nothing wrong with forming age related ministries (youth groups, young adult groups...etc), let us see here the need to create opportunities where older

Christians can spend time with younger Christians. How else will older women and men be able to influence and admonish younger women and men, if all we are doing is grouping people according to their age? This is one of the reasons there is great value in the women's ministry or in an open men's/women's Bible study...etc. I guess the main point here is to get us thinking along the lines of creating opportunities where older, more mature folks can spend time with (and form relationships with) younger folks. Even at our luncheons, we should be thinking along these lines. [Note: the danger of fleeing to churches simply because they have large groups]

2) Women, if you are a homemaker, raising children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, don't let anyone despise you or make you feel like you are wasting your life. Even though most of your younger to middle age years are given over to this very difficult, time consuming, all encompassing task, you are not throwing your life away. Indeed, you are honoring God, and you are living a worthy life in the sight of God. Don't covet the career minded, but be content serving right where God has you. You are not, by far, wasting your life, and God is well pleased with you. You are right where God wants you, and what He has designed you to be.

3) That said, while the general pattern for women involves marriage and raising children and being homemakers, there are also women (and men, for that matter) whom God has gifted and fitted for serving Him as single individuals. Please know that that is not wrong or a wasted life either. Some of the most godly women in history were reserved for serving Him in a unique way, not having to bear the burdens that surround motherhood. To be sure, there are very hard working women in this church, who because of their present state of singleness have been used in some of the most blessed ways in this body, which they were only able to do, because of their single state. I am beyond thankful for you, and would encourage you to continue to use the gifts that God has uniquely fitted you to bear, to edify and build up this body.

4) Finally, remember, older men, younger men, older women, younger women, everyone...that your obedience to God, or lack thereof, will affect how people view God's Word. By your actions, you either adorn the gospel or cause it to be blasphemed. Professing faith in Christ brings with it, the great responsibility of seeking to follow and obey Christ, lest you bring reproach to His Name, by your lack of obedience, and a life that is inconsistent with your doctrine. Your life must line up with your doctrine! The gospel! Amen!!!