

Titus 2:3–5

The High Calling of Godly Women Who Don't Cause God's Word to Be Blasphemed

Thursday, September 21, 2023 • Read Titus 2:3–5

Questions from the Scripture text: Whom else is Titus to exhort (v3)? In what are they to have the holy carefulness of a priest (translated “reverent” by NKJ)? What aren't they to be (i.e. ‘accusers’ always accusing like a devil)? To what are they not to be in bondage? Of what does this make them teachers? Whom are they to help to be temperate (v4, where NKJ “admonish” is from the same root as “temperate” in v2)? What are the two great loves of a temperate/sober-minded young woman? What is she to be, generally (yet another instance of that temperate/sober-minded/self-controlled word)? And what else? Where is her work? How else is she generally characterized? How does this goodness express itself in relation to her husband? What is at stake in young women’s conducting themselves this way?

How should an older woman conduct herself? Titus 2:3–5 looks forward to the second serial reading of in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these two verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **an older woman should conduct herself with such holiness and gentleness as encourages younger women to devote themselves to their crucial character and work.**

In making application of sound doctrine, Titus was to begin with the older men (v1–2), who were an example for the congregation. Now, he turns to the older women (feminine version of the same word, v3) for a similar reason. Their godly life is to be instructive to the younger women (v4–5).

An older woman's example, v3. There is a great spiritual danger for an older woman: live in pleasure (cf. 1Tim 5:6). Particularly if they have lived in service of others for decades, they may view old age as the time when they finally have the chance to live for themselves a bit. (Some even refer to this approach to life and “retirement” as “the American dream”!). But Titus is to exhort older women to a life that is exactly the opposite of living for pleasure. The word translated “reverent” is built off the root for a priest. Similarly to the widows of the roll in 1Tim 5, all older women are to live a life of consecration like the priests who had to be careful and wise to be always ceremonially clean.

So, let older women live in holiness. There are two things they are especially to watch out for: being slanderers or given to too much wine. “Slanderers” is “devils”—it indicates backbiters or opponents, but it is the word devil. What a danger there is in becoming one who drops negative things about others into our conversations... the danger of becoming a devil! “Given to too much wine” is “slaves to much wine.” Alcohol has a particular enslaving power that makes it a representative of all earthly pleasures: to live for pleasure is to become its slave.

A younger woman's lesson, v4. The older women's consecrated behavior makes them a “teacher of good things such that they admonish.” The idea is not that they hold classes for younger women, but that their conduct is itself a masterclass. And what do the younger women learn to do? Love their husbands and love their children. More properly to the grammar in the original, they are *to be* husband-lovers and child-lovers.

We live in a world that tells us to find our identity in ourselves, and the world finds a willing listener in our flesh. But the believer's great identity is in the Lord, and that means embracing from the heart the roles into which He puts us. For a wife or a mother, this is to be her identity, earthly-speaking: not just that she devotes her time and effort to wife-ing and mother-ing, but that her earthly identity be that of a husband-lover and child-lover.

A younger woman's conduct, v5. “discreet” is sober-minded, self-controlled. She is theologically sound, and she lives not by impulses or emotions but by that sound doctrine. “Chaste” is holy, pure. She doesn't muddle up her life with sin or competing interests. “Homemakers” is “workers at home.” She is a worker, and she has made her home the object of her labors. She is “good,” not just well-behaved but beneficial. She seeks to benefit all around her. She is subject to her own husband. That's language that cuts against our flesh and very much against the mind of our age. So the end of v5 presses the importance of wives submitting to their husbands: “that the word of God may not be blasphemed.” If we claim to hold to His Word, but then we live according to our ideas instead of His design and His commands, we bring shame upon the Word.

What does our culture expect older women to live for? What does it expect younger women to live for? What can you do to support a biblical culture? How can you honor and encourage the women who live according to these verses?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for Your design for marriage and for the household. Truly, unto Your own glory, You have made these beautiful and beneficial. So forgive us for when we live selfishly—not only failing to serve others, but not being mindful of how we might cause your word to be blasphemed. Grant unto us instead to love You with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Specifically, grant unto us to love those nearest and dearest neighbors—those in our homes. We pray especially for the young wives and mothers that they would be husband-lovers and child-lovers. Bless their labors and grant that their lives would adorn the gospel, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP128 “How Blessed Are All Who Fear the Lord” or TPH548 “Oh Blest the House”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Titus chapter 2 verses 3 through 5. These are God's words. The older women likewise that they be reverent and behavior. Not slant, verse not given to much wine. Teachers of good things. That they admonish the young women to love their husbands. To love their children. To be discreet. Chaste.

Homemakers. Good. Obedient to their own husbands. That the word of god may not be. Blasphemed. So far the reading of gods inspired and inherent work. And which we hear? About something that must be very important. Because the apostle says that, If these instructions are not followed. The word of god is going to be blasphemed.

And this is a dreadful thing, indeed. And yet, it is something that as we Um, consider the verses here? We must. Conclude with grief. That the word of god has often been blasphemed. And is much lessmed. Even in our own day.

If we. And we don't have or won't take the time now. To study first and second and third wave feminism. Put all three of them have been opposed. To the portrait of a woman. That is given here. That Titus is to command. To exhort the older women. Of the congregation in creates to be and the younger women of the congregation increased to be Just as he had with the men and the older men in particular who themselves, although they are elderly.

Rather than elders. Uh, yet they similar to the elders, are an example to the rest of the congregation. And so he began with the older men in verse two, So now he turns To the women and addresses, the older ones first And he instructs that they be. Reverent. And, Behavior.

The word reverent here is built off of The word for priest, it's not the same word that has been used for reverent in a number of these lists and First and second, Timothy and titus. It refers to how the priest was, always. Uh, reminding himself of The importance of his role and the importance of remaining.

Holy, He would be very careful. Never to come near anything. That was unclean. He would remember that that his hands are going to be. Need it for the service of the church for the offering of the sacrifices in the case. Of the priest. And so an older woman is to consider herself devoted to the good of the church.

As if she were a priest. Um, now this isn't necessarily a widow. Uh, but Even. Perhaps. In her and her husband's old age, if the lord has As spared a husband to her, he is no longer working and needing for her to keep up. Um, A support of his vocation, the children are grown and gone.

Um, You know, the season of the The helping of her husband and obeying her husband and the taking care of her children. Taking all of her time that season has passed, but still all of her time. Is to be devoted unto, God, and devoted unto God for the good of his church.

Like a priest. Who considered himself and all of his time? To be devoted unto god for the good of god's church. And so there's that mindset. Uh, that is built off of the word priest. Here and translated. In our version. Reverent. So, she must be Uh, reverent or priestly if we will.

Uh, but not saying that she's ordained to office or anything like that. Reverent or priestly consecrated devoted. In her behavior. There are two things that if she is not careful and consecrated and devoted that she is in danger of falling into one is becoming a devil That's the word that is behind the word slanderer here.

Yes, it means an opponent and And accuser. Uh, but

The fact that it Is from the word for devil reminds us of the great harm that is done. By a woman whose lips are loose. Uh, g. She is in danger not having as many duties now and this season of life of going around letting things slip here and there into conversation, letting things slip into the conversation that our Negative about others, or that's private and information?

And Causing whether it's a low opinion of someone else or strife to a rise in between parties or envy or jealousy. Or frustration, or bitterness. Being un careful. Of our speech can cause so much discord and so much harm just as the devil loves to. So discord and strife to harm the church.

Well, an older woman who has not been careful of her conversation and consecrated, devoting her conversation unto God for the good of the church. Is in danger. Of unintentionally even unknowingly even Or maybe intentionally. God have mercy. Um, becoming as a devil. Someone who's carelessness of conversation. Passes around.

Information that should not be spread or even falsehoods. All together. And so she is to be priestly consecrated unto God for the good of the church in her behavior, very careful, that of her conversation and also careful not to live for pleasure. Here. Here, it says not given to much wine, but it's not the same word as given.

To much wine like we saw for instance. In the

The officer qualifications. And first Timothy 3 here. It's the word for slave. Not a slave. Of much wine. And it's a reminder that. That living for pleasure in slaves, someone to whatever that pleasure is. For which they live, and alcohol in particular because of the way. That. Abusing it.

Waste time you become. Uh, useless for service it. Lowers your guard permits. Much more of that remaining fleshliness to be expressed. Than otherwise would. And it can be very addictive. As well. And so alcohol, which Can be a right and good pleasure. It is a profitable servant in many ways from the lord, but it makes a terrible horrible master and it can so easily go from being one to the other.

And any pleasure in life can be. Uh, can be similar in that regard. Remember, first, Timothy 5 talking about The true widow in. In particular, one of the danger for an older woman or for a widow is that she would live in pleasure. You remember the apostle there said the woman who lives for pleasure or lives in pleasure is dead while she lives Um, It would be better for her and for others.

If she had been dead. Isn't that a dreadful thing? To consider. That there is a way of living. That god says about it, it would be better if we had been dead. Who had been better for us, if we had been dead, it would have been better for others.

If, if we had been dead dead, While she lives. Um, And so they are to be consecrated and devoted to god for the good of the church. Careful. Um, Of what comes out of their lips that not only, it would only be that, which Is. Beneficial helpful. Um, to others.

And beneficial and helpful to the church. And, And careful not to live for pleasure. And this makes them by their conduct by their conversation. By their priorities. Teachers of good things. Uh, notice teachers of good things here again, is something that they are. And, I know that this is a, a versus three and four become the proof text for having like women's ministries led by women and women's classes things that the bible never envisioned and certainly is not the case here.

How do we know? Because this is something that is required of every older woman. If this was talking about women teaching classes in the church are women becoming teachers of women in the church, every single woman, every single older woman in the church, then Would be required. To be a teacher of these classes.

No, they are required. To live the sort of life that teaches the younger woman. And the that at the beginning of verse, Verse 4 is better, translated, so that They admonish the young women. To love their husbands. And so you have an older woman who has gone through the season.

Of the husband, and his calling the, the household. Uh, you know, she being the mistress of the house where he is the master of the house, she having to oversee, so many things in complement to. And And support of. His overseeing things that season has passed. And her bearing and rearing, the children has passed.

And here she is, with all of the time that she has still. Devoted consecrated to god for the good of his church. And the younger women see and they think, oh, This desire for. Living for myself and living for pleasure. And and Not having to serve so much this looking forward to retirement.

That is. The american dream, but the bible's nightmare. This is wrong. That's from my flesh. Because, I am devoted to a certain type of service now and this season. Of my life and calling before god, and i am to be devoted to another Sort of service, but still devoted to service.

And the latter season. Uh, in addition to The older women have gone through that season and they are evidence. That god's grace, sustained them and god's grace. Little sustain. Also, the younger women. And so, their conduct their behavior, their character. Becomes an admonishment to the young women. Uh, what are the young women?

To be. And it's to be not to do, although it looks like to do in our english version where it says to love their husbands and to love their children, it's actually nouns. Uh, that the young women. Be husband lovers that the young women be children lovers. That not only is it something that they do?

Do you love your husband? Oh yeah. I love my husband. And do you love your children? Oh yeah. I love my children. I love them. Dearly But that the loving of their husband and the loving of their children, the service of their husband, the service of their children, Be so much of their work that it can be described as their identity.

Yeah. So Um, What are they? Um, you know, what do you do? Oh, i'm a housewife or even worse. I'm just a housewife. Well, no. Um, What do you do? You know, it's not so much what i do it's who i am. God has called me to be. A husband lover.

God has called me to be. My children. Uh, my children's lover, a child lover. And so, The the picture starts to crystallize of the older women in verse three being Of this priestess sort of mindset that they are consecrated devoted unto god for the good of the church, even in their internal conduct of of what they live for not living for pleasure and even in how they use their lips, the devoted lips, only that, that which brings praise unto God, which does good out of the unto the church coming out of their mouth.

And that's what they are and the younger women. This is what they are lovers of their husbands lovers of their children. And, And then in their conduct, That they would be discrete sober-minded self-controlled. The idea is they have sound doctrine that Shapes their priorities that shapes their choices that instruct how they do the things that they That they choose to prioritize.

And they are controlled by theology. They are controlled by the bible. They are controlled as it thus, by the holy spirit. Who has conforming them to christ? Chaste, that means they are pure. They don't allow Any uncleanness in their life. Anything that would distract from divert from mess up.

Their ability to serve their husband or to serve their children, to love their husband to, to love their children. They are. Uh, home makers and it's A word for work, and the word for home, and it's just mashed together. Their workers at home. The the home is their masterpiece, their magnum opus.

Uh, they are. Uh, they are devoted. To it, and not just, For. Um, For beauty or for efficiency. But for good. They are good and the the word here, yes, meaning morally, upright, but perhaps even more than that beneficial. Seeking to benefit their husband seeking to benefit their children seeking to benefit.

The church seeking to benefit, even Um, strangers by hospitality. Uh, and so forth. Um, and obedient to their husband subject. Subject to their husband, submissive. Um, submitted to Their husbands. Something that, of course, Rubs the flesh the wrong way. And is we live in such an anti-biblical? Uh, age of that is so hostile.

To. The. God's design. For the, for marriage and for the home. That these words are very offensive to many. Uh, but this is what they ought to be. And all of these things, again. That the word of god may not be blasphemed. What a horrible thing, it would be.

To. Hear the word of god, read the word of god claim to believe the word of god. And then to live. Just like everyone else does. To be a love living testimony. To the idea. That the word of god doesn't make a difference. How dreadful? That would be. And so, the The bible here places, a very high calling.

On older women. And younger women. And little girls. Sophia. Little girls who need to pay attention. And family worship who need to learn. To obey their dad and their mom. Right away. All the way into cheerfully. Who need to learn how to love to serve and not, just because i'm going to get to play later.

But because the service honors, god and does good to others. Because you need to train. So that you can be one of these younger women. And god helping you through many, many years of being one of these younger, women, with your husband and with your children, then maybe, The lord blessing you with all those years and all that grace, you would be one of these older women.

Who was all example. To the younger women. That god's grace will do it. That hits his grace is powerful. And that he is merciful. To sustain us in our callings. Only the lord give you my Many daughters my dear wife. To be able to follow this passage. By the help of his spirit.

Let's ask for that help. Our father in heaven, we do pray that your holy spirit Would help us. Would help us all in character that we have been seeing you call us to Throughout this passage throughout this book. Um, but we pray, especially Just now. My wife for my daughters.

That you would grant to them. Oh lord. This Devoted and consecrated life. That rejoices in your design that rejoices In their calling. We pray. Lord that You would grant this not only to our household. Whatever household of our congregation. And indeed. Oh, lord, that part of A widespread revival and reformation.

Would be your. Causing a recovery. Of biblical womanhood. Um, In the church's generally. And even in the wider society. Have mercy. Oh, lord. Truly. There are many. Uh, who Live as if your word makes no difference. And we live in a sad and grievous age. In which the word of god is therefore by your own definition here.

Much blasphemed. Forgive us. Oh, lord. And grant repentance, we ask In jesus name. Amen.