



LIVES *that* ADORN
the Gospel

by Kelly Collier

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- What practical impact has your study in Titus had in the way you live your everyday life?
- What impact has this study had on the way you view your role in your church or in your family?
- What relationships have developed or deepened through this study that you need to continue to cultivate? How will you intentionally pursue these discipling relationships after the study is over?
- What areas need more attention in your spiritual walk?

Every individual member contributes to the collective witness of the gospel. Our individual, holy lives add to the collective witness of the people God redeemed as a special possession for himself. May the time we spent together in the Word, studying *our part* of that collective witness as women, continue to bear fruit in our lives.

Paul closed his letter to Titus, and the church in Crete, with the prayer, “*Grace be with you all*” (3:15). he was asking “for God’s grace to be realized in each believer’s life.”³¹ I echo Paul’s prayer for each one of you. Grace is in us and with us. May this grace “appear” as we interact with people in our homes, in our church, and in our community. By his grace, may our lives showcase the beauty of the gospel.

Lovingly in Christ,

Kelly

Dear Friend,

I am grateful for your commitment to study God’s Word with other women in your church. As you study Scripture together, actively fighting against the influences of the world around us and the flesh within us, it is my prayer that you will be “transformed by the renewal of your mind,” gaining the wisdom to skillfully “discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2). God promises that his Word has the power to change us in life-transforming ways.

For my local church, *Lives that Adorn the Gospel* was our first corporate attempt at inductive Bible study. While this type of study was new to most of our ladies, they bravely embraced the challenge. We initially faced some growing pains (it is never comfortable to learn a new way of doing something!), but along the way, we learned to value the benefits of a study that requires you slow down, dig deep, and take time to search out the rich truths of God’s Word—truths that aren’t readily found by the casual observer.

Maybe, like the women at my church, you are new to this type of Bible study. And maybe, like the women at my church, you are a bit fearful that it will be too much for you. I want to encourage you to wade into these new waters. You will find you are not alone. Our helper, the Holy Spirit, is with his children, eager to help us understand and apply God’s Word. And when you join other women in studying the Word, the learning process is further enriched. You will find the water of his Word to be refreshing and life-giving to your soul.

Throughout Scripture God includes many commands for his people to “remember.” Forgetfulness is a propensity of our fallen, human condition. We often need reminders of basic, foundational truths of Scripture—truth about God, ourselves, and the world in which we live—truth we cannot afford to forget. For this reason, Titus is a book of the Bible we should return to often. It includes foundational themes such as the importance of sound doctrine, holy living, discipleship, and, of course, the greatest theme of all: the gospel. The book of Titus is not only packed with rich truth, it is also deeply practical—it remains just as relevant today as the day it was penned by the Apostle Paul many centuries ago.

³¹Lea, T. D., & Griffin, H. P.: *1, 2 Timothy, Titus* (Vol. 34), (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 333.

Before you begin your study, please take time to read through the Bible study helps on the following pages. These helps include a brief explanation of the inductive study method. As our study is based on this method, you may want to refer back to these pages as you go through *Lives that Adorn the Gospel* in the months ahead. But while it can be helpful to see the whole process laid out, please don't allow yourself to be overwhelmed by the big-picture view. We are going to move slowly, deliberately, one step at a time. We live in a world that peddles the myth of instant gratification. As a result, we are easily lured into believing that hard work and effort are the enemy. Reality teaches us that stuff that *comes easy*—like a drive-thru meal or surfing Instagram—*leaves easy* too. It never satisfies in a lasting way. We are left feeling unhealthy, yet craving more. God never promises instant gratification when he invites us to know him through his Word. But he does promise deep and lasting satisfaction in himself when we seek him with all our hearts. So, I encourage you to stick with this study, even on days when it seems like all work without much payoff. As you prayerfully follow the process and allow God to work in your heart, he will open the wonders of his Word to you. He promises to use his Word to change us from “glory to glory” (2 Corinthians 3:18). Like anything good, while the end results are not immediately seen, they are absolutely worth the effort!

All of us are influenced by our culture, whether we realize it or not. Because of this, we need to adjust our perspective to reality as God defines it, and then order our lives by his revealed truth. May each of us be willing to change our thinking and our living wherever the Lord shows us that we have drifted away from his Word to be conformed to the beliefs, values, and commitments of the world. May our lives increasingly adorn the gospel of Jesus Christ

Lovingly in Christ,

Kelly

Grace Be with You All

Only three short chapters but packed with truth. I trust the book of Titus is now one of your “Bible friends.” If you have grown spiritually through this study, then praise God! His Word is at work, doing what he promised it would do. Consider sharing how God has transformed your life through his Word with someone in your church family. It will encourage them in their own walk with Jesus and provide helpful accountability for you.

Even over several months, we didn't have time to mine the depths of every verse. There is so much more to explore! And since you know how to study inductively, you can further delve into any verses you would like to become more familiar with. For example, you could study the various aspects of salvation which God brought to us through Jesus (3:4-7). Or return to one of the godly virtues listed for women in Titus 2 and discover what God has to say about it in other passages of Scripture. Or apply the inductive study method to another book of the Bible or specific passage of Scripture and make a new Bible friend. Don't stop growing! Purpose to be intentional about your spiritual growth in the days to come, fervent in tending your walk with God and consistent in allowing his Word to dwell richly in your heart and life.

The whole point of Titus is that the gospel should inform our living. Speak truth. Believe truth. Live truth. It is not enough to simply learn truth—God wants us to apply it to our lives. James warns against the danger of thinking we have changed simply because we have heard the truth. He calls this being self-deceived. True change comes when we **do** what we **hear** (James 1:22-25). For this reason, consider taking some time in the next few weeks to review what you have “heard” from God's Word through this study. Evaluate areas in which you need to apply his truth more accurately to your life. Ask the Lord to help you identify one area that you can begin focusing on in order to grow in your ability to adorn the gospel. The following questions may be helpful:

- What truth(s) in Titus most impacted your thinking about God? How have you grown to know and love him more?
- How has “right doctrine” from Titus impacted your worldview? How have you seen your thinking change?

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Keys to Your Own God & I Time

Knowing God is the greatest opportunity that a human being can experience! The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ opened the way for all believers to experience vibrant, intimate communion with God through their union with him. You can grow daily in your relationship with God by spending time with him in his Word. Getting to know God isn't complicated, but that doesn't mean it is easy. Relationships of all kinds take work. A growing relationship with God won't happen by accident—you must be intentional.

Make sure you have a:

- **Set time**—Set a regular, consistent time to meet with the Lord. Purpose in your heart to seek God daily. This daily time with God sets your heart for communion with him throughout the rest of the day.
- **Set place**—Be like Jesus and find a place without distractions to meet alone with God (Matt. 14:23; Mk. 6:46; Lk. 6:12).
- **Set study**—Resist the urge to be random in your approach to reading and studying the Bible. Working steadily through Scripture will help you grasp the full story of the Bible and better understand the background of passages you stop to study.

Bring the essential materials:

- Bible
- Notebook
- Something to write with
- Time

Principles to follow:

- Begin with prayer. Ask God to open your eyes. *Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law* (Ps. 119:18). The Holy Spirit, who lives in all believers, is the only One who can “open your eyes” to spiritual truth. Through prayer, you demonstrate your dependence on God. You need God's enabling!
- The Bible is all about a Person! Look for God on every page of Scripture. his words (what he says) reveal his character (who he is). The most important question you can ask as you read is, “What does this passage teach me about God?” (2 Cor. 3:18).

5. Believers share a common heritage and a common purpose (2:11-14, 3:3-7). Paul tells Titus to continually remind his congregation about both. We tend to forget who we belong to and what we are here for. How can we help each other better remember our union with Christ and our gospel purpose?
6. In order for Grace to appear through us, our lives have to be seen. his light in us won't “appear” to others unless we are in our communities actively doing what is good. Strategize about how to better use your God-ordained role (vocation, relationships, etc.) for kingdom advance right where you live. What is in “your hands” that you can use to show Jesus to others in your community (young children, a job, relationships in the marketplace, sickness, aging parents, etc.)?
7. Gospel advance is a corporate mission in which each individual member should take part. Like Paul and Titus and the church in Crete, we are part of a “mission team” that stretches through the centuries. Share practical ideas about how to be more intentional about supporting others who are “on the team” (3:13-14).

End your time together by praying for God to increase your fruitfulness—individually and corporately—for his glory (3:14).

3. “What makes the church attractive and influential in the world for the Lord is not its strategy or its programs but the virtue and holiness of its people.”³⁰ Does your life enhance the gospel proclamation of your local church? How does this truth impact the way you view your role in your local congregation?

How does this truth impact your view of church discipline?

4. Does your life provide an attractive setting for the gospel? Did the Holy Spirit convict you of anything that is currently a hindrance to God’s grace being clearly seen in you?

What area did you identify in which you wanted to see the Lord change you through this study (p.26)? How have you seen the Lord answer that prayer over the past several months? Let’s rejoice together over these victories! Share ideas with your group about how you can continue to grow in order to better reflect the reality of God’s saving work in your life.

- Be willing to stay in a passage or a study until God changes you. Give God time to work in your heart.
- Be an *inquisitive* student of God’s Word. Ask questions as you read Scripture or study a specific passage. “What do I learn about God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit?” “What does this passage teach me about myself, about sin, or about how I should respond to God?” Be a good “hearer” as God speaks to you through his Word. Keep a record of everything you learn.
- Be a faithful “doer” of what God shows you in his Word (Js. 1:22-25). Ask, “How does knowing this truth about God change me?” By God’s grace, what practical action steps will you take to become more like Christ? *Faith* in God and *love* for God will be expressed in *obedience* to God.
- End your daily time in prayer. Thank God for the privilege of getting to know him. Ask for his help to live out the truth he has shown you in your “God and I Time”!

Two Basic Types of Bible Study:

Bible study has often been compared to gardening or farming. Just as different approaches are needed to work the soil on a farm, there are several different approaches to getting our hearts and minds into the soil of God’s Word. Sometimes you need a plow to cover large areas of ground. At other times you need a trowel to dig deep into a specific part of the field.

Plow Study:

- Covers large portions of the Bible
- Takes in the breadth of God’s Word
- Stays more on the surface

Plow work moves through large portions of Scripture more quickly, looking for specific themes. The key is to prayerfully look for something or Someone as you read. Choose a book of the Bible or a specific topic that interests you. Take the next several weeks to read one chapter a day, recording everything you learn about that specific topic. For example, do you want to know more about the character of God? Read through the book of Psalms and write down everything you learn about God. Do you want to know what it means to be “in Christ”? Read through the Epistles and record everything you learn about what God has given you through your union with Christ. Plow studies like these will help you learn to “think Bible.”

³⁰ MacArthur, John, 103.

Trowel Study:

- Works thoroughly in a specific area of Scripture
- Takes in the depth of God’s Word
- Stay in one place and digs deep

Trowel study involves choosing a passage or verse of Scripture and settling in to study that part of the Bible for a longer period of time. Take several days—or even weeks—to dig deep using *The Inductive Study Method*. Purpose to stay in that passage until the Lord gives you understanding. Trowel work, though more intensive than plow work, is not complicated. It simply takes time, intentionality, and humble dependence on the Lord.

Both types of Bible study are needed for a balanced diet in our Christian life. Even as you settle down to accurately interpret smaller portions of God’s Word, it is helpful for you to have the “big picture” view provided by plow work. Plow and trowel work well together. Consistent time in the Word—whatever study you choose—will produce a fuller knowledge of God and his ways.

Your time in the Word should never stop short of **application** (1 Cor. 8:1; Js. 1:22-25; Heb. 5:14). Seeing yourself in light of God’s nature leads to real change. As you read and study the Bible, ask the Lord to help you apply what you learn to every-day life. What needs to change so that your life better reflects God’s character? This step should help you move past just hearing God’s Word to actually doing it! Making truth practical means going beyond **general** application (which is fairly simple and non-confrontive: “*I need to pray more*”) and actually getting **specific** (“*I will demonstrate my dependence on God by starting each day in prayer.*”) Prayerfully consider what action steps you need to take. “How does knowing God change me?” Consider your relationship with God first, then expand your application to relationships with others. Apply truth to your outward **actions**—what you **say** and **do**—but don’t stop there. Target your heart—what you **think** and **believe** and **desire**. Finally, take time to **respond** to God through prayer (prayers of repentance and confession as well as worship and adoration).

The goal of Bible study is not to gain academic knowledge. The aim is much higher! God wants you to gain true understanding of what he has communicated about himself, which ultimately leads to knowing him better. Remember, the Bible is all about a Person!

Group Discussion

Be prepared to give input on the following discussion questions with your group:

1. Take some time to think about God’s purpose for your life. Look back through the purpose clauses in Titus 2 and 3 and then formulate your own personalized “purpose statement” in the space below.

2. Paul reminds us that the gospel makes all the difference in the way we interact with others in our homes (2:4-5), in our churches (2:1-15), and in our communities (3:1-7). No relationship, no matter how difficult, is outside the reach of the effects of saving grace in our lives. Grace is that powerful, that transformational. Is there a relationship or God-given role in which you need to refocus so as to better live according to God’s purpose for your life?

List specific ways God could use this particular relationship/role to showcase the good news of Jesus Christ through you.

 **Responding to God**

Good theology will always produce humility and gratitude. We express these heart attitudes in worship—through prayer and song. Take time to respond to God, praising him for Who he is and asking for his help to grow and change in the areas where the Spirit has convicted you. Write out a simple prayer in response to what God has shown you in his Word (i.e., prayers of confession, repentance, worship).

The Inductive Study Method

Our study this year is of the trowel variety. Our specific tool for digging is called the *Inductive Study Method*. The word “inductive” simply means that we are approaching Scripture like an investigator, seeking to discover the truth. And like an investigator, we come asking questions as we survey the evidence:

- *What does it say?* (Observation)
- *What does it mean?* (Interpretation)
- *What should I do?* (Application)

This method of investigation stands in contrast to the deductive approach, which comes to the Scripture with a conclusion already formed and then seeks to prove that conclusion from the text. With inductive study, we *prayerfully* examine the text first and then *prayerfully* seek to interpret and apply what we discover during our study. A guide to the inductive study method is included on the following pages.

Guilt-Driven vs. Glory-Driven

Getting to know God is possible for anyone who truly desires it. God is not hiding. he *invites* us to know him. God demonstrated his commitment to a close relationship with us when he sent Jesus—who not only made God known to us (Jn. 1:14; 2 Cor. 4:6; Heb. 1:1-3), but also provided the only way for us to have a right relationship with him (Jn. 14:6). Through Jesus, our “hope of glory” is restored (Rom. 5:1-2; 1 Jn. 3:1-3). We experience some of this glory even now when we behold God in his Word (2 Cor. 3:18). Like Moses we can pray in faith, “Please show me Your glory” (Ex. 33:18). God loves answering this prayer for his children. he reveals himself to all who seek for him in his Word.

Bible study isn’t about guilt. It’s about glory—God’s glory. But a “glory-driven” mindset doesn’t negate the simple truth that growing in your relationship with the Lord does not happen accidentally. But neither does it happen by self-effort. Rather, this spiritual discipline requires *dependence*, relying on God for strength to obey and trusting him to give understanding. Jerry Bridges puts it well,

“We would much rather pray, ‘Lord, make me godly,’ and expect Him to ‘pour’ some godliness into our souls in some mysterious way.

God does in fact work in a mysterious way to make us godly, but He does not do this apart from the fulfillment of our own personal responsibility...under His direction and by His enablement. The power and enablement for a godly life comes from the risen Christ and is experienced through our relationship with Him by expressing my dependence on Christ through prayer and by beholding the glory of Christ in his Word.” (Jerry Bridges, *The Practice of Godliness*)

A “guilt-driven” mindset expresses itself in “doing devotions” and checking Bible reading off a list of spiritual things I’m expected to do. A “glory-driven” mindset expresses itself in diligently and dependently seeking God in his Word, with the hopeful expectation of getting to know him in order to become more like him. Not duty, but delight.

“He has called us into a living relationship with him by placing us in Christ, and he has called us to experience the joy and power of that relationship by having daily communion with him.” (Jerry Bridges, *True Community*)

Opening the Bible with a desire to see God is an act of faith. Faithfully do your part, while trusting God to do what he has promised:

Jeremiah 29:13 *You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*

Hebrews 11:6 *he rewards those who seek him.*

What is the reward? God himself! Of course, this is a reward that you cannot hoard. Knowing God is not a selfish pursuit. You *get glory* from God so that you can *give glory* to God. May you devote your life to seeking him! he is worthy!



APPLICATION: *What Should I Do?*

Record practical, specific action steps you need to take in response to what God has shown you in his Word. Plan to use what you learn! Consider your relationship to God as well as your relationships with other people. Target all areas of your life: inner man (what I think, desire, and believe) and outer man (what I do—how sin is expressed in my body). Prayerfully consider what specific action steps you need to take.



INTERPRETATION: *What Does It Mean?*

The goal of studying the Bible is understanding what God has communicated about himself so that we can know him. Remember, the Bible is all about a Person! Review your notes from the observation section of your study. Ask the kinds of questions found under the Interpretation section of “Bible Study At-A-Glance” to help understand the implications of these verses (2:5, 8, 10; 3:8). Record your thoughts.

The Inductive Study Method

There is a big difference between an “inductive” and a “deductive” approach to Bible study. Inductive simply means that you come to the Bible with the desire to examine what the Bible says *before* you decide what the Bible says. Like a good scientist, you thoroughly investigate all the facts before drawing any conclusions. In contrast, the deductive method approaches the Bible with conclusions already formed and *then* looks in the Bible for support for those preconceived ideas. We will always come away with wrong ideas about God, his world, and ourselves when we approach the Bible this way. It is important that you allow God’s Word to speak for itself. Of course, unlike a scientist who studies the natural world, we cannot understand spiritual truth using our own intellect. We need God to open our eyes to his truth. This is dependent work!

Choose a passage or verse you would like to study. Get out your Bible, a notebook, and something with which to write. Use the guide below to dig deep into the passage (elements of this guide were taken from *A Place of Quiet Rest* by Nancy Leigh DeMoss). Don’t rush. Take several days to prayerfully work through each of the three big questions:

- 1. *What does it say?*
- 2. *What does it mean?*
- 3. *What should I do?*

You don’t have to follow every detail listed below—tailor it to your needs and level of spiritual maturity. Take time to record what you learn in a notebook.

PREPARATION: *Getting My heart Ready to Meet with God*

As you open the Word, continually express your dependence on God to help you to understand his Word. Ask God to give you a tender and humble heart that is eager to obey whatever he shows you in his Word. You could call it “obedient listening.”

Psalm 25:4-5 *Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.*

OBSERVATION: *What Does It Say?*

Start with the most obvious, simple observations about the passage before probing deeper for further understanding.

Simple Observations:

- Consider the **context** (“con” = together; “textus” = woven) of the verse/passage. When we open the Bible to one particular chapter of one particular book, that chapter is connected to what comes before it and what comes after it. Context matters! How is this verse/passage connected to what comes before and after it? Record what you learn.
- Ask **investigative questions** such as who, what, when, where, why. Record what you discover.
Who wrote it? To whom was it written?
What happened? What are the main events?
When was it written? When did the events take place?
Where did it happen? Where is the author/the audience?
Why was this written?
How did it happen? How is the audience expected to respond?
- Look for patterns—**repeated words, phrases, or ideas** to help you understand what the author intends to emphasize. It might be helpful to mark these patterns with a colored pencil or marker.
- Look for the **author’s purpose**. Who is writing? Who are they writing to? What is the situation? What problems are being addressed? Is there a single idea that holds everything together? Finding the answers to these questions will help you answer the bigger question, “Why did the author write this?” Apply this same question to God himself, remembering that he is the ultimate Author!
- Try to locate the **key verse** of the passage.
- Consider **genre** (Is this section of Scripture historical narrative, poetry, prophecy, epistle, or apocalyptic?). Be aware that genres are often mixed together but wherever you happen to be studying, look for God’s character—he is the unifying theme throughout all types of genres.

Deeper Digging:

- Discover the meaning of **key words** in the passage. Don’t worry about finding something profound for every word; just look for

in perfect obedience to his Father’s will. he cared for the poor, healed the sick, and welcomed the outcast. his good works and holy life made God’s *grace, goodness, and loving kindness* visible. In a similar way, the Person of Grace *appears* to others when we let his light shine through our Spirit-enabled good works and righteous lifestyle.

Years ago, my husband and I had the privilege of ministering alongside dear missionary friends in Papua New Guinea, helping them start a Christian youth camp. Many of the young people I met spoke a type of pigeon-English. When talking about giving glory to God they used this phrase: “give God a big name.” In simple bush language, that is our purpose as believers. We tend to put ourselves at the center of the story. But we don’t belong there. We aren’t the focal point. It isn’t about people seeing us. It is about people seeing God’s glory through our lives. We exist to give God a big name, to exalt and magnify his reputation.

Cross References: (Mt. 5:16; Jn. 15:8; 2 Cor. 3:2-3; Eph. 2:1-10; 5:3-4; Phil. 2:15; Col. 3:5-11; 1 Tim. 3:7, 4:12, 5:14, 6:1; 1 Pt. 2:9-15; 3:1-3)

Verse 2:5b, 8b, 10b in my own words:

laboring with God to advance his kingdom in the world, in joyful expectation of seeing his “*will be done on earth as it is in heaven*” (Mt. 6:10; Mk. 16:20; 2 Cor. 6:1).

It should not surprise us to discover that all believers share a common purpose. Pastors, men, women, younger, older, slaves— all have a shared purpose because all have a shared identity. Our purpose flows out of who we are in Christ. Possessing Jesus as “*our*” Savior fundamentally alters who we are and what we are to do. While Paul doesn’t use his iconic “*in Christ*” phrasing in Titus, the doctrine of the believer’s union with Christ under-girds his entire letter.

So that. In order that. Our purpose is anchored in our identity. This is gospel logic: believers are devoted to good works because of who we are—a people devoted to God.

What is the purpose of Grace “*training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age*” (2:12)? Why is it so important for believers to “*devote themselves to good works*” (3:8)? I love how John McArthur put it: “for the purpose of showing sinners the joy and power of salvation.”²⁷ The testimony of the gospel is at stake. It was this end—the glory of God through the salvation of sinners—that lay behind all of the instruction Paul gave to Titus and why he was so strong in commanding Titus to “insist on these things” to his congregation (3:8, 2:15). In fact, every “exhortation to holy living in Scripture” shares this same purpose: “to honor and glorify God through the righteous living of his people, leading to the salvation of more sinners.”²⁸

God has placed his church in the world to advance his kingdom and his glory. Holiness is necessary to our mission. Sin selfishly distracts God’s people from fulfilling God’s purpose. Rather than being “*unfit for any good work*” (1:16), believers are “*ready for every good work*” (3:1) because of God’s transforming work in their lives. The fundamental change in our nature will be seen. It must be seen. Christlike character and good works, like those listed in Titus 2:2-10 and 3:1-2, make our faith in Christ visible.²⁹ Grace appeared. he walked among us. he lived

²⁷ Ibid, pg 70.

²⁸ Dockery, David S., General Editor. *Holman Concise Bible Commentary* (Broadman & Holman Publishing, 1998), 106.

²⁹ Towner, P. H., 771.

the essential meaning of the main words in the passage. It is best to look up the definition in the original languages rather than English. There are many good resources available to help with this process such as *Blue Letter Bible* and *Olive Tree*. These websites allow the user to look up word definitions as well as dig into the grammar of the Greek and Hebrew words (part of speech, tense, voice, etc.). It is easier than it sounds! (For helpful tutorials, go to www.blueletterbible.org/help/videohelps.cfm#section3.) The word definitions listed will give you a general idea of the word’s meaning. When several definitions are given for a word, you may wonder, “Which definition do I pick?” A word study dictionary, such as Vines, will often give a very specific meaning for the exact verse you are studying. But you may have to look up other verses that use the same word to see how it is used in other parts of the Bible. Look back at the context of your passage and consider which definition fits best. Sometimes you just have to prayerfully wrestle with it—this is called meditation.

- Look for “**linking words**.” Linking words help us see the flow of an argument or reveal the connection between different statements.
 - » Some linking words point **forward**: *therefore, consequently, for this reason, thus*. These words take what has come before and point your attention towards a conclusion that is coming. They usually tell us about a result or consequence that flows from the previous statement. (Examples: Matt. 10:16; Phil. 2:6-9; 2 Cor. 4:7)
 - » Some linking words point **backwards**: *for, because, since, so*. In those cases, the reason or explanation comes after that word. (Example: Heb. 4:14-15)
 - » The linking phrase “so that” tells us the purpose or result of something. (Examples: Phil. 2:10; 1 Jn. 2:1; 2 Cor. 4:7)
- Look up **cross-references** to provide a broader understanding of the verse/passage. Write down any insights you gain that help you better understand your topic.
- Read the passage in various translations.
- Paraphrase the passage, putting it into your own words.
- After spending personal time in study and meditation on the passage, you may want to consult some trusted commentaries or the notes in a study Bible to gain further insight.

INTERPRETATION: *What Does It Mean?*

The goal of studying the Bible is to understand what God has communicated about himself so that we can know him. Remember, the Bible is all about a Person! Good interpretation seeks to get at the plain meaning of God's Word. Exegesis is a combination of two Greek words: "out of" and "to lead or guide." Exegesis basically means "to explain." In Bible study, it means finding out the original intent of God's words. Ask the following kinds of questions to better understand the meaning of the text and write down your thoughts.

- What does this passage teach me about God?
- What does this passage teach me about Jesus?
- What does this passage teach me about man/myself?
- Are there any promises to claim?
- Are there any commands to obey?
- Are there any examples to follow?
- Are there any sins to avoid?

APPLICATION: *What Should I Do?*

Application asks the question, "What should I do with the truth I've seen?" As you read and study the Bible, ask the Lord to help you apply what you learn to every-day life. What needs to change so that your life better reflects God's character? This step should help you move past just **hearing** God's Word to actually **doing** it! Making truth practical means going beyond **general** application (which is fairly simple and non-confrontive: "*I need to pray more*") and actually getting very **specific** ("*I will demonstrate my dependence on God by starting each day in prayer*"). Prayerfully consider what specific **action steps** you need to take in response to what God has shown you in his Word. Plan to use what you learn! Application is often the hardest step of Bible study. It forces us to be honest with ourselves and with God. It humbles us, but it also prepares us to receive grace from God (Jas. 4:6)!

- Consider your relationship with **God**. *How does knowing God change me?*
- Then expand your application and think about your relationships with **others**. *How does knowing God change the way I relate to others?*
- Consider what you **believe**, what you **desire**, and what you **do**.
- *Where is change needed in my inner man (my beliefs, my affections, and/or my will)?*

The heart of Paul's letter to Titus (2:1-3:8) is sandwiched between verses addressing the false teachers threatening the gospel's advance in Crete (1:10-16; 3:9-10). By arranging the text this way, Paul masterfully highlights the missional purpose behind godly living. "Those who believe in God (the 'us' who have been saved, washed, and who have received the Spirit, justification, and heir-status) have a responsibility to the world."²⁵ What is the answer to the problem of false teaching? The gospel made visible in the lives of God's people. The book of Titus helps us understand just how incredible the "evangelistic impact of a spiritually healthy congregation" can be.²⁶

Every believer is responsible to extend to others the gracious blessings and benefits they have received through salvation—to people both inside and outside the body of Christ (3:8). Every believer also shares in the corporate responsibility to provide an attractive setting for the gospel through the way they live (2:4, 5, 8, 10). The testimony of each individual member in the body of Christ impacts, either positively or negatively, the testimony of the rest of the body. As Paul reminded Titus, the message we proclaim is indelibly linked to the people who proclaim it (2:8).

In the closing verses of chapter 3, Paul mentions several people by name who are part of their mission team. Besides Titus, who is working alongside Paul? (3:12-13)

But it isn't just these choice servants who are laboring for the kingdom. The entire church in Crete is intimately involved in this effort—this is the whole thrust of Paul's letter. Notice that even as Paul addresses individual groups of people within the church, the language of Titus is corporate. Read through Titus chapters 2 and 3 again looking for Paul's use of the plural ("*we, us, our, them*"). Mark these words in a distinctive way.

Believers have been set apart for this very purpose. Gospel advance is not a solo effort. Believers share a comradery and a deep affection for God's people in every place (3:15). Paul calls the believers in Crete "*our people*" (3:14). And "*all who are with*" Paul in the place where he is writing this letter, add their greetings to the believers on this little island (3:15). Because we are a body, God expects us to work together,

²⁵ Towner, P. H., 789.

²⁶ MacArthur, John, 69.

of God our Savior appeared" (3:4) what did he enable us to do?

3:8 so that _____

What do you think Paul means by "these things are excellent and profitable for people" (v.8b)? _____

Verse 14 contains the last purpose clause in Paul's letter to Titus. What does Paul say believers are able to do as they "learn to devote themselves to good works"?

3:14 so _____

Believers are "now radically different from the way we once were, and from the way the unsaved still are, solely because of God's **kindness, his love, his mercy, his washing of regeneration, his renewing by the Holy Spirit, his Son Jesus Christ our Savior, and his grace.**"²⁴ It is only because of God's saving work through Christ that we can have any hope of identifying with the first list of seven virtues (3:1-2) and not the second (3:3). As "slaves" to our own passions we couldn't live out our purpose. But through Christ a radical internal change occurs, and it leads inevitably to a radical external change. The list of virtues at the beginning of chapter 3 reads like a character sketch of Jesus. We are *expected* to be like him, and we are *able* to be like him, because we are in him. Paul is reminding us, "Believers, live like what you are: a people who have been transformed by Jesus."

Paul's summary statement in 3:8 is parallel to 2:15. This verse brings us full circle from where we began our study—when right doctrine is proclaimed ("*insist on these things*"), and right doctrine is believed ("*those who have believed in God*"), it produces right living ("*may be careful to devote themselves to good works*"). **Speak truth. Believe truth. Live truth.**

- Remember the ultimate target: the **heart**.
- Do I need accountability in this area?

"If you haven't thought through your plan of action well enough to put it down on paper, you haven't thought it through well enough to put it into action. Good intentions do not become reality without diligent thought and preparation. Take the time to think through your plans and write them down if you expect to carry them out." (Dr. Jim Berg, *Changed Into his Image*)

Why is application such a big deal? Because knowledge without personal application is spiritually dangerous. It produces **pride** (1 Cor. 8:1, "*knowledge puffs up*"). It is **deceiving** (Js. 1:22-25, "*But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*"). And it results in **immaturity** and stunted spiritual growth (Heb. 5:14). But knowledge of God through his Word that is personally and practically applied is **spiritually beneficial** (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Warren Weirsbe put it this way: "Our relationship to the Word of God determines our spiritual maturity."

Finally, take time to **respond to God** in prayer and worship. Write out your response in the form of a prayer. In this prayer, you might confess and repent of sin, ask for help to change, or offer praise to the One who is worthy!

²⁴ MacArthur, John, 150 (original emphasis).

Titus 1

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, 2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began 3 and at the proper time manifested his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior; 4 To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. 5 This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—6 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. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. he must not be arrogant or quick tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 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. 10 For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. 11 They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. 12 One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." 13 This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth. 15 To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. 16 They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Titus 3:4-7 is one single sentence in the Greek, densely packed with truth about God's character and work in salvation. This section of verses echoes Titus 2:11-14. From studying the word "appeared" in 2:11, we know that Paul is referring once again to the incarnation of Jesus. In 3:4 what aspects of God's nature are revealed through the first coming of Jesus? _____

The focal point of this sentence is the phrase, "*he saved us*" (3:5). This verb refers to an action performed by God. he initiated our salvation.

What caused God to save us? (3:5a) _____

How did God save us? (3:5b-6)

"by" _____

"through" _____

What is the effect of God's goodness and loving kindness appearing through Jesus? "*he saved us*" (3:5). We were "*justified by his grace*" (3:7). Why did God do this? Why did Jesus pour out the Holy Spirit richly on us? What was **his purpose**? (3:7)

Jesus came—he *appeared*—for a purpose. The greatest purpose statements in the book of Titus (2:11-14, 3:3-7) aren't about us at all! They are about the Person of Grace, Jesus Christ. Grace appeared **so that** a people could be redeemed and purified for God's very own possession (2:14). Grace appeared "**so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life**" (3:7). Jesus lived and died and rose again to accomplish the purpose for which God sent him. Because Jesus accomplished his purpose, we are now able to accomplish ours. "*When the goodness and lovingkindness*

Titus 2

1 But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. 2 Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. 3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, 4 and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. 6 Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. 7 Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, 8 and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. 9 Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. 11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. 15 Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Titus 3

1 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. 3 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice

- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____

The believers in Crete needed continual reminders about the importance of being good citizens and neighbors in their communities. And just as in chapter 2, the call to such a lifestyle is grounded in the gospel and linked to a specific purpose. But rather than stating that purpose outright, Paul moves onto another list of seven virtues, set in direct contrast to 3:1-2. List the **seven aspects of our lost condition**²³ which characterize the lives of all who are without Christ (3:3):

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____

How is it possible to fulfill the obligations of the first list of virtues, especially in a world that is hostile to the gospel? By remembering what we “*once were*” and, furthermore, by remembering what God has done for us through Christ. This should lead us to compassion for those who remain in that lost condition from which we have been redeemed. The list of ungodly virtues (3:3) stands in direct contrast to God’s character described in 3:4-7.

²³I owe this observation to John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Titus* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1996), 150.

and envy, hated by others and hating one another. 4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 8 The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. 9 But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. 10 As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, 11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned. 12 When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. 13 Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they lack nothing. 14 And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful. 15 All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.

Paul said of the Corinthian believers that they were his “letter of recommendation,” written by Christ himself, “to be known and read by all” (2 Cor. 3:2-3). The behavior of believers is often the only opportunity unbelievers have to evaluate the validity of our truth claims. As one commentary put it,

“Inevitably, unbelievers judge the gospel message by the lives of those who embrace it. As we live and identify ourselves as Christians, we can make the gospel message attractive and credible by our godly attitudes and behavior. However, if we are perceived as unloving and hypocritical, we provide unbelievers with good reason to be skeptical about the power of the gospel. Paul’s exhortations, both to these Cretan groups and to Christians of every age, should alert us to the tremendous importance of being in reality what we profess in word.”¹⁸

Through the four purpose clauses in chapter 2, Paul provides both negative and positive motivation for our continued growth in holiness. Negatively, ungodliness in believers’ lives will “undermine the credibility of the Christian message.”¹⁹ Positively, godliness removes “any legitimate grounds for the gospel to be reviled” and “highlights the attractiveness of the gospel” to unbelievers.²⁰ This is “the desired result of ‘gospel living.’”²¹ A “transformed life marked by godly virtue”²² is the layman’s pulpit—the means by which unbelievers will be drawn to *come and see* the Jesus we proclaim. We prove the reality of the gospel by how we live.

We find the same combination of **holy living** linked to a **gospel purpose** in chapter 3. But here, Paul addresses believers in general. List the **seven specific behaviors** which should characterize the lives of all who profess to know Christ (3:1-2):

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Marshall, I. H., & Towner, P. H. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 250.

²⁰ *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 2350.

²¹ Ibid.

²² MacArthur, John, 90.

Introduction to Titus



imagine being a first-century slave, having no rank, no rights, no honor, no freedom? And yet, the gospel of Jesus Christ gave slaves a glorious purpose for which to live! “*In everything*” means that nothing was left out in their realm of experience as slaves that couldn’t be used for this purpose. To the lowest ranking members in society, those who never had the privilege or wealth to adorn themselves, was given the honor of enhancing the beauty of “the doctrine of God” their Savior and true Master.

Slaves were only able to fulfill this purpose by obeying the directives in verses 9 and 10. Their submission, honesty, loyalty, and hard work were the setting that allowed the jewel of the gospel to be beautifully displayed.

Our obedience or disobedience doesn’t change the priceless value or splendor of the gospel, but it does impact how the gospel is viewed by others. The Hope Diamond, worth an estimated \$200-350 million dollars, would not be nearly as alluring if it was set in aluminum, surrounded by colorful plastic beads and displayed on a dirty piece of recycled cardboard rather than its simple, pristine case at the Smithsonian Institute. I saw the Hope Diamond several years ago when our family visited Washington, DC. It was magnificent. I can’t remember the setting or the case in which this rare jewel was displayed. (I’ve since learned that the setting for the Hope Diamond has changed over the years to better showcase its beauty and character.) People don’t go to museums to see the display cases or to inspect the setting of a jewel. They go to see the items those cases hold. They go to see the Hope Diamond because of its reputation as a magnificent, rare gem. In a similar way, our lives are like display cases—they just serve as a setting for the grace of God— so that people are able to see, without hindrance or distraction, the stunning beauty of the gospel at work in our lives (2 Cor. 4:7). It really isn’t about us. When unbelievers observe our lives, we don’t want them to walk away talking about us, but about the God who alone could produce something so glorious in us.

The way Paul structures Titus 2, with the purpose clauses sprinkled throughout his instruction to individual groups of people, is meant to help us see “the missionary aspects of everyday Christian behavior within a hostile and lost world.”¹⁷ Every person who professes Christ provides some kind of testimony about Jesus, even without speaking.

¹⁷ Lea, T. D., & Griffin, H. P.; 308.

Before digging into specific verses, we need to spend some time getting an overview of the book of Titus. Why did Paul write this letter? What timeless truths are being communicated to us today? What can we learn about God and specifically, Jesus, from this little letter written by Paul to his son in the faith?

Begin by reading through the entire book of Titus several times. You will find it helpful if you can accomplish this in one sitting. Just three short chapters, you can read the entire book in under ten minutes. You may even want to read it aloud or try using an audio Bible (free audio Bibles are available online). The believers in the early church learned truth in this way, as letters from Paul circulated to various churches and were read aloud in their assemblies.

Taking in the entire book several times will enable you to better grasp the flow of Paul’s letter and to see its main themes more clearly. It will also set the verses we will study in the months to come in their proper context. Keep your mind engaged as you read by marking key words or phrases. With each successive reading you will become more familiar with this precious letter. I trust that by the end of several months of mining its depths, it will become one of your treasured “Bible friends.”

After familiarizing yourself with the book of Titus, work through the *observation* questions on the following pages. These pages will guide you through the first step in the inductive study process: observation. We are basically seeking to answer the question, “What does the Bible say?”

If you need help, please don’t hesitate to ask a friend who has more experience in Bible study or your group facilitator. And refer back to the Bible study helps at the beginning of your notebook. There are many great resources that can be helpful in your personal study of the Word.

Although much of what we are doing in this first lesson will “feel” academic, please remember that we are not on a quest to simply gain knowledge. Knowledge alone leads to pride (1 Cor. 8:1). Rather, we are on a serious search for a *Person*. We must approach our time in God’s Word looking for him.

“The search for God must be a search for a Person. ...The principles you find along the way are manifestations of his character. If you don’t see the Person behind the principles, you have missed God’s intention for his revelation.” (Jim Berg, *Changed Into his Image*)

“If our reading of the Bible focuses our eyes on anyone other than God, we have gotten backwards the transformation process. ...We must turn around our habit of asking ‘Who am I?’ We must first ask, ‘What does this passage teach me about God?’ before we ask it to teach us anything about ourselves. We must acknowledge the Bible is a book about God.” (Jen Wilkin, *Women of the Word*)

The pursuit of such a special relationship will require the sacrifice of time and diligent effort on our part. In fact, I would encourage you to set aside several blocks of time in your week to complete each lesson. But effort alone is not enough. God invites us to know him. And he promises that if we seek him, we will find him. “he rewards those who seek him” (Heb. 11:6). But we must remember that he alone is the great Revealer. We are dependent on him to open our eyes and give understanding. We are dependent on him to grant us wisdom from above. We are dependent on him to humble and convict our hearts. *Dependent Bible study*—the kind that starts and continues and ends with earnest prayer for God to illumine our understanding—is the kind of learning we are after. It leads to humility and transformation and, ultimately, to the glory of God made more visible in our lives.

“The only necessary key to understanding the Bible is to approach it with a humble and contrite heart softened by the Holy Spirit, ready to listen to what God says, and just as ready to obey him.” (David helm, *One to One Bible Reading*)

in everything = 3956 pas; “each, every, any, all, the whole... everything.”¹² (This is a 100% word!)

may adorn = 2885 kosmeo; (*verb; subjunctive: expresses action that is probable or possible.*)

doctrine = 1319 didaskalia; “doctrine, what is taught”¹³ (used in Titus 1:9, 2:1, 7, 10). “The teaching of the gospel...stated in vv. 11–15.”¹⁴ The doctrine Paul is referring to is specific; it originates from and belongs to “*God our Savior.*”

God = 2316 theos; “the one supreme supernatural being as creator and sustainer of the universe.”¹⁵

our = 5216 hymōn; (*personal pronoun, plural*)

Savior = 4990 sōtēr; (*same word as used in 2:12*)

he is “*God our Savior*” and deserving of the highest honor. Possessing him as our Savior is our greatest possible motivation! As one commentator put it, “his love in being ‘our Savior’ is the strongest ground for our adorning his doctrine by our lives.”¹⁶

Remember who Paul is addressing in this verse. Who is the subject (“*they*” in v.10) of this specific purpose clause (2:8)? Slaves! Can you

¹² Strong, James, S. G3956.

¹³ Swanson, James: *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*. electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), S. DBLG 1436, #2.

¹⁴ Vincent, Marvin Richardson: *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2002), S. 4:344.

¹⁵ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A.; 136.

¹⁶ Jamieson, Robert; Fausset, A. R.; Fausset, A. R.; Brown, David; Brown, David: *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), S. Tit 2:10.

• **Philippians 2:14-15**

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.

• **1 Peter 2:12, 15**

Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.

• **1 Peter 3:16-17**

Having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

Holy lives bring glory—rather than reproach—to God. Paul is reminding the church in Crete, and us, of our purpose: to discredit opponents of the gospel by living in a way that gives credit to the amazing power of God to save and sanctify the lives of those who trust in him. The opposite is also true. Sin silences our testimony to the validity of the Word and, instead, magnifies the voices of critics of the gospel. The wrong “word” is heard. “The world judges the gospel...by the character of the people who believe and claim to be transformed by it.”¹¹ Holiness is a powerful witnessing tool!

The last part of verse 10 contains the final purpose clause in Titus 2. here Paul states the believer’s purpose in positive terms, giving us another reason as to why our conduct as believers is so important.

Titus 2:10b ... so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

Discover the meaning of **key words** in Titus 2:10b. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

so that = 2443 hina; (same as 2:5b)

¹¹ MacArthur, John: *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, Titus (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1996), 88.



OBSERVATION: *What does it say?*

Start with simple observations about the text.

Who wrote this letter? (1:1) _____

Who was this letter written to? (1:4) _____

When was this letter written? _____

Where was the author when he sent the letter? (3:12, 15) _____

Where was Titus when he received this letter? (1:5) _____

Describe this place (*Use commentaries or Bible dictionaries to find historical information about the place.*):

Read the entire book of Titus. Use a colored pencil or highlighter to mark every reference to God, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit.

Character Sketch #1: *God*.

What specific truth did you learn about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit from Paul’s letter to Titus? (*Use additional notebook paper if needed.*)

Read the entire book of Titus again. Look for every reference to Paul and Titus. Record everything you learn about these men.

Character Sketch #2: *Titus*.

(See also 2 Cor. 2:12-13, 7:6, 7:13-14, 8:6, 8:16-19, 8:23, 12:18; Gal. 2:1-3; 2 Tim. 4:10.)

Character Sketch #3: *Paul*.

What kind of relationship did Paul have with Titus? (*2 Cor. 8:23, Titus 1:4*) _____

us = 5216 hymōn (*personal pronoun, plural*) “Interestingly, Paul included himself by stating ‘they have nothing bad to say about us’ (author’s emphasis).”⁹

“‘The opponent’ is described as already present and making allegations or spreading rumors of some sort. What Paul intends is that Titus’s good behavior and teaching will provide no grounds for a charge that will stick (lit. ‘having no report of our worthlessness’).”¹⁰

In verse 5, Paul’s concern was about the reputation of God’s Word, especially among those who are outside the body of Christ. here, in an almost parallel statement, he expresses his concern differently. Whose reputation is in focus in verse 8? _____

What does this imply? _____

Once again, the godly characteristics of younger men outlined in verses 6-8a are required for a specific purpose. Those who are hostile to the gospel and eager to speak evil of Christians and their God are silenced. Shame runs the opposite direction. Rather than Christians being ashamed of their sin and marring their testimony for Christ, unbelievers are ashamed. Rather than our witness lacking credibility, their slander is silenced.

The opposite of reviling and slander (2:5, 8) is seen in the following passages. What occurs when the lives of believers have “no handles” for unbelievers to use as ammunition against them? Or when accusations of sin or impurity will not stick because of the integrity of believers’ lives? Mark the results (look for linking words/phrases) in the following verses:

- **Matthew 5:16**
In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

⁹ Lea, T. D., & Griffin, H. P.: 1, *2 Timothy, Titus* (Vol. 34), (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 305.

¹⁰ Towner, P. H., 734.

In addressing the character of believing young men—and Titus specifically—Paul uses a very similar purpose clause as verse 5:

Titus 2:8b ... so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

opponent = 1727 enantios (*adjective; singular*) “could refer to those outside of the church (2:5, 10; 3:2, 8), to the opponents inside of the church (1:9–16), or to both of these groups together.”⁵

may be put to shame = 1788 entrepō; (*verb; aorist, passive, subjunctive*)

having = 2192 echō (*verb; present, active*)

(nothing) evil = 5337 phaulos; “worthless, bad.”⁶

to say = 3004 legō (*verb; present, active*) “To speak or talk, with apparent focus upon the content of what is said.”⁷ Closely related to “logos” (p.171).

about = 4012 peri; “about, on account of...in respect of...as concerns.”⁸

⁵ Towner, P. H.: *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006), 733.

⁶ Thomas, R. L.: *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek dictionaries: updated edition*. (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998).

⁷ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A.; 396.

⁸ Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W.: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985), 827.

What specific commands or warnings does Paul give to Titus throughout his letter?

Why did Paul leave Titus in Crete? (1:5) _____

What problem was the church in Crete facing that Paul addressed in this letter? (1:10-16)

Though Paul provides instruction to Titus about believers in general (such as 2:11-15), he also highlights specific groups of people to whom Titus is responsible to give the truth. List them below:

- 1:5-9 _____
- 1:10-16 _____
- 2:2 _____
- 2:3 _____
- 2:4-5 _____
- 2:6-8 _____
- 2:9-10 _____

During your first several times reading through Paul’s letter to Titus, **what** major ideas/themes stood out to you?

Looking back over your initial observations, **why** do you think Paul wrote this letter to Titus? (*Author's Purpose*)

Over the course of the next few days, **read** through Titus several more times, looking for **repeated words** or **phrases**. This will help you understand what the author intends to emphasize. As you read, use different colors of pencils or highlighters for marking words/phrases (several examples are given below). This will help the theme of the book literally stand out on the page.

Repeated words/phrases in Titus:

- doctrine, teaching
- word, the truth
- speak, declare
- grace
- works
- faith, believe
- self-controlled
- sound

Also take time to mark any **linking words**, such as “so,” “since,” “for,” and “so that.” This will be helpful when we move from simple observation into deeper digging in the weeks ahead. For example:

Titus 1:9 *he must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine...*

Feel free to wait on these steps if you don't have time now; you will be prompted to look for specific words and phrases in the lessons to come.

that = 2443 hina; “that, in order that, so that”² (denoting the purpose or the result). This phrase emphasizes the purpose behind the training that the older women are providing and the importance of Christian women living in a holy manner.

the word = 3056 logos; (“the” is a definite article in the Greek showing that the “word” being referred to is unique, one of a kind)

the God = 2316 theos; (“the” appears in the Greek as a definite article for “God;” showing that *the God* being referred to is unique and one of a kind, as opposed to other gods.) “The one supreme supernatural being as creator and sustainer of the universe.”³

not = 3361 me; “no, not lest.”⁴

reviled = 987 blasphemeo (*verb; present active: expresses continuous or repeated action, an ongoing state of being; subjunctive mood: expresses action that is probable or possible.*)

The following verses provide Scriptural examples of ways that God and his Word are blasphemed. As you read each verse, consider: Who is doing the blaspheming, how is it done, and who does it affect?

- 2 Samuel 12:9-14 _____
- Romans 14:12-21 (The word *blasphemeo* is translated as “spoken of as evil” in v. 16.) _____
- 2 Peter 2:1-3 _____

² Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996), S. G2443.

³ Louw, Johannes P.; Nida, Eugene Albert: *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition (New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989), S. 1:136.

⁴ Strong, James, S. G3361.



OBSERVATION: *What does it say?*

From our initial observations of Paul's letter to Titus, we sought to identify the various linking words and phrases which Paul employs (see pp.24, 32-33). Linking words help us see the flow of an argument or reveal the connection between different statements. They often alert us to the purpose or result of something. Look back through the copy of Titus you have been marking throughout your study and notice how often Paul uses linking words/phrases. For example, he doesn't waste much ink before he points out his own purpose for writing this letter to Titus, *"so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you"* (1:5). And within the first verse of the book, Paul reminds Titus of his own reason for existing as God's servant, *"for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth"* (1:1). Paul was serving God so that people like us would grow in our faith and know God. Thank you, Paul, for remembering your purpose!

Purpose statements keep appearing throughout Paul's letter. **Overseers** *"must hold firm to the trustworthy word"* in order that they *"may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it"* (1:9). **Titus** is commanded to strongly rebuke the insubordinate in order that *"they may be sound in the faith"* (1:14). **Older women** are compelled to live holy, exemplary lives in order that they might effectively fulfill their purpose as trainers of the younger women (2:4). An older woman lacking godly character cannot fulfill her God-given purpose. **Behind each command lies a gospel purpose.**

As Paul gets into the specifics of how God's people are to live in a hostile world, he periodically reminds Titus of the reason for such a radical call for holiness. Why these commands? Why are virtues like self-control, purity, and submission so important in a believer's life? It has to do with our purpose as believers. Paul provides three more purpose clauses in chapter 2, each one serving as a reminder of why we exist (vv.5, 8, 10).

Titus 2:5b *...that the word of God may not be reviled.*

Discover the meaning of **key words** in Titus 2:5. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

Group Discussion

Be prepared to give input on the following discussion questions with your group:

1. As you read through Titus, what did you learn about the character of God? How will knowing this about God help you receive the teaching included in the book of Titus?
2. What impacted you personally from the character sketch of Paul and/or Titus? What specific application do you need to make to your own life after regarding their lives?
3. Do you see any similarities between our current culture in America and the culture in Crete during Titus' time?

What problems are currently facing the twenty-first century church that need to be addressed with God's truth?

4. Titus lived in a place that was well known for being evil and strongly anti-Christian and, yet, he was “Paul’s model of a born-again, Spirit-filled Gentile convert.”¹ Talk as a group about the practical encouragement we can derive from Titus’ example.



...that the word of God may not be reviled.

Titus 2:5b

5. Look through the list of qualities the Bible admonishes us to cultivate in our lives as women (Titus 2:3-5). Which qualities do you think are most lacking in your life? In what ways would you like to see the Lord change you in the coming months?

...so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

Titus 2:8b

... so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

Titus 2:10b

...so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

6. Please share several specific, long-term prayer requests that your group can pray for throughout your year together. Consider making one of your requests about an area of *spiritual* need in your life.

Titus 3:8b



¹ MacArthur, John: *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Titus* (Chicago, IL.: Moody Press, 1996).

distracted in this life. he wants believers to remember the reason for their existence. “What is God’s purpose for you?” Just as with small children, understanding the “why” behind the “what” helps motivate obedience with the right heart attitude.

After digging deeply into so many rich truths in the book of Titus, we are going to finish our study by zooming out to take in the full panorama once more. Like David Livingstone when he stepped out from the jungle canopy into the open sky on the ledge overlooking what he later named Victoria Falls, everything comes into clearer focus when you can see the landscape from a higher perspective. Through our exploration of the Word we have discovered various streams of truth—God’s order for the church and the Christian home, discipleship, self-control, submission, the importance of good works, and much more—but they are all part of one river of truth. And oh, what a river it is! As we “stand on the ridge” and take in the whole view before us, we see this mighty river with all its various strands come together—sourced in God’s gracious gospel and leading to God’s amazing glory. From this view, as we stand in awe of God’s great goodness, we see where we fit in the landscape. We aren’t at the center, as we tend to think. But we are invited to plunge in and be a part of what God is doing in his world for his glory!

Sound Doctrine

 TITUS 2:1, 15; 3:8 

When driving along the Blue Ridge Parkway, you are often immersed in a canopy of green. But there are places along the way when, suddenly, the view opens up—the trees clear away, and you can literally see for miles—ridge upon ridge of beautiful mountains. Those overlooks help us see the lay of the land more clearly. And it is breathtaking! But to really *know* the land, we have to personally interact with it, leave the comfort of the overlook, put on our hiking shoes, and start down the trail at the end of the sidewalk. It might look daunting, but we are lured by the promise of something glorious at the end of the trail, and so we venture on even when the trail becomes difficult. I remember exploring a new trail with our young family. It ended up being harder than we expected and, after an hour of tough hiking, my five-year-old was ready to give up (truth be told, so was I!). But the distant roar of the waterfall kept us all putting one foot in front of the other. When we got to the end of the trail, we were all thankful that we didn’t turn back.

As we dig deeper into God’s Word over the next few months, remember that God is not hiding his truth from us. he wants us to know him. In fact, he promises great blessings for the person who will diligently seek after him.

Proverbs 8:17 *I love those who love Me, and those who seek Me diligently find Me.*

Jeremiah 29:13 *You will seek Me and find Me, when you seek Me with all your heart.*

This kind of search—the search for a Person—is worthy of our whole-hearted effort. We are learning his character (who he is) and his ways (what he does) through his Word (what he says).



The focus of our study in this lesson is “sound doctrine.” This theme shows up prominently throughout this short letter, demonstrating just how important it was to Paul that he communicate this particular message to young Titus. What is “sound doctrine”? Why is it so important? What impact should it have on our everyday lives?

Start by looking up the Greek definition for each key word in the verse (the Strong’s numbers are listed for each word). Look up cross references that will help you understand the verse you are studying.

Then try to put the verse in your own words. Next, think through what the verse means and write down your thoughts. Finally, apply the truths God has shown you personally. How do you need to change because of what God has shown you from his Word? Please don't attempt to do all of this at once. Take several days during your regular time with the Lord (10-15 minutes) to look up word definitions. Then take a few minutes the next day to work on cross references. During another day simply take time to read what you have written down and prayerfully think through how to put it into your own words. Devote several study times to working through the interpretation and application sections. There is no need to rush through these steps; just seek to make steady progress—a few minutes each day—through the passage.

The process described above is called “meditation.” It takes time and effort, but the roar of the waterfall will grow louder with each step. The anticipation of the view at the end keeps us venturing on, even when the trail gets muddy and steep. So grab your study tools, ask God to open your eyes, and dig in with expectation of great reward!

Remember Your Purpose

 TITUS 2:5; 8, 10; 3:8 

Have you ever gone to the store for a particular item and gotten so distracted by an unexpected sale that you totally forgot to purchase the one thing you actually needed? Or maybe, like me, you walk purposefully into another room in your house and in those few moments between the kitchen and the laundry room you stop dead in your tracks and think, “Why am I here?” Forgetting your purpose in situations like these can be frustrating, but the lasting impact is relatively minor; just another trip to the store or the laundry room when you finally remember what it was you were seeking to accomplish in the first place.

But there are times when forgetting your purpose can have lasting, devastating results. Like when a company forgets the reason they exist and get sidetracked with strategies and marketing techniques to the neglect of their core objectives. One notable example is the fall of Nokia from its position as *the* dominant cell phone provider in the United States. Sidetracked by their strategy to remain in dominance, Nokia missed a whole new technology that made their strengths as a company quickly irrelevant to consumers—the introduction of the iPhone by Apple in 2007. Their company never recovered.

The Oxford dictionary defines *purpose* as, “The reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists.”¹ Can you imagine what would happen if a surgeon went into the operating room without a clear understanding of the purpose for the surgery? Knowing and remembering your purpose not only matters, it is vital. What are the chances of success for a team of scientists who set out on an expedition without any clear understanding of where they are going or what they are seeking to discover? Accurate preparation depends on the purpose. Marco Polo, Ferdinand Magellan, David Livingston, Daniel Boone, Lewis and Clark, Neil Armstrong. Their names are well known to us as men knew their purpose and successfully lived by it.

At some point each of us must ask ourselves, “Why am I here?” “What is my purpose?” Paul masterfully sprinkles purpose clauses all throughout his writing. he knows how easily we get disoriented and

¹ <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/purpose>.



“But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.”

Titus 2:1

*“Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority.
Let no one disregard you.”*

Titus 2:15

*“The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on
these things, so that those who have believed in God may
be careful to devote themselves to good works.*

These things are excellent and profitable for people.”

Titus 3:8





OBSERVATION: *What does it say?*

If you haven't done so already, read through Titus again and use a colored pencil or highlighter to mark the word "doctrine" or "teaching" every time it appears in the text. Use another color to mark the word "sound."

Titus 2:1 *But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.*

Titus, Paul's son in the faith, is set in contrast to **what** group of people? (compare 2:1 with 1:10-16) _____

"Sound doctrine" (2:1) is contrasted to **what** in Titus 1:10-16?

Character Sketch #4: False Teachers.

Read Titus 1:10-16 and 3:9-11; write down everything you learn about the false teachers.

What is the result of false teaching in the lives of both the false teachers and those who listen to them? (1:11-16)

- 6. Look back at the chart on page 146 showing God's intended order for the home, consider singles in your church body who no longer live at home with their parents. What should their "chart" look like? To whom are they accountable for spiritual direction?

- 7. Does submission to your husband (or other God-ordained authority) mean that you cannot offer your opinion? Is there ever a place for a respectful appeal? (Give an example from the Bible.) How should you respond if your appeal is turned down?

4. The concept of biblical submission runs totally against our culture!
How does your union with Christ as a believer help you embrace this aspect of adorning the gospel?

5. How would you counsel a woman who is married to an unbelieving or disobedient husband who encourages or even commands her to do something that is directly against God's clear commands in Scripture?

What are some specific ways the women in your church can spiritually encourage and support those with unbelieving or disobedient husbands?

What should a woman do if she is in danger or if she thinks her husband needs help?

Who is Titus told to instruct in sound doctrine? (2:1-10)

What is "sound doctrine?" Discover the meaning of key words in Titus 2:1. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

but = 1161 de / **you** = 4771 sy

In Titus 2:1, Paul places the emphasis of the sentence on the word *you*. he "established a strong contrast with the false teachers he had just discussed [in Titus 1:10-16]."¹ It is as if Paul is saying, "but as for you, Titus, something different is expected." Paul is intimating a change of direction from the false teachers.

teach = 2980 laleo (*contrast "teach" with Titus 1:11*)

accords with = 4241 prepo

sound = 5198 hygiaino

¹ Walvoord, John F.; Zuck, Roy B.; Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-c1985), S. 2:763.

doctrine = 1319 didaskalia

Now take a few minutes to look up other Scripture passages that are similar to Titus 2:1. These are called **cross references**. Cross references are “other verses that relate to, confirm, or shed light on” the passage you are studying. You can find cross references listed in the margins of a good study Bible. Or, as you look up word definitions, you may find other verses that use the same Greek word. Reading these verses can help in understanding the word’s full meaning. Several cross references have already been supplied for you. After looking up the cross references, write down any thoughts that help you gain a better understanding of Titus 2:1. Follow this same pattern throughout the study.

Cross References: (1 Tim. 1:8-11, 6:3-4; 2 Tim. 1:13-14, 4:3; Titus 1:9; Eph. 4:29)

Verse 1 in my own words²:

²“Take the definitions you have compiled, write out your own paraphrase (i.e., put the verse into your own words) using words from your definitions in place of the original [Greek] words.” Dr. Jim Berg

Group Discussion

Be prepared to give input on the following discussion questions with your group:

1. How can you join with the women of your church to actively encourage new or immature believers who struggle with accepting God’s view of womanhood?

2. What aspect of submission in this study was most convicting to you? Are there any specific steps you need to take to grow in this area?

Is there anything you need to make right with an authority in your life?

3. Is there any authority to which you fear submitting (present or future)? How can you build trust in God?



Responding to God

Good theology will always produce humility and gratitude. We express these heart attitudes in worship—through prayer and song. Take time to respond to God, praising him for Who he is and asking for his help to grow and change in the areas where the Spirit has convicted you. Write out a simple prayer in response to what God has shown you in his Word (i.e., prayers of confession, repentance, worship).

Where does sound doctrine come from? Look for the source of sound doctrine in Titus 1:1-3 and 1:9.

Titus is commanded to teach doctrine that is healthy and accurate, unlike the corrupted teaching of those who are “insubordinate” and “turn away from the truth” (1:10, 14). But **why** is *sound doctrine* so important? This is where linking words help us better understand Scripture. Read through the following verses and identify any **linking words** Paul used.

1:9 he must hold firm to 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.

1:13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith.

Paul starts his letter by stating that he too has a distinct purpose for teaching and preaching the truth:

1:1 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.

The word “sound” shows up several other times in Titus 2. Look for how Paul uses it progressively:

2:1 sound _____

2:2 sound in _____

2:8 sound _____

Sound *doctrine* results in sound *faith* which results in sound *living*. Truth, or lack thereof, has a direct relationship to our behavior, good or bad.

Identify the **linking words** in the verses below. Then underline the results to which these linking words point.

2:3b-5 *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.*

2:7-8 *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.*

2:9-10 *Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, nor pilfering, but showing all good **faith**, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.*

These verses show a direct connection between how believers live—based on what they are taught—and the reputation of God’s Word and character in the watching world. Truth matters!

What is the result when sound doctrine is steadfastly and consistently affirmed?

What is the result in the lives of those who are “insubordinate” when sound doctrine is guarded and proclaimed (see 1:11)?

Truth matters. It is vital to healthy doctrine. It is vital to healthy living. This is why Paul is so adamant that Titus *“insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people”* (3:8).



APPLICATION: *What Should I Do?*

Record practical, specific action steps you need to take in response to what God has shown you in his Word. Plan to use what you learn! Consider your relationship to God as well as your relationships with other people. Target all areas of your life: inner man (what I think, desire, and believe) and outer man (what I do—how sin is expressed in my body). Prayerfully consider what specific action steps you need to take.



INTERPRETATION: *What Does It Mean?*

The goal of studying the Bible is understanding what God has communicated about himself so that we can know him. Remember, the Bible is all about a Person! Review your notes from the observation section of your study. Ask the kinds of questions found under the Interpretation section of “Bible Study At-A-Glance” to help understand the implications of these verses (2:5, 2:9, 3:1). Record your thoughts.

“*These things*” in 3:8 “refer to everything Paul has emphasized in [chapter two] and in the first seven verses of chapter three: namely, the way believers should live and act in regard to one another within the church (2:1-15) and the way they should live and act before the unbelieving world (3:1-7).”³ The same phrase is used in 2:15, where Paul commands Titus to “*declare these things*” continually and faithfully to the church in Crete. But don’t miss Paul’s emphasis: while reminding Titus to faithfully instruct believers about the godly lifestyle that accompanies “*sound*” faith, “*these things*” also refers to the gospel itself—the good news of God’s amazing grace through Christ (2:11-14, 3:4-7). Paul isn’t calling Titus to be a teacher of morality. As we will see in weeks to come, godly living (*good works*) can never be divorced from the grace of God. Rather, Paul is calling Titus to declare the gospel of Jesus Christ, along with all the good that flows from it in our lives. It’s like Paul is saying, “**speak truth**, Titus, so that people will **believe truth**, so that people will **live truth**.”

Titus 2:15 *Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.*

Let’s discover the meaning of a few more important **key words** in 2:15. Along with the word “*declare*” that we looked at earlier, “*exhort*,” “*rebuke*,” and “*let disregard*” are also commands and they are all in the present, active tense. This simply means that these are things that Paul expects Titus to keep on doing without stopping. Write the definitions in the space provided.

exhort = 3870 parakaleo

and = 2532 kai; (*used twice in this verse*) and, also, even; has a cumulative force.

³MacArthur, John: *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Titus* (Chicago, IL.: Moody Press, 1996), 157.

rebuke = 1651 elegcho

with = 3326 meta; denoting accompaniment.

all = 3956 pas; total, complete.

authority = 2003 epitage; the right or authority to command.

no man = 3367 medeis; not even one, none, not anyone, nobody.

let disregard = 4065 periphrono

Why is it that Titus—a young man—can speak with such confidence and authority to all age groups in his congregation or rebuke those who are insubordinate? Where does his authority come from?

Take the principles from this section of Titus and put them in your own local church context. **Who** has God given the responsibility to speak truth to you?

Stop right now and take time to thank God for these people who are continually, faithfully declaring the truth. They are on a serious mission,

“be subject to your own husbands,” he begins this command with the linking word “likewise” (1 Pt. 3:1). What specifically does Peter point wives to look to as their example (1 Pt. 2:21-25)?

Like the submission of Christ, what does 1 Peter 3:1 say is a potential result of a wife practicing godly submission? _____

If you are a believer, then you have personally experienced the power of submission! Remember, your submission has gospel significance too. In each relationship where God calls us to submit, we have the wonderful opportunity to imitate Jesus. As we submit to our authorities, the power of the gospel is displayed through the life-change it produces; and we have the opportunity to be used by God to bring others to him!

Cross References: (*Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 5:21-24; Col. 3:18-22; Rom. 13:1-7; Heb. 13:16-17; 1 Tim. 2:11-12; 1 Pt. 2:13-18, 3:1-7, 5:5*)

Verse 2:5b, 2:9a, 3:1 in my own words:

John 4:34 *Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work."*

John 5:19 *So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise."*

John 5:30 *"I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me."*

John 5:36 *"For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me."*

John 6:38 *"For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me."*

John 8:28-29 *So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me. And he who sent me is with me. he has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him."*

John 10:17-18 *"For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."*

Just how far did Jesus' submission take him? All the way to the cross. If you have time, read the account of Christ's ultimate act of submission in **John 18-19**.

What resulted in our lives from Christ's submission to God's will (1 Pt. 3:18; Rom. 5:1-2, 9-11)? _____

The submission of Jesus Christ has ultimate gospel significance!

The writers of the New Testament consistently point to Jesus as the pattern we are to follow. For example, when Peter calls on wives to

deployed by God in the fight against error. Pray for your own receptivity to God's Word, that your heart will be humble and attentive to God's truth whenever it is shared, and that you will fight the tendency of your flesh to "turn away from the truth" (1:14).

Cross References: (Tit. 1:13; 1 Tim. 4:12; 5:20)

Verse 15 in my own words:



INTERPRETATION: *What Does It Mean?*

The goal of studying the Bible is understanding what God has communicated about himself so that we can know him. Remember, the Bible is all about a Person! Review your notes from the observation section of your study. Ask the following kinds of questions to better understand the implications of these verses (2:1, 15). Record your thoughts on the following page.

- *What does this passage teach me about God?*
- *What does this passage teach me about Jesus?*
- *What does this passage teach me about man/myself?*
- *Are there any promises to claim?*
- *Are there any commands to obey?*
- *Are there any examples to follow?*
- *Are there any sins to avoid?*

Colossians 3:22-24 *Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.*

1 Peter 3:5 *For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands.*

Ephesians 6:1 *Children, obey your parents in the Lord...*

Ephesians 6:5-7 *Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man.*

Ephesians 5:21 *Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

Ephesians 5:22 *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*

Submission is only possible because of our union with Christ. We submit “in the Lord.” We willingly take our place under another “as to the Lord.” Paul even goes so far as to say that through our submission we show “reverence for Christ” (Eph. 5:21). Remember that the command to submit is grounded in the good news of the gospel (2:11-14, 3:3-8). Submission—through Christ, because of Christ, and for Christ.

Just How Powerful is Submission?

Embedded in the very fabric of the Bible—from start to finish—is the most profound example of the power of submission in all of history. Jesus demonstrated a completely different attitude from the popular thinking of his day (Jn. 13:1-5, 12-17; Phil. 2:5-8).

Jesus Christ, the Master of all creation, holding the highest rank and position, willingly and joyfully submitted to God, the Father. John especially brings this out in his gospel account. here is just a small sampling of what Christ said about himself:

becomes even more difficult when an unjust person holds authority over us. Many people wrongly think that submission implies weakness. For the Greeks in Paul’s day, submission was a sign of weakness, something to avoid at all costs. Sentiments haven’t changed much in 2000 years!

The chain of command for the home was established before sin entered the world. But what God intended for our good became very difficult for us to obey once sin entered the equation. Genesis 3:16 lays out the curse all women are under because of sin. Along with multiplied pain and sorrow in childbearing, God declared, “Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.”¹³ The word “desire” refers to a deep urge to “dominate, or just be independent of the man.”¹⁴

In Genesis 3:16, “the reference to ‘desire’ is in a context of sin and judgment.”

All women, including believers, suffer from the effects of sin’s curse. We have a treacherous enemy residing in our own hearts that longs for preeminence, power, and control. The entire feminist movement is based on this principle of woman’s independence from men and dominance in society. How many “controlling women” have you known in your lifetime? How many times have you struggled with this “desire to dominate” in your own heart? Biblical submission—and mastering our desire to be in control—actually takes a great deal of strength. In fact, it takes greater strength than we can muster on our own. If it isn’t found within ourselves, then where does this strength come from? How is it possible to submit—and to do so with a willing spirit and a cheerful disposition? God gives us a clear answer in his Word. Underline the phrases in the following verses that show the *context* in which submission is to be given (the first one is done for you):

Colossians 3:18 *Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.*

¹³ T Swanson, James: *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew* (Old Testament). electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), S. DBLH 9592.

¹⁴ Harris, R. Laird; Harris, Robert Laird; Archer, Gleason Leonard; Waltke, Bruce K.: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999, c1980), S. 913.



APPLICATION: *What Should I Do?*

Record practical, specific action steps you need to take in response to what God has shown you in his Word. Plan to use what you learn! Consider your relationship to God as well as your relationships with other people. Target all areas of your life: inner man (what I think, desire, and believe) and outer man (what I do—how sin is expressed in my body). Prayerfully consider what specific action steps you need to take.



Responding to God

Good theology will always produce humility and gratitude. We express these heart attitudes in worship—through prayer and song. Take time to respond to God, praising him for Who he is and asking for his help to grow and change in the areas where the Spirit has convicted you. Write out a simple prayer in response to what God has shown you in his Word (i.e., prayers of confession, repentance, worship).

Notice that in each of these relationships (husband, master, ruler) no qualifying statement is given concerning the character of the persons to whom we are called to submit. Paul’s focus is simply on God’s ordained order in our relationships and our ultimate responsibility to submit to what he has established.

Submission to God

We naturally tend to fear submission to a human authority because of how often authorities abuse their power. God makes provision for this possibility. While rulings made by civil authorities significantly impact our lives, we can find comfort in knowing that, just as with husbands and masters, the power of these offices is both delegated and controlled by God. God is the ultimate authority. In the context of the slave/master relationship, God gives these warnings to those in authority:

Ephesians 6:9 *Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.*

Colossians 4:1 *Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.*

Our immediate earthly authorities are also under authority—a heavenly one. That means that all authorities—good or bad—will ultimately answer to him. Submission requires trust in God. This becomes easier when we remember the character of God...even when we have to submit to an authority that doesn’t fear God or follow his ways (1 Pt. 2:23; 3:12). God uses our authorities—even unbelievers—as a protective umbrella to shield us from harm.

God created a chain of command for all aspects of society. All people everywhere have someone ranking over them. God created this order for our benefit. Those who reject God’s order and live independently of it also reject the peace and protection that this God-ordained order brings. Submission is possible when we remember this chain of command. Submission to our God-given authorities is, in essence, simply submission to God himself.

Christ-Empowered Submission

Submission is so hard! (And that’s on a good day.) It goes against our naturally proud natures to rank ourselves under others. And submission

Group Discussion

Why did Paul command Titus to continually remind believers about their responsibility to submit to civil authorities? Why is this persistent reminder necessary? _____

What does Paul specifically identify as evidences of the right ordering of our community relationships (3:1-2)? In other words, what actions and attitudes should characterize our lives as believers in the way we interact with others? _____

to be obedient = 3980 peitharcheō (*verb; present, active*)

to be ready = 2092 hetoimos (*verb; present, active*)

Ready for what? Find the **linking word** at the end of 3:1. _____

How is this teaching different from the way unbelievers generally view civil authorities and interact with their community (review the character of those who oppose the gospel 1:10-16)?

Remember the context of Titus 3. Behind this command lies God’s desire for the gospel to impact the society in which the Cretan believers are living. The best way to seek the welfare of others is not through political activism. “The deeper needs” of a society are “addressed as the church lives out its missionary life of Christ in the world.”¹²

¹² Towner, P. H.: *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006), 770.

Be prepared to give input on the following discussion questions with your group:

1. Discuss the connection between speaking truth, believing truth, and living truth. Do you see this flow of truth in your own life? Is there a break-down in one or more areas? If so, what action step do you need to take to allow the flow of truth in your life?

2. What did Paul tell Titus to continually do in order for the Cretans to be “sound in the faith”?

Has anyone ever done this to you when you weren’t thinking biblically? (*Give an example.*)

3. What false teaching is currently popular in our culture? How can you better protect yourself or those you disciple from being drawn by it?

4. While women in the church do not hold the position of a pastor shepherding a congregation, they are to be known as teachers of “*what is good*.” Being faithful to this calling will sometimes require you to “*declare...exhort and rebuke*” other people (2:15). How does this principle apply in your family relationships, with your friends, or with fellow church members?

5. Talk about ways you can support and encourage your God-given pastor, even if he is a younger man.

by their conduct—and especially because of their willing submission to their earthly master—could be effective witnesses for the gospel. “Surely the gospel’s transforming power in the lives of those who had every reason to be bitter would stand out clearer and brighter than in those who lived in freedom and dignity unknown to slaves.”¹¹ Submission is powerful!

Submission to Civil Authorities

In chapter 3, Paul widens the scope to all believers. Every believer has the responsibility to submit to “rulers and authorities.” As with the home, God has established an order for our civil authorities.

Titus 3:1 *Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work.*

Discover the meaning of **key words** in Titus 3:1. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

remind = 5279 hypomimnēskō (*verb; present, active, imperative*)

to be submissive = 5293 hypotassō (*verb; present tense*); same word used in 2:5, 9.

rulers = 746 archē (*noun*)

authorities = 1849 exousia (*noun*)

¹¹ Ibid.

Besides submission, what other behaviors does Paul list as essential to a slave's godly testimony (2:9-10)? _____

“From the world's perspective a slave should not owe any of these things to his master, but from a Christian's perspective the situation looks different.”⁹ According to Colossians 3:23-24, who does a Christian slave actually serve? _____

According to Philemon 1:16, how does Christ change the master/slave relationship? _____

Though our culture no longer operates on a social system of slaves and masters, the principles in this verse are still relevant to us today. While it is tempting to make a direct application to our own work settings (i.e., how employees should relate to their employers), to do so misses the main point of the passage. (None of us can rightly compare our lives to that of a first-century slave!) Just how powerful is gospel-motivated submission? Through their example of submission, slaves were given the particular honor of imitating the example of Jesus, whose willing submission to the Father provided the way for all who live in spiritual bondage to obtain freedom from sin (2:9-10).

True freedom in Christ looks like willing submission to God's ordained order in the home and in society. Think of how counter-cultural such an attitude was in Roman society—or in any society, for that matter! God effectively raises the bar for all slaves, giving them a glorious calling: to proclaim the truth of spiritual emancipation by their righteous lives, and so “adorn the doctrine of God our Savior” (2:10). It is no accident that Paul reserved this special purpose clause for slaves!

“Against the bleak hopelessness of this system of bondage, the Christian slave's devotion to the gospel and resulting godly attitudes and actions serve to make attractive in an unparalleled way the ultimate freedom that is only realized in Christ.”¹⁰ Christian slaves,

⁹ Walvoord, John F.; Zuck, Roy B.; S. 2:765.

¹⁰ Lea, T. D., & Griffin, H. P.: 1, 2 *Timothy, Titus* (Vol. 34), (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 308.

When Grace Appeared

TITUS 2:11-14; 3:3-7

Following his strong admonition for Titus to declare sound doctrine (2:1), Paul spends nine verses communicating the specific character qualities that are to be distinctly manifested in the lives of God's children (2:2-10). This is one of Paul's main reasons for writing. He wants Titus—and us—to understand that healthy faith leads to a holy life. But before we dig into these verses about how God wants believers to live, we first need to explore the motivation that Paul establishes in Titus 2:11-14. Every command in verses 2-10—and in the rest of the book—has its roots in this foundational section. In this short section of verses, we find what motivates believers to live holy lives that adorn the gospel. These verses contain the main point of the entire book and are central to understanding everything else that Paul writes in this letter to Titus. Though we will not look at chapter three in depth, please note that it follows the same basic structure as chapter two. You may want to read Titus 3 with that in mind and see if you can find the similarities. In both chapters, Paul gives Titus specific things to teach his people. Immediately after that, he gives the motivation behind such a radical call to holiness.

For this lesson, as well as in the lessons to come, we will follow the same structure as the previous lesson. If you need to review the Inductive Study Method, please refer to the Bible study helps at the beginning of your notebook. One of the main goals of our ladies' small group studies is to become a “Word-filled” woman who continually grows in her skillfulness in both studying and applying God's Word. Don't be discouraged if this type of study seems difficult at first—keep practicing! Ask the Lord to help you. You will grow as you seek him in his Word! If you are already familiar with this type of Bible study, ask the Lord to sharpen your skills. Even if you have studied this passage in depth in the past, pray that the Lord will make it fresh to your heart and show you new things about his character and how you need to change in light of it. We can never exhaust God's Word!

As always, if you have any questions, your group leaders will be happy to help. But don't neglect your greatest helper, the Holy Spirit. As A.W. Tozer once said, your best study tool is “the diligent application of two knees on the floor.” In order to better grasp these rich verses, we will be spending the next two lessons digging deeply into Titus 2:11-14.

Pray that the Lord will use your time in his Word to allow your own heart to be “trained by grace.”

submission in his various letters to churches, Paul regularly refers to *wives* and *slaves*, likely because of the potential for unbelievers to accuse Christianity of being a subversive religion. If newfound freedom in Christ was used for license to rebel against an authority, then it would give occasion to unbelievers to criticize and slander the “*word of God*” and the “*doctrine*” it taught (2:5, 8).

Titus 2:9 *Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything...*

Discover the meaning of **key words** in Titus 2:9. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

bondservants = 1401 *doulos*

to be submissive = 5293 *hypotassō (verb; present tense)*; same word used in verse 5. Submission is not the same thing as obedience, “although it is shown in obedience” and includes the attitude of “respect and willingness to serve.”⁶

own = 2398 *idios*; same word used verse 5.

masters = 1203 *despotes*; “a master, lord...absolute ruler,”⁷ “owner.”⁸

Again, God gives a protective provision for slaves in this verse. Rather than being subject to all masters, the command is limited to the slave’s relationship with his own master.

in everything = 3956 (*adjective*)

⁶ Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. electronic ed. (Ontario:

⁷ Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996), S. G1203.

⁸ Swanson, James: *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*. electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), S. DBLG 1305, #2.

fundamentally distorts the picture. Instead of giving an accurate picture of the gospel, we portray the church leading and Christ submitting. In other words, we put ourselves as our own saviors. Perhaps this is why Paul designates the enemies of the gospel with the title “*insubordinate*” (1:10). Submission, or the lack of it, has serious gospel implications.

Submission is not just for women. The Bible clearly teaches that every person who has ever lived is under authority of some kind. Paul often taught on this theme, and his letter to Titus is no exception. Mark each reference to *submission* in your copy of Titus (references are given below). In each case, take note of who is doing (or should be doing) the submitting and who is acting as the immediate authority:

Verse	The One Submitting	The Authority
1:1	<i>Paul</i>	<i>God</i>
1:6		
1:7		
1:10		
2:5		
2:9		
2:14		
3:1		

While Titus doesn’t present everything the Bible says about submission, these examples cover just about every relational experience we can imagine. God has determined a right ordering for all our relationships. And, as with the husband-wife relationship, each of these carries gospel significance as well. Let’s consider a few of these in more detail.

Submission to Masters

Slaves “made up a significant portion of first-century congregations.”⁵ Because of this, slaves also had a considerable role to play in adding to the collective witness of the gospel in Crete. When speaking of



“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”

Titus 2:11-14

“For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

Titus 3:3-7



⁵ Walvoord, John F.; Zuck, Roy B.; Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-c1985), S. 2:764

 **OBSERVATION: *What does it say?***

If you haven't done so already, find and mark the **linking words** in Titus 2:11-14 and 3:3-7. Also, use a colored pencil or highlighter to mark the word "grace" every time it appears in the text. Use another color to mark the word "salvation," "saved," or "Savior." Are there any other repeated words or phrases that stand out to you? Mark these in a distinct way.

Titus 2:11 *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people.*

Paul uses the important linking word "for" at the very beginning of verse 11. This word provides a clue that Paul is getting ready to give the reason, or theology, behind what he wrote in verses 2-10. This linking word points backwards, intensifying Paul's argument that healthy faith will result in holy lives. In this short section of verses, Paul sets out "to explore that central aspect of God's truth which demands godly living: grace. The word **for** (gar) suggests that here is the theological foundation for what the apostle had just written."¹ Why live the way Paul has just set out in 2:2-10? Short answer: because of grace.

Discover the meaning of other **key words** in Titus 2:11. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

grace = 5485 charis

Consider the use of "charis" in Classical Greek:

"Charis...implies a favor freely done, without claim or expectation of return. ... finding its only motive in the bounty and free-heartedness of the giver. But in pagan Greece, this favor was always conferred upon a friend, not upon an enemy. When charis...is [used in the] New Testament, it takes an infinite leap forward, and acquires an added meaning which it never had in pagan Greece, for the favor God did

¹ Walvoord, John F.; Zuck, Roy B.; Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-c1985), S. 2:763.

How does Christ's example impact your view of submission as a woman? _____

Considering the negative side of submission helps to better understand the kind of attitude and behavior God forbids in the marriage relationship. The opposite of *hypotasso* is *anupotaktos*—translated as "disobedient" in 1 Timothy 1:9, "insubordinate" in Titus 1:6 and 10, and "not in subjection" in Hebrews 2:8. While sharing the same root word as *tassō* (5021), *anupotaktos* (506) is presented in the negative, describing a person who is unwilling to be subjected to an authority. They reject God's ordained order and refuse to "get in their place."

The virtue of submission has special gospel significance. From the very beginning, God's purpose in creating the institution of marriage was to provide a visual representation on earth of gospel realities in heaven (Gen. 2:24-25; Eph. 5:22-32). God desires that his image bearers accurately portray truth about him through the marriage relationship. For example, in Ephesians 5:22-24 Paul specifically states that a wife's willing submission to her husband is a miniature dramatization in daily life of the church's willing submission to Christ. And a husband's loving and sacrificial leadership reflects the love of Christ for his people, the church. God powerfully uses a husband's loving leadership and a wife's joyful submission to portray the beauty of the gospel to the watching world.

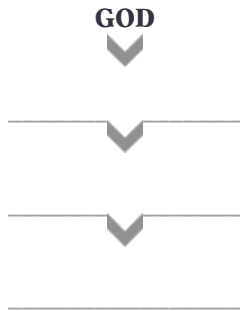
We must conclude then that ignorance of or insubordination to God's ordained ordering of the home has serious implications that reach far beyond our individual lives. This gospel picture cannot be altered without altering the gospel message the picture is meant to portray. It would be like trying to change the molecular structure of an atomic compound—it cannot be done without fundamentally altering the compound. The compound H₂O is one of God's greatest gifts to mankind. Change things around a bit and you get O₂H, which is not water, but rather a reactive oxygen species known as Dioxidanide; or you may recognize it by its better-known name, hydrogen peroxide. While helpful in preventing bacterial infections in wounds, a steady ingestion of O₂H would kill you. In a similar way, changing the "molecular structure" of a marriage leads to devastating results. When a wife refuses to get in her place and instead rules over her husband, it

God clearly states this order in 1 Corinthians 11:3. Use the chart below to list each person in their proper “rank”:

The order which results from this submission is vital for Christians to be effective in their God-assigned roles.

1 Corinthians 11:3 *But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.*

God’s Order for the Home



What does this verse teach you about Jesus Christ?

Wayne Grudem connects submission to the character of God:

“The idea of headship never began! It has always existed in the eternal nature of God himself. And in this most basic of all authority relationships, authority is not based on gifts or ability.... [The relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] is one of leadership and authority on the one hand and voluntary, willing, joyful submission to that authority on the other hand. We can learn from this that submission to a rightful authority is a noble virtue. It is a privilege. It is something good and desirable. It is the virtue that has been demonstrated by the eternal Son of God forever. It is his glory, the glory of the Son as he relates to his Father.”⁴

⁴ Wayne Grudem, “The Key Issues in the Manhood-Womanhood Controversy,” *Building Strong Families*, ed. Dennis Rainey (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2002), 61.

at Calvary’s Cross, he did, not for a race that loved him but which hated him. Thus, in the New Testament., [this word] refers to an act that is beyond the ordinary course of what might be expected and is therefore commendable.”²

According to Titus 2:11, 1:4, and 3:7, where does this special kind of grace come from? _____

Read through Titus 2:11-14 and 3:7 again. What does grace do? Write down any action words (verbs) applied to grace:

has appeared = 2014 epiphaino (*Greek verbs are very specific. Discovering the verb tense, mood, and voice helps in understanding the meaning of a verse. Technology has simplified this process. Instead of taking a full course in Greek, we can discover this information by simply clicking on a link in a Bible study website or app. For example, the verb “has appeared” is in the aorist tense: an action that occurred one time in the past; the indicative mood: a statement of fact; and is in the passive voice: the subject [grace] receives the action of the verb. This same word is used in Titus 3:4.*)

bringing salvation = 4992 soterios (this phrase is one word in the Greek; “an adjective [describing] grace.”³)

² Wuest, Kenneth S.: *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), c1984, S. Tit 2:11.

³ Ibid.

Let's dig a little deeper into this rich and beautiful word before moving on:

- What word in our English language do we derive from the Greek "epiphaino"? _____ What one time event in the past do you think this verse is referring to? In other words, when did "grace" appear?
- The concepts of *darkness* and *light* appear frequently in Scripture. To understand Titus 2:11 better, look up the following verses and write down your thoughts about how they relate to the subject of verse 11, "grace...appeared."

Isaiah 9:2, 6 _____

Malachi 4:2a _____

Luke 1:78-79 _____

Hebrews 1:1-3a _____

2 Timothy 1:9-10 _____

- In Titus 2:11, "grace" is a noun. Based on your study so far, do you think "grace" is a person, place or thing? _____
- Read the following verses, looking for the word "appear" or "shine" (*phaino*): John 1:1-5, 9; Revelation 1:13-18 and 21:23. Who do these verses refer to? _____

Paul could have substituted the name "Jesus Christ" in place of "the grace of God" in verse 11. Why live holy lives? Because Jesus appeared. he came, and in his coming he brought salvation for all people. Grace is a Person!

all = 3956 pas; all, any, every, the whole. "Gentiles as well as Jews ...for all ranks and conditions of men."⁴ (See Titus 2:2-9.)

"There is a universal need, and God provided a universal remedy for all who will believe."⁵

⁴ Henry, Matthew: *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996, c1991), S. Tit 2:11.

⁵ Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996, c1989), S. Tit 2:9.

their = a definite article for "husbands," showing that each wife's husband is unique, one of a kind, and to be regarded as different from other women's husbands.

own = 2398 *idios* (*adjective*)

husbands = 435 *aner* (*noun*) "Common as the general designation of a man. ...The word also denotes the husband... [referring] to the actual position."²

Through the phrase "their own husbands," God provides a limiting protection for women. Women are not inherently inferior and thereby subject to submit to all men in general (Gal. 3:28). God requires submission in the context of a specific relationship, and a godly wife will joyfully embrace her God-given responsibility.

Submission has nothing to do with a woman's value. Men and women, slave and free are on equal footing when it comes to our position in Christ. In New Testament times, Christianity actually raised women and slaves to a higher standing than they had ever before experienced in their culture. God bestowed on them the greatest value possible. Submission isn't about value; it's about order.

Hypotassō is a military term describing "a general arranging soldiers under him in subjection to himself."³ What if the Pentagon decided to do away with the military chain of command in order to treat everyone as equals? Just think of the devastating impact a lack of order in the command structure would have on the effectiveness of our Armed Forces. For the good of the country and the successful outcome of their mission, soldiers observe rank and proper chain of command. Each soldier must embrace the rank he has been assigned and all of the responsibilities that come with it. God, in his infinite wisdom, created a similar order for the home. For the good of the family, each person must submit to the rank that has been assigned.

² Kittel, Gerhard (Hrsg.); Bromiley, Geoffrey William (Hrsg.); Friedrich, Gerhard (Hrsg.): *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-c1976), S. 1:360.

³ Wuest, Kenneth S.: *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, c1984), S. Tit 2:3.



OBSERVATION: *What does it say?*

Before we delve into the seventh virtue in which young women are to be trained, we need to remember that this virtue, like all the others, is rooted in the doctrine of grace (2:11-14, 3:4-7). No virtue can truly become a part of our character which we seek to produce by self-effort, on demand. This may result in some outward, behavioral change for a time but, under the surface, the “virtue” produced is nothing more than pride. Virtues that grow out of grace, however, are genuine and God-glorifying. Grace, personified in the Person of Jesus Christ, is an effective trainer. Older, godly women are called to imitate the example of Jesus—cooperate with their Lord in his training work in the lives of younger women. Even when the training is hard to give and hard to receive, Grace compels us to press on.

Titus 2:3b-5 *...and so train the young women... (to be) submissive to their own husbands.*

Discover the meaning of **key words** in Titus 2:5. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

Course of Study #4: Submission

Unlike the other six virtues we have studied which were adjectives, descriptive of a godly young woman’s character, “submissive” is a verb.

(to be) submissive = 5293 *hypotassō (verb; present tense) Hypotasso is a compound word formed by combining hypo (5259) and tassō (5021).*

In using the specific form of this word, Paul “implies willing subjection and makes it the responsibility of the wife to give it rather than for the husband, who has his own responsibilities in the relationship, to take it.”¹

¹ Marshall, I. H., & Towner, P. H. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 247.

people = 444 anthropos; mankind in general.

Cross References: (Col. 1:26-27; 1 Tim. 2:3-6; 4:10; Titus 3:4-7)

Verse 11 in my own words:

Titus 2:12 *Training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.*

Discover the meaning of **key words** in Titus 2:12. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

training = 3811 paideuo (verb)

Look back to verse 11; who/what is doing the training? _____

to = 2443 hina; can be translated “in order that;” designates purpose.
How does this linking word help your understanding of vv. 11-12?

renounce = 720 arneomai (*verb, aorist tense*: expresses “denying once for all.”⁶ “It is a settled matter.”⁷)

See Hebrews 11:24-25 for an example of this word in action:

ungodliness = 763 asebeia

worldly = 2886 kosmos; “having the character of this present age.”⁸
The word *kosmos* (κοσμος) is used here of the world system of evil of which Satan is the head... together with the pleasures, pursuits, practices, and purposes of the individuals involved.”⁹

⁶Jamieson, Robert; S. Tit 2:12.

⁷Wiersbe, Warren W.; S. Tit 2:9.

⁸Strong, James; S. G2886.

⁹Wuest, Kenneth S.; S. Tit 2:11.



They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women... (to be) submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.

Titus 2:3b-5

Bondservants 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.

Titus 2:9-10

Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

Titus 3:1-2



Even though Titus 2:5 is specifically directed toward married women, the theme of submission runs through the entire book with a broad range of application, whatever your stage of life. Married or unmarried, we live in a culture that pursues a relentless attack against biblical femininity, marriage, and the family. Unless our beliefs—and the choices that result from those beliefs—are based on the authority of God’s unchanging Word, we will be just as unstable and uncertain as the culture around us.

As you study one of the most controversial verses in our modern society, pray that the Lord will give you a tender and receptive heart. Our joyful and active obedience in response to God’s Word brings honor to God and “adorns the gospel.”

Rather than making Scripture palatable to those who stumble over its truths, Titus 2 teaches that truth lived out in our lives will attract unbelievers to the gospel. The very thing our sinful, independent hearts want to reject, God has designed to be our most attractive and powerful witnessing tool. Unbelievers need to see the gospel displayed in the lives of women who claim to be transformed by its power, for that is the only power that can transform their lives as well. Back in the 60’s feminists coined a phrase: “Sisterhood is powerful.” But Titus 2 and parallel passages prove something very different: *Submission is powerful!*

passions = 1939 epithumia; “desire, craving, longing, desire for what is forbidden, lust;”¹⁰ “a passionate desire.”¹¹

live = 2198 zao (*verb; aorist subjunctive active*); “behave, conduct oneself in a particular manner.”¹² This verb “calls for a specific act with a note of urgency.”¹³

Grace is always at work, training believers to “put off” *ungodliness* and *worldly* passions. But, just as importantly, grace also actively instructs God’s children in positive righteousness. Because of their union with Jesus Christ, believers are called to “put on” a manner of life that is marked by grace. Those who are “in him” must and will become “like him.” Three godly qualities (adverbs) at the end of verse 12 stand in stark contrast to those who live apart from the righteous influence of Jesus:

self-controlled = 4996 sophronos

upright = 1346 dikaios

godly = 2153 eusebos

¹⁰ Strong, James; S. G1939.

¹¹ Wuest, Kenneth S.; S. Tit 2:11.

¹² Swanson, James: *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains: Greek* (New Testament). electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), S. GGK2409.

¹³ Rogers, Cleon; p.510.

With these three adverbs, Paul succinctly covers every aspect of living, personal as well as relational:

“‘Soberly,’ that is, with self-restraint, in relation to one’s **self**: ‘righteously’ or justly, in relation to our **neighbor**; ‘godly’ or piously, in relation to **God**.”¹⁴

In the present age = 3568 nun, 165 aion; “at this time, the present, now;”¹⁵ “a space of time, an age.”¹⁶

This world is not all there is. But for now, by the will of God, this “present age” is where we live, and it is where we are expected to live out the reality of God’s saving grace. While verse 13 looks ahead to our glorious *future*, verse 12 focuses on our *present* responsibilities as believers. Those who are in Christ have a responsibility to grace: an obligation to say “no” to sin and an obligation to say “yes” to God. Both present and future aspects of the Christian life find their basis in the *past* work of grace God has accomplished (verse 14).

Paul reiterates this same gospel logic in chapter 3. Why submit to authority, be obedient, and ready for every good work? Why guard your tongue and be gentle and courteous towards others? Because *Grace appeared*. The coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ, made all the difference between a life broken and bound by sin, and a life of freedom and usefulness for God. Read Titus 3:3-7. Use the chart below to identify the things that “*were once*” true of you and, in contrast, the things that are now true because “*the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared*.”

For we ourselves were once...

But when...our Savior appeared...

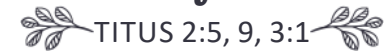
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¹⁴ Jamieson, Robert; S. Tit 2:12.

¹⁵ Strong, James; S. G3568.

¹⁶ Thomas, Robert L.: *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition* (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981), S. H8674.

The Power of Submission



As my husband often reminds our congregation from the pulpit, we don’t have the freedom to pick and choose which parts of God’s Word we want to receive and which parts we would rather just skip over. The practice of studying God’s Word systematically allows God to choose the topics for us. If we went by our feelings, there are likely portions of Scripture we would never read! So, when we come to an especially difficult section of Scripture, or one that runs counter to our culture—as in this lesson—we should embrace it as from the Lord himself. The final “course of study” in which younger women are to be trained is submission. Just seeing that word may prompt a variety of internal responses depending on your background, experiences, and understanding of Scripture. No matter how you currently feel about it, each of us can find comfort in the truth that Paul didn’t choose this topic. And as the writer of this women’s Bible study, I didn’t choose it either. God chose it. And our good God, the revealer and giver of grace, intends the knowledge of these verses to result in our spiritual benefit. Submission wasn’t a popular topic in Titus’ day either. But Paul commanded him to declare God’s right ordering of things—in the church, in the home, and in the broader community. Paul did not want Titus to be shy about this message: *Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. (2:15)*. Neither should we.

Submission is one of the most misunderstood and misapplied words in the English language. For some women, the Bible’s teaching on submission is a stumbling block that keeps them from coming to Christ. To make Scripture more palatable, many mainline denominations have ceased teaching on this subject or changed their view of it altogether. All you have to do is browse through the section on women’s books in any major Christian bookstore to discover just how deeply this kind of worldly thinking has infiltrated Christianity as a whole. The book of Titus was written to correct error that was creeping into the Cretan church. Paul’s solution to error: preach the truth. Right doctrine transforms lives. Two thousand years later, it is still our best defense. We are all influenced by our culture—and our own hearts—more than we realize and need constant reminders of the truth to avoid drifting into error. Genesis 3 clearly states that every woman who has ever lived has the tendency to resist God’s established order in the home.

Look up the following passages and pay special attention to the theme of putting off evil and putting on godliness. Write down what you find in the chart below. All of the commands given in Titus 2:1-10 follow this same pattern: showing every Christian—regardless of age or class—his responsibility to grace.

	Say “no” to sin/flesh	Say “yes” to God
Titus 2:3	<i>Not false accusers Not given to wine</i>	<i>Holy behavior Teachers of good things</i>
Romans 6:11-14		
Romans 12:2		
2 Corinthians 5:14-15		
Ephesians 4:22-24		
1 Peter 1:14-15		
1 Peter 2:24		
1 Peter 4:2		

It is impossible for us to say “no” to sin (and, in essence, say “no” to our sinful flesh) in our own strength. We need grace! Jim Berg addresses this issue in *Essential Virtues*:

“At every crossroad where he must decide whether he will please himself or please Christ in order to manifest a Christlike quality, he must then die to himself (Lk. 9:23-24; 1 Cor. 9:24-27) in order to receive the divine help—the grace—to carry out the right choice (1 Pt. 5:5; 2 Cor. 9:8).”

“The believer can and will say no to any wrong desires when he has said a bigger yes to Christ’s will for him. It is this surrender to God himself and to his will to which the Spirit of God responds with enabling grace and through which Christlikeness is formed.”

“Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts’ is the exercise of self-control for the purpose of bringing every part of life under the lordship of Jesus Christ—the essence of living a well-ordered life. Contrary to the libertine teaching of Peter’s day—and ours—grace does not give a believer free reign to do anything he wishes as long as the Bible does not forbid it. Paul is clear here that grace does not produce license but rather teaches us to deny ourselves the worldliness that corrupts us and pursue the godliness that changes us for Christ.”¹⁷

Grace appeared. And he made all the difference!

Cross References: (Gal. 5:24; Eph. 1:4; Col. 1:22; 1 Jn. 2:15-16; 1 Jn. 3:5)

Verse 12 in my own words:

¹⁷ Berg, Jim. *Essential Virtues: Marks of the Christ-Centered Life* (Greenville, SC:JourneyForth, 2008), pp. 58, 60, 69.

Do you use your home as a center for ministry to care for the spiritual well-being of others (both to those in the church and to those in the community)? List at least one way you can grow in this area.

List several practical ways you can demonstrate “love with shoes on” in your home—showing active love that is useful and spiritually beneficial to your husband/family. Plan to share at least one of these with your group.

In addressing our role in the kingdom as women, J.D. Greear provides this encouragement²⁵:

“If you are a stay-at-home mom, you need to ask yourself: What role do I play in the advance of the mission? My wife views the rearing of our four children as serious, spiritual, missionary work. Ask her what she does, and she’ll say she is a missionary to the unreached people group known as ‘the Greear children.’” he goes on to explain, “Right now, that’s her primary role in the mission. And of course, being in this stage provides her some unique opportunities to share Christ with and disciple other mothers in the same stage. The same principle applies if you are a public school teacher, a police officer, or a federal court judge. God didn’t make you all to be vocational pastors, but He put you all on the front lines of the mission. And when I say that, I don’t mean that you simply exploit your platform to force awkward evangelism encounters or give your business a cheesy Christian name. God has a purpose for the vocation itself; your witness grows out of the excellence with which you carry out your vocation. Your vocation is God’s means of blessing the world, and doing it excellently gives you a chance to tell others about the God who cares for them body and soul.”

You have a special role in advancing God’s kingdom in the world! How does God want you to use the unique platform he has given you—along with all he has put into your hands—to show others the reality of the gospel? Consider making this a matter of earnest prayer.

²⁵ Greear, J.D. *Gaining by Losing* (Zondervan, 2015), 72.

3. **Self-controlled and pure:**

There are many unsaved people who are extremely disciplined and practice some form of self-control. What is the difference between the self-control that even an unsaved person can practice and the self-control that Scripture commands believers to cultivate and practice in their lives?

Do you have a personal, biblical strategy for dealing with temptation? When presented with an opportunity to sin—in thought or action—how do you say “no” to that sinful desire? Write at least three practical steps for resisting temptation below. Discuss practical ways a believer can intentionally pursue purity instead.

4. **Working at home and kind:**

“In Titus 2:5 the wife and mother has her primary sphere of responsibility in the home. Yet Proverbs 31:10–31 indicates that the home is not necessarily the limit of her sphere of activity.” Though Scripture does not prohibit a woman from pursuing interests outside her home, it does clearly teach that home management is a woman’s God-given ministry. Our culture does not portray homemaking or stay-at-home moms in a positive light, but the hard-working Proverbs 31 woman oriented all of her pursuits around her home and the good of her family. When considering taking on responsibilities outside your home (work or ministry), what principles should govern your decision?

Without even realizing it, worldly definitions of success and fulfillment can creep into our thinking and affect the way we prioritize our lives. What practical steps can you take to maintain, and further cultivate, a heart for your God-given “home work?”



INTERPRETATION: *What Does It Mean?*

The goal of studying the Bible is understanding what God has communicated about himself so that we can know him. Remember, the Bible is all about a Person! Review your notes from the observation section of your study. Ask the kinds of questions found under the Interpretation section of “Bible Study At-A-Glance” to help understand the implications of these verses (2:11-12). Record your thoughts.

²⁴ Hughes, Robert B.; Laney, J. Carl: Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), S. 653.



APPLICATION: *What Should I Do?*

Record practical, specific action steps you need to take in response to what God has shown you in his Word. Plan to use what you learn! Consider your relationship to God as well as your relationships with other people. Target all areas of your life: inner man (what I think, desire, and believe) and outer man (what I do—how sin is expressed in my body). Prayerfully consider what specific action steps you need to take.

What can you personally do to help cultivate an atmosphere where these kinds of relationships flourish within your church body?

2. Loving husbands and children:

The world communicates a very different message about godly femininity than what God lays out in Titus 2. In what ways have your thoughts and attitudes towards men and children been influenced by our culture (such as unrealistic expectations about love and romance, feminist ideology, etc.)?

There is no distinction in God’s kingdom between married and unmarried women. We are all stewards of the grace of God with the unified purpose of bringing glory to God. No hierarchy. No ranking. Each woman in the body of Christ has a significant role to play in advancing God’s kingdom. How can unmarried women in the church help support and encourage their sisters in Christ who are married in their responsibility to love their husbands and children?

Women who are not yet married are a rich resource in the church! They have spiritual gifts that God wants to use to further his kingdom and to bring him glory. How can the married women in the church support and encourage their unmarried sisters in Christ to utilize their gifts in the body?

Discuss how women without biological children can demonstrate the virtue of being “lovers of children.”

Group Discussion

Be prepared to give input on the following discussion questions with your group:

1. **Discipleship:**

Look back at the definition of *sophronizo* on page 120. This strong word calls for active, earnest, long-term involvement in others' lives for their spiritual good. Relationships like this require both teachers and learners. They function best when there is willingness and humility on both sides. Are these types of relationships typical in your church? Why or why not?

What potential fears might **older women** face about engaging in discipling relationships with younger women?

What might keep **younger women** from receiving spiritual instruction when someone is willing to offer it?

We have a responsibility to love our sisters in Christ by being involved in each other's lives. Relationships like this were designed by God to be one of the primary ways in which we grow and help to "rescue each other from sin and deception."²² In their book, *The Compelling Community*, Mark Dever and Jamie Dunlop put it this way: "The Christian life is not one of posturing and preening; it is a life of honesty. Honesty about our money and marriages, our sins and struggles, our ambitions and anxieties. At least a few in your congregation should know pretty much everything about your life."²³ They go on to say, "Such transparency is contagious. Once some start taking risks to live this way, it will spread to others." Who have you invited to know you in this way?

²² Dever, Mark and Dunlop, Jamie. *The Compelling Community* (Crossway, 2015), 174.

²³ Ibid.

Responding to God

Good theology will always produce humility and gratitude. We express these heart attitudes in worship—through prayer and song. Take time to respond to God, praising him for Who he is and asking for his help to grow and change in the areas where the Spirit has convicted you. Write out a simple prayer in response to what God has shown you in his Word (i.e., prayers of confession, repentance, worship).

Group Discussion

Be prepared to give input on the following discussion questions with your group:

1. As we saw in the last lesson, one of the main themes of Titus is that doctrine (what we believe) is inseparably linked to living (what we do). Yet, Paul is not giving Titus a cold and sterile formula: believe right and live right. In Titus 2:11-14 and 3:3-7 we discover the link between truth and obedience: God's grace. In your own words, describe the connection between grace and godly living. What dangerous error results when grace is removed as the source and motive of obedience?

2. In Titus 2:12 grace is presented as the Teacher and believers are the students. Does the *grace of God* really have a right to dictate how you live your life? Why or why not?

Are you a good student, allowing grace to train you? Do you generally have a negative or positive reaction to God's instruction in your life? What changes do you need to make to become a better student of grace?

Responding to God

Good theology will always produce humility and gratitude. We express these heart attitudes in worship—through prayer and song. Take time to respond to God, praising him for Who he is and asking for his help to grow and change in the areas where the Spirit has convicted you. Write out a simple prayer in response to what God has shown you in his Word (i.e., prayers of confession, repentance, worship).



APPLICATION: *What Should I Do?*

Record practical, specific action steps you need to take in response to what God has shown you in his Word. Plan to use what you learn! Consider your relationship to God as well as your relationships with other people. Target all areas of your life: inner man (what I think, desire, and believe) and outer man (what I do—how sin is expressed in my body). Prayerfully consider what specific action steps you need to take.

3. The command to abandon ungodliness and worldly lusts *after* receiving salvation assumes that we were entrenched in ungodliness and worldly lusts *before* salvation. If grace had not “appeared,” what would we be like right now (Acts 26:18; Eph. 2:2-3, 4:17, 5:8; Col. 1:13, 3:7-9; 1 Pt. 2:9, 4:3)? Take some time to remember your own “grace story.” When was the last time you shared it with someone else?

Are you grateful for God’s grace? Do you *regularly* thank God that his grace “appeared” and brought salvation to you? Write down at least one specific way to cultivate a grateful heart towards God. How will you fight against the tendency of allowing the reality of your salvation to become commonplace?

4. “The grace of God was an abused doctrine in Crete...There are some who would turn grace into license, teaching that Christians can live in sin since they are no longer under Law. Of course, the believer is not under Law but under grace; but grace brings an even greater responsibility.”¹⁸ In a similar way, Peter confronts believers who “were living like the world while defending their sin and disobedience in the name of “Christian liberty.”¹⁹ Centuries later, we face the same temptation to abuse God’s grace. How can you use what you learned about God’s grace in Titus to counter this type of thinking?

¹⁸ Wiersbe, Warren W.; S. 662.

¹⁹ Berg, Jim; p. 22.

he is our righteous Advocate (1 Jn. 2:1). Being "in Christ" means that God credits his righteous character to us. And it is for this reason Paul can declare, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). When you fail, find forgiveness in Jesus and rest in your righteous standing through his good work on your behalf. And then remember your purpose; rise up again and, by his grace, continue to follow your Lord.

As these virtues become more and more visible in our lives, we as women add to the collective gospel witness of the church—and the watching world is impacted! May many people in your sphere of influence be drawn to the Savior as they see his grace actively at work revealing the character of Christ in you.

Cross References: (Gen. 2:23-24; Eph. 5:22-33; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; 2 Thess. 2:17; 1 Tim. 2:8-15, 5:9-15; 1 Pt. 4:7-10)

Verses 4-5 in my own words:

Compelled by Grace

 TITUS 2:11-14; 3:3-7 

I remember the fist of Pharaoh. It fills an entire room in the British Museum in London. I stood there, transfixed and awed, just trying to imagine the rest of the statue, looming large and ominous in the Egyptian desert. No doubt, my awe certainly didn't compare with what the archaeologists experienced when they discovered this great treasure. Consider the vast difference between the archaeologist and the museum guest. One has fingernails encrusted with mud from long and tedious digs through the layers of dirt that mark the ages of men, pants thread bare from kneeling, a sore back. The other explores ancient artifacts, discoveries of other men, from a comfortable distance, through pristine glass and carefully placed lighting. Labor and sweat lead to an intimacy with history that the casual observer will never experience. But the archaeologist is willing to endure the discomfort because he has tasted the glory of discovery and is driven by an insatiable desire for more. He patiently waits while he zealously works.

It is the same with Bible study. Though God certainly uses the biblical insights of others to convict, change, and even inspire us, he wants us to be personally active in the diligent study of his Word. He wants us to get our hands dirty, so to speak, in the soil of his Word. Fight the tendency to just be a guest at the museum. The Bible is alive, and God is inviting us to discover him there. Don't be content to read about the explorations of others; get in the "dig" yourself. Exploration takes great investments of time and effort but, like a patient archaeologist, the rewards are immense. You will never forget the treasures God helps you unearth!

I trust that you are already experiencing the joy of discovery:

- God cannot lie.
- God's Word is trustworthy.
- Grace appeared bringing salvation to all people.
- Grace is a Person!

But there is more to discover!

After a thorough study of verses 11 and 12, we are beginning to catch Paul's heartbeat: grace, grace, grace. Past grace, present grace, future

grace. All brought to us when Jesus appeared. Grace is the source and motivation for the godly conduct Paul outlines throughout the book. In the verses that follow, Paul goes on to name two key motivations for holy living—both of which are based on God’s saving and training grace. As we explore verses 13 and 14, remember that every command in verses 2-10—and in the rest of the book—has its roots in this foundational section. Unpacking these verses and getting to the heart of the passage will help tremendously when we come to the “nitty-gritty” of the Christian life in the lessons later on.

It is my prayer that your heart will be refreshed and challenged by this closer look at our Savior, the One who not only gave himself for us but also gave us the promise that he will certainly “appear” again in the full splendor of his glory. May your faith and confidence in him be strengthened as you continue to explore his precious Word.

Paul’s instruction for the older women to train the younger women is rooted in another training that is going on in this passage: “Grace” is also “training” it’s recipients in godliness (2:11-14). Although the word “training” in verses 4 and 12 are not exactly the same, the function of the teacher is similar. In fact, it is the training which Grace does in our lives as believers that provides the model for the training we give and receive in our discipling relationships. Doesn’t this excite you?! Older women are given the amazing privilege to *be like our Lord* when, like him, they sacrifice themselves to teach truth, model a life of devotion to God, and come alongside others to help them learn to live in a way that is pleasing to him. Are you being like Jesus? Whom are you “training?”

Before we close this lesson, let’s remind ourselves of the amazing outcome God has promised when women—young and old—live in a way that “*accords with sound doctrine*” (2:1). What are the results when **teachers of good** and **learners of good** work together to learn God’s ways? We find the answer at the end of verse 5: *that the word of God may not be reviled*. We will study this statement more in depth in the weeks to come, but for now we simply need a reminder of our ultimate purpose. Developing these qualities isn’t so that people admire us; these qualities reflect the image of Someone far greater! When people see evidences of his gracious character in our lives, we are responsible to give the credit to the One who produced those qualities in us by his grace (2:11-12). In a sense, we get to put a face with a name: “That is *Jesus* you are seeing!” Our character (who we are) and our lifestyle (what we do) impact how unbelievers view the gospel. “One’s deeds will either prove or disprove” our “claim to know God.”²⁰ Is the gospel message we proclaim truly credible?

We all fail at times to demonstrate the reality of the gospel’s power to change our lives. (It happens more often than we would like to admit!) We all know how very *unlike* Jesus we are. And while “the grace of God that saves also instructs its recipients to live in a new way,” this same grace provides forgiveness when we fail to do so. We can, and *we must*, run to Christ in repentance and faith when we sin. Remember: Grace is a Person. Our hope is Jesus, who never failed to demonstrate perfect love, self-control, purity, or kindness; who always perfectly fulfilled the work his Father gave him to do.

²⁰ *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 2346.

²¹ *Ibid.*

This word infers action. *Agathos* “implies some type of activity involving others,” which ultimately leads to their “benefit.”¹⁸ Veteran missionary Daryl Champlin was known for calling it “love with shoes on.” According to Luke 6:35-36, what is our motivation for “doing good” to others (including those who could be considered our “enemies”)? What does the character of God have to do with the cultivation of kindness in our lives? _____

Why do you think Paul paired these two qualities together (*working at home* and *kind*)?

The courses of study outlined in Titus 2 may seem overwhelming. A consistent focus on the **gospel** and **eternity** is the strong motivation both younger and older women need to persist in their training.

We have only scratched the surface of what God has to say about each of these godly virtues. Perhaps as you were studying the Lord convicted you about an area in which you need to grow in Christlikeness. Take time to explore more of what God says in his Word on that topic. Younger women, God has given you a precious gift in the body of Christ. Are you receiving this gift of grace? Consider inviting an older woman—one who is more experienced in living out the gospel—to train you in that aspect of godly living.

Older women, you are called to use your life in the service of the Lord to help train up the next generation. But remember, this “ministry of teaching to shape lives is not simply repetition of words. Christian teaching calls for an intimate involvement of the teacher with the learner, and involves instruction, encouragement, advising, urging, exhorting, guiding, exposing, convincing, and perhaps most important, providing a living example.”¹⁹



“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”

Titus 2:11-14

“For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

Titus 3:3-7



¹⁸ Louw, Johannes P.; Nida, Eugene Albert, S. 1:741.

¹⁹ Richards, Lawrence O.: *The Bible Readers Companion*. electronic ed. (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1991; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996), S. 848.



OBSERVATION: *What does it say?*

If you haven't done so already, use a colored pencil or highlighter to mark the word "works" or "good works" every time it appears in the text.

In the last lesson we learned that grace is actively at work in the lives of believers—always redeeming, always training. Grace is an effective teacher; the results of which are seen in the lives of those whose passionate pursuit of sin (v.12) has been replaced by an energetic zeal for all that is good (v.14). We might wonder, "What could possibly influence our naturally wayward hearts to want to pursue God instead of sin?" Paul introduces two powerful incentives, both of which have Jesus at their center.

Incentive #1: The Appearing of Jesus

Jesus is coming again. While we live in this "present age" (v.12), believers cling to the hope that there is another age coming!

Titus 2:13 *Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.*

Discover the meaning of **key words** in Titus 2:13. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

waiting for = 4327 *prosdechomai* (present participle—a verb that functions as an adjective, describing the person grace is training; expressing continuous or repeated action)

See Luke 2:25 and 2:36-38 for examples of those who "looked for" Christ's first coming:

(to be) kind = 18 *agathos* (adj.)

Young women who are trained by grace should be characterized by kindness. Like the virtuous woman described in Proverbs 31, "She does not rule her household with an iron hand, but practices 'the law of kindness'."¹⁵ *Agathos* "denotes excellence."¹⁶ "Good, generally, in opposition to all vice...kind, helpful, and charitable; as Dorcas, *full of good works and almsdeeds*...one of a meek and yet cheerful spirit and temper, not sullen nor bitter; ...not of a troublesome or jarring disposition...*thus building her house, and doing her husband good, and not evil, all her days.*"¹⁷

Paul uses various forms of *agathos* throughout his letter to Titus. If you haven't done so already, read through Titus again and use a colored pencil or highlighter to mark the word "good" every time it appears in the text.

Agathos is often used in Scripture as an adjective to describe the works and deeds of God or of his children (Gal. 5:22, 6:10; Col. 1:10; 2 Thess. 2:17; 1 Tim. 2:10, 5:10; 2 Tim. 3:17; Heb. 13:20-21). We find several notable examples in Titus:

Titus 1:7-8 *For an overseer, as God's steward, must be...a lover of good.* Lover of good is all one word in the Greek: *philagathos*; a combination of the word love (*philos*) and kind (*agathos*).

Titus 3:1 *Remind them...to be ready for every good work. Good (agathos) describes the works (ergon) for which believers must be ready.*

¹⁵ Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996, c1989), S. Tit 2:4.

¹⁶ Kittel, Gerhard; Friedrich, Gerhard; Bromiley, Geoffrey William, S. 3.

¹⁷ Henry, Matthew: *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996, c1991), S. Tit 2:1.

Similar wording appears in 1 Timothy 5:13-14. Paul warns Timothy about the types of temptations facing young widows: “*They learn to be idlers, going about from house to house*” and are especially prone to becoming gossips and busybodies. In verse 13 he uses the negative form of *ergon* when he describes the young widows as “*idlers*”: **argos (692)**

Titus 1:12 uses *argos* to describe the Cretan people. They were known characteristically as being idle and lazy (1:12). In contrast, 1 Timothy 5:10 describes widows who have a good testimony because of their good works. What types of good works is this woman known for?

Where does Titus 2:5 and 1 Timothy 5 assume that most of a woman’s work takes place? _____

In ancient times the idea of a steward or manager over an estate was very common. Eliezer was a faithful steward of Abraham’s household for many years (Gen. 15:2, 24:2). Potiphar made Joseph “*overseer of his house*” and “*left all that he had in Joseph’s charge*” (Gen. 39:4, 6). During his earthly ministry, Jesus often used this well-known image of the master-steward relationship in parables (i.e., Matt. 18:23-35, 20:1-16). In Titus 1:7 Paul uses the same concept when speaking of a church elder as “*God’s steward*” (*oikonomos*, 3623)—only in this case the “house” which an elder stewards is the house of *God* (i.e., his people). How does this concept of stewardship relate to the husband-wife relationship Paul is addressing in Titus 2:5?

How does the idea of *stewardship* protect from becoming a “controlling woman” who acts independently of her husband?

blest= 3107 makarios; “‘Blessed’ is...‘prosperous.’ The hope we have of the return of our Lord to catch out the Church, is one that is prosperous; it is filled with richness, benefits, good things.”¹

hope= 1680 elpis

“By hope is meant the thing hoped for, namely, Christ himself, who is called *our hope* (1 Tim. 1:1).”²

appearing= 2015 epiphaneia; in verse 11 we looked at another form of this same word. There, *appearing* referred to the incarnation—or first coming—of Jesus Christ. here, *appearing* refers to his second coming—the final unveiling of Jesus—when he will appear in all his glorious splendor. “The Greek does not speak of ‘the glorious appearing.’ It is ‘the appearing of the glory’ of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”³ (*The single Greek article for both “hope” and “appearing” links these two words together, showing that they are actually the same thing.*)

glory = 1391 doxa

our= 2257 hemon _____

¹ Wuest, Kenneth S.: *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, c1984), S. Tit 2:11.

² Henry, Matthew: *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996, c1991), S. Tit 2:11.

³ Wuest, Kenneth S.; S. Tit 2:11.

great= 3173 megas

God= 2316 theos; "a general name of deities or divinities. The Godhead, Trinity. Spoken of the only and true God."⁴

Savior= 4990 soter

The verse could read, "the great God and our Savior (or even our Savior) Jesus Christ; for they are not two subjects, but one only."⁵

Jesus= 2424 Iesous; Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of mankind, God incarnate. Jesus = "Jehovah is salvation."⁶ "Jesus or Joshua, the name of the Messiah..."⁷

Christ= 5547 Christos

In verse 12, the focus was on the believer's present responsibilities. Now, in verse 13, the focus has shifted to the believer's future hope. The theme of blessed hope is woven throughout the pages of Scripture, but it is only when we come to the New Testament that the object of that hope becomes crystal clear. Look up the following verses and write down what they communicate about the object of our hope:

- Philippians 3:20 _____
- Colossians 1:27 _____
- I Thessalonians 1:9-10 _____

⁴ Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.* electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996), S. G2316.

⁵ Henry, Matthew; S. Tit 2:11.

⁶ Strong, James; S. G2424.

⁷ Thomas, Robert L.: *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition* (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981), S. H8674.

One definition for *hagnos* is: "what awakens awe."¹² How does purity in a believer's life cause other people to reverence God? Or to put it another way, what part does your personal purity play in causing others to be in awe of God? _____

The purity required of the younger women is similar to the *reverent behavior* expected of the older women (2:3). Later in the chapter Paul reminds Titus that this kind of purity is one of the chief results of Christ's redemptive work. Jesus came to save us from sin and *to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works* (2:14).

Course of Study #3: *Working at home and kind*

(to be) working at home = 3626 oikouros (*adj.*)

Oikouros is a combination of the words *oikos* (3624: home, household, dwelling) and *ouros* (guard, keeper), or probably originally *ergon* (2041: work, labor, task). "The oldest manuscripts read, 'Workers at home': active in household duties."¹³ "A house-steward."¹⁴

To better understand *oikouros*, look up the definition for one of the root words from which this word is likely derived: *ergon* (2041)

¹² Kittel, Gerhard; Friedrich, Gerhard; Bromiley, Geoffrey William, S. 19.

¹³ Jamieson, Robert; Fausset, A. R.; Fausset, A. R.; Brown, David; Brown, David: *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments.* Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997, S. Tit 2:5.

¹⁴ Liddell, H.G., S. 546.

The Greek intends the idea of “to be” to correspond to each virtue listed in verses 4 and 5. We could actually read the verse this way: “*To be self-controlled, to be pure, to be working at home, to be kind, to be submissive to their own husbands.*” Each virtue in this list carries the idea of an ongoing state of being. The emphasis is not simply on what she *does*, but on what she *is*; her very character.

self-controlled = 4998 *sōphrōn* (*adj.*). We have already looked at this quality in regard to older men and women in the church (see p. 102). here Paul applies the same quality to younger women and will later require it of the younger men (2:6). Why do you think Paul singles out self-control as a virtue which young men and women especially need to be taught?

Sophron originates from a word that means, “to behave in a sensible manner, with the implication of thoughtful awareness of what is best— ‘moderation, sensibility.’”¹⁰ (A form of this word is expressed in the phrase “*humility of mind*” in Philippians 2:3, NASB.) Self-control, or discipline, was “one of the central Greek virtues; when applied to women, it meant ‘modesty’ and hence indicated virtuously avoiding any connotations of sexual infidelity.”¹¹

(to be) pure = 53 *hagnos* (*adj.*)

Why do you think Paul chose to pair the virtue of self-control with purity? What connection do they have?

¹⁰ Louw, Johannes P.; Nida, Eugene Albert, S. 1:752.

¹¹ Keener, Craig S.; InterVarsity Press: *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993), S. Tit 2:5.

- 1 Timothy 1:1 _____
- 1 Peter 1:20-21 _____

This *future hope* also brings with it some incredible **promises**. What are some of the “blessed” things believers look forward to?

- John 17:24 _____
- Colossians 3:4 _____
- 2 Timothy 4:8 _____
- Hebrews 9:28 _____
- 1 Peter 1:3-5 _____
- 2 Peter 3:13 _____
- 1 John 3:2 _____

Verses 11-14 all make up one sentence in the Greek. The subject of the sentence is grace. Grace appeared in the person of Jesus, bringing salvation for all people. Not only does grace save us, but grace also trains us to live in this present age (2:12). Verse 13 seems to provide a further description of what a life that has been trained by grace looks like: “*self-controlled, upright, and godly...waiting*” (vv.12-13).

“*Waiting*” is an evidence of grace. We often think of waiting as something that we do passively but, as we have already discovered, this word is full of energy and life. Believers who have their hope set on Jesus “live like those who will see him face to face.”⁸ Expectant, hopeful waiting is a defining characteristic of those who have been saved by grace. In fact, it is the confident expectation of his coming that serves as a powerful motivator to turn away from sin and pursue the righteousness of Christ. We cling to the promise that someday we will be made like Jesus and experience the “total and permanent removal of sin from our lives.”⁹ We find these two themes linked together quite often: expectancy for Christ’s return and holy living. Read through the following verses.

⁸ Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996, c1989), S. Tit 2:9.

⁹ MacArthur, John: *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Titus* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1996), 119.

Use two different colors to mark all of the words/phrases regarding our *future hope* and all of the words/phrases regarding our *present holiness*.

- 2 Peter 3:11-14
Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, 12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! 13 But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 14 Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.
- 1 Peter 1:13-17
Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, 15 but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” 17 And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one’s deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile.
- 1 Corinthians 1:4, 7-8
I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus...7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1 John 3:2-3
Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3 And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.
- Jude 1:21-24
Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. 22 And have

pleasant and hospitable way with their brothers and sisters in Christ. But there is more to it than simply learning to get along with one another. Paul emphasizes the Christian home as something unique. Homes characterized by love were not the norm in Crete. From the very beginning, God intended marriage to be a miniature picture of the gospel (Gen. 2:24-25; Eph. 5:25-33). Through the institution of marriage this gospel picture is spread all over his world, a silent witness of the ultimate reality: his love for us. Christian wives and husbands have the privilege of representing this gospel picture through their union. But those who are not married are not left out of this gospel witness:

“Singleness, like marriage, is a unique way of testifying to the gospel. There is no earthly marriage in heaven—because in heaven we will have the reality, we won’t need the signpost. By foregoing marriage now, singleness is a way of both anticipating that reality and testifying to its goodness. A way of saying that reality is so real and so certain and so good that I can live in the light of it now. So, if marriage shows us the shape of the gospel, singleness shows us the sufficiency of the gospel. It is a way of declaring to the world, obsessed as it is by sex and romantic companionship that those things are not what is ultimate, and it is quite possible to do without them.”⁹

All believing women can partake in this collective witness to the gospel through the honoring of God’s institution of marriage.

While the Bible has much more to say about this aspect of a godly woman’s character, here we simply see that those who are trained by grace will be marked by this unique character quality. Grace will show itself in the practical outworking of love at home. Like lovers of husbands and children, Paul seems to put the next few qualities in pairs as well: *self-controlled and pure, working at home and kind*. While it seems that Paul has primarily young wives in mind, these adjectives apply to all women who profess to know Christ. (We will explore the last quality, *submissive to their own husbands*, in the next lesson.)

Course of Study #2: *Self-controlled and pure*

“**To be**” is not in the actual Greek translation of verse 5; rather, our English translation implies “to be” from verse 4 (see p. 123).

⁹ Allberry, Sam. *Sexual Identity* (<https://ibcd.org/sexual-identity-and-the-bible/>).

new set of priorities and privileges. ...The greatest priority in a home should be love. If a wife loved her husband and her children, she was well on the way to making the marriage and the home a success.”⁷

But even in our current culture, this is an aspect of Christian family living that must be taught. As in Paul’s day, the Christian home is becoming a “totally new thing” once again. If young women need to be constantly encouraged and exhorted to love their husbands in this way, then we must infer that this instruction is included because this kind of love is easily neglected, forgotten, set aside for other things—or even possibly rejected. *Philos* doesn’t happen by accident or simply grow with the passing of time; this kind of love must be intentionally cultivated. There is only one kind of love that comes naturally to all human beings: self-love (2 Tim. 3:2).

Philos emphasizes the thought of a close, pleasant relationship or friendship. It also carries the idea of hospitality or, when used “in politics the word means ‘alliance.’” It can also mean “‘harmony’ as a principle of unity.”⁸ Considering these definitions, why do you think God inspired Paul to use *phileo* instead of *agape* (self-sacrificing love) as the kind of love that a young woman must cultivate for her husband and children?

What types of things could cause a younger woman to either *neglect* or *reject* her duty to *philos* her husband and/or children?

All women—not just those who are married—should seek to cultivate the virtue of *philos*. While not directed towards a specific man, younger women need to learn how to develop godly friendships and live in a

⁷ Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996, c1989), S. Tit 2:4.

⁸ Kittel, Gerhard; Friedrich, Gerhard; Bromiley, Geoffrey William: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 1995, c1985), S. 1266.

mercy on those who doubt; 23 save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

“There is no greater incentive for Christian living than the second coming of Jesus Christ.”¹⁰ While we live in this present age, we live with hope—hope based on the promise of more grace to come (1 Pt. 1:13).

Cross References: (1 Cor. 15:19; Gal. 5:5; Col. 1:5; Heb. 10:35-37; 1 Pet. 1:6-9)

Verse 13 in my own words:

Those who have never experienced God’s grace do not understand the object or the certainty of the believer’s hope. They don’t know our Savior, so they don’t have a reason to look for Jesus. Why set all our hopes on him? Paul gives us the reason in verse 14.

⁹ Wiersbe, Warren W.; S. 662.

Incentive #2: The Sacrifice of Jesus

Jesus gave himself for us. While we live in this “present age” (v.12), believers remember the astounding price that was paid for their redemption.

Titus 2:14 *Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.*

Discover the meaning of **key words** in Titus 2:14. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

gave= 1325 *didomi* (*aorist: expresses an act occurring at a certain time in the past; active: the subject—Christ—accomplishes the action*)

himself= 1438 *heautou* (*reflexive pronoun: reflects back on the subject, Christ.*) “The act of giving himself indicates Christ’s willing, gracious gift of himself.”¹¹ A free and voluntary gift. (This word is also used later in the verse: “purify unto himself.”)

for = 5228 *hyper*; “for the sake of, in behalf of, instead of; above. In his death on the Cross, he came above us and between us and a holy God, thus intercepting the penalty that would have fallen upon us.”¹²

to = 2443 *hina*; in order that (this word expresses purpose or the result); to the intent that, so that.

“To” points to the reason for the gift. What two purposes does verse 14 give as to why Jesus gave himself for us?

1) To _____

2) To _____

redeem = 3084 *lutroo* (*subjunctive mood: expresses probability or potentiality, “might redeem.”*)

all = 3956 *pas*; “all, every, each, whole...every kind of.”¹³

¹¹ Rogers, Cleon. *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 510.

¹² Wuest, Kenneth S.; S. Tit 2:11.

¹³ Swanson, James: *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*. electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), S. GGK4246.

love their husbands = 5362 *philandros* (*adj.; from “philos” 5384 and “aner” 435*)

(to love their) children = 5388 *philoteknos* (*adj.; from “philos” 5384 and “teknon” 5043*)

To better understand these two descriptive words, look up the definition for the root word from which both of these words are derived: **philos (5384)**

A form of this word (*philanthropia*) is used to describe God’s love towards man in Titus 3:4. In what practical way does this verse say God shows his benevolence and kindness towards us?

At first glance it may seem strange to find this aspect of love—affection, friendship and companionship—in the curriculum for young women to learn. In our modern-day Western culture, we assume that people get married because they love each other. But consider how marriages took place in Eastern cultures of that day; romance was hardly ever in the list of considerations. Rather, arranged marriages were based on things like social class, dowry price, and tribal alliances. So, love and friendship were things that had to be cultivated in a Christian marriage.

“The Christian home was a totally new thing, and young women saved out of paganism would have to get accustomed to a whole

We intentionally studied the “book ends” of Titus 2 first: the **gospel** and **eternity**. As we work through these verses that show us what we are “to be” as women, we need the full understanding of what we already are “in Christ.” We often fail in our task to adorn the gospel of grace, but *he* will not fail in his task. Because “Grace appeared” (2:11), we can be absolutely certain that Grace will also persevere in making our lives match the reality of our position as a people set apart “for his own possession” (2:14). The church is not a museum full of finished works of art. Rather, the church is a collection of messy, broken people whom God is cleansing, healing, and restoring—more like an artist’s studio where great masterpieces are underway. The Lord isn’t finished with any of us yet. This truth not only provides great encouragement but also strong motivation to patiently stay under the Master Artist’s redemptive hand.

Just as we saw with the older women, most of the words used in these two verses are **adjectives** rather than commands. “This list emphasizes, in the original, first what young wives and mothers are to be, and then only secondarily what they are to do.”⁵ As the older women “*teach what is good,*” God uses his Word to reach the **heart** of the learner—transforming the inner person and subsequently producing visible change (“*good works*”). God’s truth—faithfully and accurately spoken into the lives of willing learners—will result in holy living. This is God’s divinely- appointed method for the church to accurately represent the gospel. And he will honor our obedience to it.

Titus 2:4-5 *...to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind...*

Discover the meaning of **key words** in Titus 2:4-5. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

Course of Study #1: *Loving husbands and children*

to = 1510 eimi; “to be, to exist.”⁶ This word is in the present tense, emphasizing that “to love” is a state of being; they are to continue in this state in an ongoing way.

⁵ Walvoord, John F.; Zuck, Roy B.: Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-c1985), S. 2:764,

⁶ Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996), S. G1510.

lawlessness = 458 anomia

purify= 2511 katharizo (*subjunctive mood: expresses probability or potentiality, “might purify.”*)

for himself = 1438 heautou (*see definition on p. 70*)

people= 2992 laos; “collective for people who belong to God.”¹⁴

for his own possession = 4041 periousios

Paul then provides a descriptive quality that characterizes people whom God has purified and made his own: they are “*zealous for good works.*”

zealous= 2207 zelotes

¹⁴ Swanson, James; S. GGK3295.

good works = 2570 kalos / 2041 ergon; same as Titus 3:8. *Good works* is a direct contrast to *all lawlessness*. Look back at the copy of Titus which you have been marking and highlighting. Find Paul's references to good works throughout the book. Write down what you learn about *good works* in the space below:

There are many instances in the Old Testament when God specifically names Israel as his own *treasured possession* (Ex. 19:5; Dt. 4:20; 7:6; 14:2, 26:18; 1 Sam. 12:22; 2 Sam. 7:24). This is the intent of God's heart: "*they shall be my people, and I will be their God*" (Ez. 37:23). he redeems them in order to have a relationship with them.

When God redeems people, he also gives them a new heart that is "careful to obey" his Word (Ez. 37:24). A relationship with Jehovah God *must* result in purity; it is part of his purpose in redemption.

Now through Jesus Christ, God has opened the way for people of all nations to partake in the special privilege of belonging to him. Jesus came to take away our sin, the very thing that keeps us from having a relationship with God. It makes sense then, that those who have been redeemed will be serious about avoiding sin. Redemption results in relationship. And relationship with Jesus results in purity and good works. "Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe."

"Deliverance is from sin in the fullest sense. But for Paul deliverance is double-sided; not only *from* sin but *to* a life of purity. ...The idea of the people of God as a very special possession for Jesus Christ is vividly brought out here. ...The Christian objective to do what is good is strongly motivated by the thought that it is essentially because we belong to Jesus Christ in a special way."¹⁵

Again, we need to connect verse 14 back to the main idea of the full sentence. The subject is still grace. Titus 2:13 describes believers as

¹⁵ Carson, D. A.; S. Tit 2:11.

(*sophroneo*, 4993) concerning younger men. But here it is a verb, rather than an adjective; and the older women are the ones responsible for acting. _____

the young women = 3501 neos (*adj.*); a young woman, without respect to being married or unmarried. *Neos* is used to describe "what is recent or new as a state or class."² This definition expresses the idea of *new* rather than *young*; like a novice—someone inexperienced. So it can refer to those who are inexperienced spiritually. Or to someone "who is relatively young, often the younger of two objects—'young, younger.'"³ "To be young or new...thinking or acting like a youth."⁴

List the seven areas mentioned in verses 4 and 5 that older women are told to emphasize in their training and discipleship of younger women:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Looking at the list above, mark the aspect(s) of godly living in which you consider yourself least competent (either as a teacher or a learner). Stop now and thank the Lord for enabling you to be humbly honest in your assessment of yourself. Then pray for him to graciously work in your heart to grow you in this area as you dig into these verses.

² Swanson, James: *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek* (New Testament). electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), S. DBLG 3742, #2.

³ Louw, Johannes P.; Nida, Eugene Albert: *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition (New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989), S. 1:64.

⁴ Liddell, H.G.: *A Lexicon: Abridged from Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996), S. 526.

 **OBSERVATION: *What does it say?***

What does God say about womanhood, marriage, children, and family? His voice on these matters is contrary in every way to what our culture promotes as normal and good. In his commentary on Titus, John McArthur notes, “No biblical standard is more viciously attacked today than the God-ordained role of women in society. And no passage is more ridiculed or reinterpreted by assailants within the church than these two verses.” The feminist agenda is nothing new—it began in Genesis 3 and was thriving when Paul wrote to Titus about the church in Crete. But it is also true that, as in every century, when the virtues listed in Titus 2:4-5 flourish in the lives of women in the church, the gospel is made attractive to those who are without Christ. The gospel lived out in a believer’s life is one of the church’s greatest witnessing tools.

We saw in our last lesson that older women in the church have a large part to play in helping younger women hear God’s clear voice on these matters of faith and practice (2:3-4). Although implied and not stated outright in the text, the younger women also have a big responsibility—they are to be willing learners. Teacher and learner working together enable gospel-training to be effective.

Titus 2:3b-4a *They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women.*

Discover the meaning of **key words** in Titus 2:3b-4a. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

train = 4994 *sophronizo* (verb; present, active: expresses continuous or repeated action; subjunctive: “presents the verbal action as being probable or intentional...mere possibility.”¹) You may already recognize this word from studying the qualities expected to be present in older men in verse 2 (translated “self-controlled” in ESV; *sophron*, 4998). It appears again in verse 5 in reference to younger women (*sophron*, 4998) and also in verse 6

¹ heiser, Michael S.: *Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology* (Logos Bible Software, 2005), subjunctive.

those who *look forward* to the return of Christ (future grace that will be brought to us at the return of Jesus). In verse 14, Paul encourages believers to *look back* to the sacrifice of Christ on their behalf (past grace that was brought to us when *grace* first *appeared*).

Godly living flows out of a robust memory of what we have been saved from (vv.11-12), who we belong to (v. 13-14), and what we are saved for (v.14). Rehearsing the gospel is another powerful incentive to holiness, producing gratitude and growing our affections to love God and hate sin. Just as with verse 13, there are many passages where these themes appear side by side. Using two different colors, mark all of the words/phrases in the following verses regarding *Christ’s sacrifice* and all of the words/phrases regarding our *present holiness*.

- Romans 6:10-13
For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. 13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.
- 2 Corinthians 5:15
And he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.
- 2 Corinthians 5:21
For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- Galatians 1:4
Who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.
- 1 Peter 1:15-16, 18-19
But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” 18 Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

- 1 Peter 2:24
he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.
- 1 Peter 4:1-2
Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

Cross References: (Mt. 20:28; Jn. 10:17, 11:50, 17:19; Acts 20:28; Gal. 3:13, 4:5; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Titus 3:3-7; 1 Pet. 2:9-10, 3:18)

Verse 14 in my own words:



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.

Titus 2:3b-5



to change and grow. As we humble ourselves, he promises abundant grace (James 4:6).

You don't have to be a mother with young children to benefit from the instruction Paul gives in these verses. Titus 2:4-5 contains benefit for young and old alike, for married and for unmarried, for blood-related families and for families related only by the blood of Christ. Whatever your stage of life, ask the Lord to help you grow in understanding and wisdom as you explore these verses. Ask him to show you how to apply these timeless truths to your own life, relationships, and circumstances. If you are a younger woman blessed with the responsibilities of a wife and mother, allow these verses to help you grow in your skillfulness as a gospel-adorned in those settings. If you are an older woman, you need this lesson to learn how to better communicate the right content in what you teach younger women. If you are a younger woman who is not yet married, you can grow in your understanding of God's design for the Christian home. This will help you fight the errant voices of our culture and enable you to better support and encourage your sisters in Christ who are in a different season of life.

Theology is practical. Allowing our hearts to be "trained by grace" means that we must allow the Word of God to teach us how to live out these truths in everyday life—wherever God has sovereignly placed us.

In both Titus 2:11-14 and Titus 3:3-7 Paul refers to the Incarnation (the first coming of Christ), the Atonement (the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ), and the Second Coming (the promise that Christ will return). It is all about Jesus, God's gracious gift to us! Locate and mark these three important events in both passages.

Past grace and *future* grace affect life in the *present*. Warren Weirsbe calls these the "three tenses of the Christian life."¹⁶ When we choose to sin, we have failed to look far enough back. When we choose to sin, we have failed to look far enough ahead.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary summarizes these verses well:

"The gospel of grace affects one's present behavior, on the one hand, by focusing on God's unmerited favor in the past.... But the Gospel also promotes godly living by focusing on the future.... Therefore, knowing what all He has done and why He has done it, a Christian who truly loves Christ and looks forward to His return will pay any price to bring his life into conformity with his beloved Lord's will, lest he disappoint him at his return. ...A full understanding of these things leads inexorably to godly living. Conversely, ungodly living in a Christian is a clear sign that either he does not fully understand these things, or He does not actually believe them."¹⁷

Grace trains us to say "no" to sin and "yes" to God by these two core realities of the Christian life: the gospel and eternity. Compelled by grace, we **actively wait** as we **gratefully remember**. What is the inevitable result in the lives of God's people when they are anchored in these truths? **Zeal for good works**.

Wait. Remember. Work. Not to *merit* God's grace, but *because* of God's grace (Titus 3:5, 8)—pure, undeserved, amazing grace brought to us by Jesus!

¹⁶ Wiersbe, Warren W.; S. 663.

¹⁷ Walvoord, John F.; Zuck, Roy B.; Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-c1985), S. 2:765.



INTERPRETATION: *What Does It Mean?*

The goal of studying the Bible is understanding what God has communicated about himself so that we can know him. Remember, the Bible is all about a Person! Review your notes from the observation section of your study. Ask the kinds of questions found under the Interpretation section of “Bible Study At-A-Glance” to help understand the implications of these verses (2:13-14). Record your thoughts.

Learners of Good



Mrs. Tamashiro: the one good thing I remember about Wahiawa Intermediate School. Already in her late 50’s at the time, and a native to the island of Oahu, she looked like a human version of a plump Asian dumpling. However, my 8th grade science teacher was anything but soft. She was fierce. And we adored her. Mrs. Tamashiro made her students work hard. She sometimes brought us to tears. But we loved her class. So much so, that I seriously contemplated a career in science. She was a “good teacher” and she taught her students to be “good learners.”

Mr. Tamashiro, my history teacher in the next building over, was an entirely different story. I will refrain from admitting here just how many times I was sent to the principal’s office from his class...and then promptly let off the hook because, after all, it was “just Mr. Tamashiro.” (Incidentally, it wasn’t until I married Matt that I got over my disdain for history.) There was an unspoken understanding that allowing her husband to teach was the price the school had to pay to retain a teacher like Mrs. Tamashiro.

It takes both a good teacher and a willing student for effective learning to take place. The transfer of knowledge breaks down when the teacher fails to pass it along (Mr. Tamashiro) or when the student fails to be teachable (me).

Having studied the godly attributes of older women that qualify them to be “teachers of good,” we now turn our attention to the content of their training. I often find it overwhelming to read through a list of virtues like the one found in this passage. I have a tendency to wallow in my past failings and lose hope of ever measuring up to the standard God has set. Encouragement comes when we remember the **gospel** and **eternity**. Jesus saved us by his grace, is changing us by his grace, and will one day complete the work he has begun in us by his grace (Phil. 1:6; 1 Peter 1:13). Grace is always available to the believer in the person of Jesus Christ.

God simply wants us to cooperate with him in the work he is already doing in our lives to make us more like himself. This, of course, requires humility—not only to recognize and repent of sin that he shows us through the mirror of his Word, but also to depend on him for strength



Responding to God

Good theology will always produce humility and gratitude. We express these heart attitudes in worship—through prayer and song. Take time to respond to God, praising him for Who he is and asking for his help to grow and change in the areas where the Spirit has convicted you. Write out a simple prayer in response to what God has shown you in his Word (i.e., prayers of confession, repentance, worship).

5. Warren Weiersbe, writing from his own experience, said:

“One of the strongest forces for spiritual ministry in the local church lies with the older believers. Those who are retired have time for service. It is good to see that many local churches have organized and mobilized these important people. In my own ministry, I have been greatly helped by senior saints who knew how to pray, teach the Word, visit, troubleshoot, and help build the church.”¹⁵

Take time to write a note to a “senior saint” who has been a blessing to you. Tell them specifically how the Lord has used them in your life.

¹⁵ Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996, c1989), S. Tit 2:1.

3. *“Teachers of good things* are opposed to teachers of things corrupt, or to what is trifling and vain, of no good use or tendency, old wives’ fables or superstitious sayings and observances....”¹⁴ This definition broadens the scope of what is meant by “good things.” Our teaching is not only to be free from false doctrine, but in order to be “good” it must have substance and eternal value as well. Consider your current relationships with other women. Does the bulk of your interaction fall under the category of “trifling and vain” or “substantive and eternal”?

Think back to the help you have given others in recent months. How can you be more intentional in speaking words that have an eternal flavor?

4. Do you need to begin praying that the Lord would show you whom he wants you to disciple? Remember, age is relative! There are people in your sphere of influence who are younger than you. Identify two people you believe God wants you to influence for righteousness (no need to share specific names with your group).

Discipleships is not a formal “program” entered into for a set period of time. Discipleship is simply a relationship entered into for the purpose of growth in Christlikeness. Discuss practical ways to get involved in others’ lives for their spiritual good. Specifically, what would this require (i.e., changes in your schedule, investment of finances, time, etc.)?

¹⁴ Henry, Matthew; S. Tit 2:1.

Group Discussion

Be prepared to give input on the following discussion questions with your group:

1. “Almost every error in Christian living and character stems from either ignorance of or disobedience to the divine priority of the *eternal* over the *temporal*.”¹⁸ On a scale of 1 to 10, how well are you doing at giving priority to eternal things? Is the promise of his coming influencing your thoughts and desires?

Share one or two practical ways you could be more intentional about allowing grace to train your heart in the godly practice of “waiting.”

2. Christ “gave himself for us” to redeem us from a life dominated by sin. he died and rose again to make us his own precious possession. In your study, did the Lord convict your heart about any sin/sins you consistently struggle with? How would consistently reflecting on the gospel help in your fight against this sin habit?¹⁹

¹⁸ Berg, Jim. *Essential Virtues: Marks of the Christ-Centered Life* (Greenville, SC: JourneyForth, 2008), 45.

¹⁹ Often, we need help and accountability from other believers when we are struggling with a life-dominating sin. If this is true for you, pray that the Lord will help you be willing to involve someone in helping you grow.

Group Discussion

3. Warren Weirsbe comments about this passage, “There are two ‘poles’ to the Christian life: we look back to the cross (v. 14) and ahead to the coming of Christ (v. 13). These two poles help keep us steady in our Christian walk.”²⁰ Practically, how does remembering the gospel and looking ahead to eternity help us **navigate trials** (the long-enduring kind or the daily-difficulties kind) in a godly way?

What recent examples of a steady walk through trials have you seen in your church family because they have been navigating by these two “poles”?

4. What is the difference between a person who does good works *for* salvation and a person who does good works *as a result* of salvation? How would you describe the difference to an unbeliever?

We have just seen in Titus 2:14 that one of God’s chief purposes in our redemption is to produce a people who are “zealous for good works.” Does this description accurately characterize your life? Why is it so important that our “good works” are anchored in the reality that we are his own precious treasure?

Be prepared to give input on the following discussion questions with your group:

1. When asked why they reject Christianity, many unbelievers give the excuse that they have “known too many Christians.” Though certainly not perfect, does your “behavior,” or lifestyle, typically match up with your profession of being a follower of Christ? What qualities described in Titus 2:2-3 do you need to intentionally cultivate in order to grow in your credibility and effectiveness as a “teacher of good things” to women younger than yourself?

What does it look like to overcome an area of weakness? Discuss practical strategies for personal growth.

2. On page 107 we explored common enslaving “passions and pleasures” of our culture. What positive steps should older women take to avoid these common vices?

²⁰ Wiersbe, Warren W.; S. 663.



Responding to God

Good theology will always produce humility and gratitude. We express these heart attitudes in worship—through prayer and song. Take time to respond to God, praising him for Who he is and asking for his help to grow and change in the areas where the Spirit has convicted you. Write out a simple prayer in response to what God has shown you in his Word (i.e., prayers of confession, repentance, worship).

Join Your Voices

TITUS 2:1, 6-7; 1:14; 3:8-9

By this time in our study, we are catching Paul’s heartbeat: the gospel, the gospel, the gospel. The good news of Jesus is the reality by which we exist spiritually. But how did this good news come to us? How did it become our foundation and motivation for life? Someone loved us enough to tell us.

The good news about Jesus is a message that God intends his people to share. The message came from God himself (Titus 1:1-3). God entrusted the message to Paul (1:3), who passed it along to Titus (1:4). And Titus was commissioned to declare this good news to others (2:1, 15; 3:8). The chain of “truth giving” leads all the way back to our good God who wants us to know him! Isn’t God kind to provide a way for us to hear the truth of the gospel?

While God speaks to us today through his completed written Word, he still uses ordinary people—just as he did in the first century—to pass along the message of the gospel. God has chosen people to be his messengers of the good news (1 Cor. 1:21-25). Declare, teach, remind, exhort, insist, and rebuke: all of these actions require *people* using their *voices*. “Words are the currency of relationship.”¹

People. All of us need this gift. We all need other believers lovingly speaking the truth of God into our lives. We easily forget, we are easily distracted, and we are easily led astray.

And all of us need to be this gift to someone else. In Paul’s letter to Titus we find ourselves in this chain. As recipients of the message of grace, we have a responsibility to pass the glorious message on to others—joining our voices to those who have gone before us.

¹Marshall, Colin and Payne, Tony. *The Vine Project* (Matthias Media, 2016), 104.



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. 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. Bondservants 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.

Titus 2:1-10



APPLICATION: *What Should I Do?*

Record practical, specific action steps you need to take in response to what God has shown you in his Word. Plan to use what you learn! Consider your relationship to God as well as your relationships with other people. Target all areas of your life: inner man (what I think, desire, and believe) and outer man (what I do—how sin is expressed in my body). Prayerfully consider what specific action steps you need to take.



INTERPRETATION: *What Does It Mean?*

The goal of studying the Bible is understanding what God has communicated about himself so that we can know him. Remember, the Bible is all about a Person! Review your notes from the observation section of your study. Ask the kinds of questions found under the Interpretation section of "Bible Study At-A-Glance" to help understand the implications of these verses (2:2-4). Record your thoughts.



OBSERVATION: *What does it say?*

As we saw from our observations of the book of Titus in lesson one, Paul left Titus on the island of Crete for a specific task. he was commissioned to "put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town" (1:5). The lack of order in the Cretan church was the direct result of a lack of godly leadership. Without qualified men in place to "give instruction in sound doctrine" (1:9), false teachers quickly stepped in to fill the gap. Paul makes a clear connection between the lack of sound, spiritual leadership and the false teaching that was wreaking havoc in the lives of believers (1:9-11). Like sheep, people need a shepherd; they are easily led astray into error. And while error directly impacts individual lives, it also impacts the collective witness of the gospel through a body of local believers. Throughout his letter to Titus, Paul uses plural language (i.e., *us* and *our*) because the church is a collection of redeemed people.

It might be helpful to refer to page 23 of this study to review the commands and warnings Paul gives Titus throughout his letter. Notice the action words Paul uses: give instruction, rebuke, teach, declare, exhort, rebuke, remind, insist, warn. Many of these commands are in the present active tense meaning Titus and the other elders were personally responsible to continually carry out these actions. This may seem obvious, but please don't miss this: in order to obey these specific commands, Titus had to use a very specific part of his body. In your own words, what seems to be Paul's overarching mission for Titus while he is in Crete? What was Paul asking Titus to constantly do?

There are many different "voices" in the world vying for our attention and the opportunity to influence our hearts. (According to Proverbs, our spiritual anatomy is ordered differently than what we see physically—our ears are connected to our hearts! Prov. 4:20-27). These various voices speaking into our lives exert influence for either good or evil. They help us lean toward God or away from him. We see this in the results of both types of teaching: false teaching produces ungodliness (1:15-16), while sound teaching produces godliness (2:12-14). For the believers in Crete, the competing voices included their own Cretan

culture, false teachers, family, friends, and even their own fleshly hearts (1:15). Paul challenges Titus to be a new, louder voice speaking the truth of the gospel into their lives.

In verses 1-10, Paul instructs Titus using three specific action verbs: **teach**, **urge**, and **show**. Mark each of these in a distinctive way in the text. Although we are already familiar with teach from lesson two (see pp. 31), take time to rediscover the meaning of these **key words** and write the definitions in the space provided.

teach = 2980 laleō (verb: present active imperative)

- What specifically was Titus told to teach? (See 2:1)
- Just as importantly, what does Paul instruct Titus *not* to teach? (See 3:9)

urge = 3870 parakaleō (verb: present active imperative)

- A form of this same word was used several times by Jesus when he spoke with his disciples on the evening before his crucifixion. Look up the following references and journal about what you discover: John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-8.

show to be = 3930 parechō (verb: present middle)

Anyone living a frittering existence at thirty will, apart from a serious course correction, end up frittering away an entire life. It is just as true that a person doesn't suddenly become a wise, kind, gracious, fruitful old person just by reaching, say, seventy years. Of course, it's not too late to grow and change (and I take comfort in that), but, more important, it's never too soon to begin. ...everyone, regardless of age, is already setting patterns for the shape of his or her life. These patterns of thought and practice will either serve the glory and purposes of God or hinder them.¹³

We are all growing older by the day. Are you growing older in such a way that you can join the ranks of other godly women who “teach what is good”?

Cross References: (Prov. 31:26; 1 Tim. 2:9-10; 3:8-11; 1 Peter 3:3-4; 1 Tim. 5:13-14; Eph. 5:3)

Verses 3-4a in my own words:

¹³ Fleming, Jean. *Pursue the Intentional Life* (NavPress, 2013), 16.

which is the mood of possibility or potentiality. This means it will not happen automatically. Certain conditions must be met for this *training* to occur in the lives of younger women. What are those conditions? Look back through the word definitions in this lesson (pp. 102-108) and note how many adjectives appear in 2:2-3. Paul does not emphasize what an older woman is to **do**; rather, he emphasizes what an older woman is to **be**. The godly character God requires in older women makes it possible for them to effectively minister to others.

Every woman is a potential disciple-maker. But only a woman who is known for her holy lifestyle and consistent practice of godliness will have credibility to teach. In other words, she must be *reverent in behavior*. Because she has disciplined herself, she is therefore able to disciple others. Matthew Henry puts it well: “Preachers of good works must be patterns of them also; good doctrine and good life must go together.” This calls to mind one of the vital aspects of any discipling relationship—the one discipling must be an **example** worthy of imitation.

Personal holiness has an object: to glorify God by influencing others to live in a way that honors the gospel. “A worthy walk is demanded of older women...that they spur on the younger women to a similar walk.”¹² If you know Jesus, then you have the potential to influence others for Christ. But godliness never happens by accident; age and spiritual maturity do not automatically go hand in hand. The Spirit produces Christlikeness over time in the lives of those who are personally devoted to the Lord.

In her book, *Pursue the Intentional Life*, Jean Fleming writes about getting older and the importance of intentional spiritual growth. The quote is lengthy but worth reading and taking to heart:

The truth is that, all things unchanged, the women we will be at seventy, eighty, and ninety are the women we are at forty and fifty—only distilled. Have you noticed that the flaws and weaknesses of a forty-year-old concentrate with age? A complainer at forty will, with much practice, engrave the response in his or her bones by seventy. Self-centeredness will intensify. Bitterness, allowed to take root and grow over decades, engulfs and consumes in advanced age.

¹² Kittel, Gerhard (Hrsg.); Bromiley, Geoffrey William (Hrsg.); Friedrich, Gerhard (Hrsg.): *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI : Eerdmans, 1964-c1976), S. 7:1104.

- Take a closer look at verse 7. Paul commands Titus, “*show yourself in all respects to be a **model**.*” What does this word mean? What implications does it carry?

model = 5179 typos (noun)

- What specific things must Titus model before others? (2:7-8)

Corporations often hire marketing consultants to help them improve their customer experience. Paul advises Titus to do some intentional “marketing” of his life. But the focus isn’t on Titus. Paul actually wants the people of Crete to see *past* Titus to Someone far greater. Titus is simply the venue through which others can see the reality and beauty of Jesus Christ. Titus has an opportunity to “put a Face with a Name”, as it were; to be a visible expression of the transforming power of the gospel. his example impacts not only those in the church but also unbelievers who are eagerly looking for an opportunity to discredit the gospel he represents (2:8).

At this point you may be tempted to think, “What do Paul’s instructions to Titus have to do with my life? After all, I am not called to be a leader in the church.” As a spiritual leader of the church, Titus was to set the example—the pattern—for the rest of the congregation. he shows us how to relate to one another in the body of Christ. (We will see this connection especially between the older and younger women when we study verses 3-5.) Paul’s challenge to Titus to *teach, come alongside others, and be an example* is nothing less than a challenge to discipleship as a way of life within the church. Each of these actions encompasses a vital aspect of discipleship.²

² Although the word “discipleship” isn’t used in this passage, the concept is very present. Paul often wrote about discipleship—encouraging believers with the big task of coming alongside one another as mutual learners of Christ, to speak truth into each other’s lives and help one another grow towards Christ-likeness (Mt. 28:19-20; Heb. 3:12-13, 5:12-13, 10:24-25).

How is right **teaching** (laleō) necessary for discipleship?

In what way is **coming alongside** (parakaleō) other people necessary for discipleship? What results if this aspect is left out and only teaching happens?

Why is a **godly example** (parechō typos) important for discipleship? Why is it important that the example not be isolated from teaching and coming alongside others?

In order to have effective discipling relationships, all three aspects must work together simultaneously. Titus had a unique position as the chief teacher and guardian of the truth in Crete. But like Titus, we too are called to speak truth in our own spheres of influence, to come alongside others, and to provide an example of God's grace in action through our godly lives and good works. Titus wasn't supposed to do this on his own. He led the way, and the others in the church followed. Every member in the church at Crete—and in your own local church—works together to make the gospel distinctive and attractive to the watching world.

We noted during our initial observations of the book of Titus that Paul highlights specific groups of people that make up the church to whom Titus is responsible to give the truth. Read through Titus 2:1-10 and list the specific things that are to characterize each group of people in the church:

What *passions* and *pleasures* do older women in our culture have a reputation for indulging? _____

Why might older women be particularly tempted to engage in behaviors like this? _____

While enslavement to “*various passions and pleasures*” characterized our lives prior to salvation (3:4-7), as those who have been redeemed and purified, there is only one Master worthy of our devotion and obedience: *our great God and Savior Jesus Christ* (2:13). The Bible forbids believers from being dominated by any master other than Christ precisely because he redeemed them from the slave market of sin in order to make them his own precious possession (2:14).

Instead of being enslaved to unprofitable vices, Paul encourages older women to fulfill God's purpose for them in the church: “*they are to teach what is good.*”

teach what is good = 2567 kalodidaskalos (*adjective*; this phrase is one word in the Greek, a combination of “the word for ‘good’ (*kalos*), and ‘teacher’ (*didaskalos*).”¹⁰)

In verse 4 we find the first purpose clause in chapter 2. (If you haven't done so already, mark the linking word in verse 4.) The Greek word *hina* (2443) denotes purpose or result. What does verse 4 indicate as the intended outcome of the godly lives of older women?

We will study more about this outcome in the next lesson, but for now please note that “*train*” (*sōphronizō*) is the first *active verb* we have discovered in verses 3 and 4. This verb appears in the subjunctive mood

¹¹ Wuest, Kenneth S.: *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, c1984), S. Tit 2:3.

Older women cannot “join their voices” to the mighty chorus of those who proclaim the good news about Jesus while their hearts are producing a discordant, devilish tune. The right kind of speech produced by the right kind of heart is needed to be an effective disciple-maker. Even more importantly, such slanderous speech by professing believers has an unintended consequence—the slander and defamation of God’s Word (2:5).

- **(not) slaves = 1402** douloo (verb: perfect tense, expresses action in the past that has continuing results in the present)

The people in Crete were sadly familiar with slavery—many of them likely had firsthand experience with it. As an island situated in the middle of the Mediterranean, Crete’s ports were often frequented by merchants of the slave trade. Paul’s use of the word *douloo* likely brought vivid images to mind—they knew what it meant to be enslaved to a master, bound to obey and powerless to break free. here Paul challenges them not to allow themselves to be owned by “*much wine*” (**much [4183]** polus] carries the idea of “a relatively large quantity—‘much, great, extensive’”⁸). Paul forbids the older women from being brought “under the power and mastery”⁹ of alcohol.¹⁰

The idea of enslavement calls to mind Titus 3:3, “*For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*” Likely, Paul addresses slander and alcohol specifically because they were vices that characterized the culture at the time of his writing. But as 3:3 reminds us, slavery can take many different forms.

⁸ Louw, Johannes P.; S. 1:595.

⁹ Henry, Matthew: *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996, c1991), S. Tit 2:1.

¹⁰ Not only does the Bible give abundant warnings concerning the use of alcohol, it also provides many examples of people who suffered great harm because of their enslavement to this master. If you desire to do a more thorough study on this topic, begin with the following verses and then use a concordance or Bible software program to find other passages: Gen. 9:20-21; Pr. 20:1; 21:17; 23:29-31; Isa. 5:11-12, 22; 28:7; Hos. 4:11; Lk. 12:19; Rom. 13:13; 14:19-21; Eph. 5:18; 1 Pet. 4:3.

<i>Older Men (v.2)</i>	<i>Older Women (vv.3-4)</i>
<i>Younger Men (v.6)</i>	<i>Younger Women (vv.4-5)</i>
<i>Titus (vv.1, 7-8)</i>	<i>Bondservants (vv.9-10)</i>

Notice that many of these characteristics overlap regardless of age. We see this connection by the use of the word “likewise” throughout the passage. Mark each time “likewise” is used in Titus 2:1-10. *Likewise*, in the same way as Titus, in the same way as the older men, in the same way as the older women. These qualities hold true for every believer because they are the qualities of Christ.

Titus is included with the “young men” (2:6-8), and yet he has the responsibility as Paul’s appointed spokesperson for the gospel in Crete to even teach those who are older than him. While this may have been

intimidating for a young man like Titus, and perhaps difficult at times for those whom he was responsible to teach, his authority was from God and, therefore, not to be disregarded (1:3, 2:15).

What is the only group in the church to whom Titus did not have a *direct* responsibility to instruct in godly living (look carefully for the flow of teaching in 2:2-6)? _____

Who is given this responsibility instead? _____

Why do you think God ordered things in this way?

Can you identify the three aspects of discipleship (speak, come alongside, be an example) either clearly stated or implied in verses 3-5? Note them below:

What similar result does Paul note will come from this type of discipleship? (compare 2:5 “that...” with 2:8 “so that...”)

Discipling relationships are not an end in themselves. The outcome of discipleship should be much more than just drawing closer to other believers. The right kind of Word-centered relationships push us closer to God, allowing us to add to the attractiveness of the gospel through the supernatural change it brings to our lives.

The ESV uses a form of the English word “devote” two times in Titus—in 1:14 and 3:8. And each time it is connected to a certain type of teaching—that which is false or that which is true. Discover the meaning of these **key words** and write the definitions in the space provided.

1:14 Not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.

What does this Greek word remind you of? A person characterized by this type of behavior is actually bearing whose image (see Jn. 8:44)? _____

In 2 Timothy 3:3, those who are “slanderous” (*diabolos*) are included in the list of those who have a form of godliness but, in actuality, deny its power. Timothy is told to “avoid” these kinds of people, for they “oppose the truth” (3:5, 8).

In Proverbs 6:16-19, a person that “sows discord” is included in the list of seven things that God hates. He hates these things because they do not accurately portray his character. James also speaks frankly about our tongues. Though our tongue is a “small member” of our body, it is often the most difficult one to control (James 3.) Rather than mastering our tongue, we often find ourselves mastered by this little tyrant! What images does James use to describe the tongue? (James 3:5-12)

James makes the incredible claim that a person who, by God’s grace, is able to discipline her tongue (what she says, how she says it, and when she says it) will also be able to exercise control over her whole body (James 3:2). No wonder Paul uses this aspect of our behavior as a litmus test of self-control in our lives.

Ultimately, where must change take place in order for our speech to bear the image of Christ? (see Isaiah 59:13b, Matthew 12:34-35, 15:18-19; Mark 7:20-23; Luke 6:45)

Look once again at the definition of “slanderers” on page 104. What is the opposite of a “slanderer”? What positive ways can we use our tongues for the kingdom (we see a chief way right here in Titus 2:1-6)?

After many years of walking with the Lord, consider all that an older believer has learned about cultivating faith in God, demonstrating biblical love for God and others, and running the Christian race with hopeful endurance. What a rich source of encouragement and help to less seasoned believers!

Paul summarizes the godly conduct expected of older believing women with the phrase “*reverent in behavior*” (2:3).

reverent = 2412 hieroprepes (*adjective*; the only time this Greek word is used in the New Testament is here in Titus 2:3. *Reverent* is a combination of two words: *hieros* [2413] + *prepō* [4241].)

behavior = 2688 katastema (*noun*)

Like the older men, older women “must give evidence in their outward life of inward spiritual commitments.”⁷ Paul calls for integrity between the inner and outer life. Dynamic inner faith will inevitably lead to the outward expression of holy living. Paul goes on to give three aspects of this “*reverent behavior*” that distinguish women who claim to be set apart unto God. The first two are phrased in negative terms because they are inconsistent with a life of faith: “*not slanderers or slaves to much wine*.” Though not explicitly stated, this seems to be the older women’s call to “*self-control*.”

- **not slanderers = 1228** diabolos (*adjective*)

⁷Towner, P. H., 723.

devoting = 4337 prosechō (*verb: present active*)

3:8a *The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works.*

devote = 5431 phrontizō (*verb: present active subjunctive*)

To what are those who are being led away and troubled by false teaching *devoted*? (1:14) _____

Because of this, according to verse 16, they are “*unfit for any good work*.” To whom are they set in contrast to in 2:14 and 3:8? _____

To reinforce his point, Paul reiterates with the same type of contrast in 3:8-9. What is “*excellent and profitable*”?

What is “*unprofitable and worthless*”?

To whom or what are you devoted? It matters. Once again, we see the vital connection between **believing truth** and **living truth**. The order can’t be switched. And the order is inevitable. How we **live** always flows from what we **believe**. Good works are the result of right belief. And the opposite is also true: believing lies makes one “*unfit for any good work*” (1:16). Paul goes even farther to declare that unbelievers actually “*deny*” God “*by their works*.” Belief or unbelief. This is the issue of primary importance and the reason why Paul places so much emphasis on this theme in his letter to Titus. The island of Crete and the believers who inhabited it would not be changed by lessons on

morality or more aggressive social initiatives. The only thing that has the power to bring lasting change in people's lives is the truth of God's Word. This begs the question: How can people believe what is right unless they are taught what is right? Paul lays out this case clearly in another one of his letters:

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. (Rom. 10:14-15, 17)

Someone must tell them.

This is what Paul sent Titus to Crete to do. But Titus was not alone. In the lessons that follow, we will examine the importance of discipling relationships between older and younger women as well as the righteous qualities that should characterize women who have been saved by grace (2:3-5).

Like a transistor radio from the 1950's with a finicky dial, we have difficulty tuning in to the right frequency. Our circuitry bends toward error, constantly pulled to tune in to the wrong channels. The answer to our dilemma is to learn to tune our ears—and our hearts—to truth. God uses *people* in this process of spiritual tuning. People like Titus, people like the Cretan believers, people like you. We were not intended to do the Christian life on our own. The book of Titus speaks to a "people" who have been set apart for God. We see the vital importance of relationships within the church body. We need each other. We can't fight against all the competing voices on our own. We need the collective voice of the church—from the pastor who declares the truth and guards against error, to the people next to us who add their voices to affirm the truth. We are often weary and faint of heart. We need fellow believers to come alongside us and urge us to walk in a manner worthy of the gospel. We need the example of others who are faithfully running the race, living in joy and victory by the grace of God. That means someone needs you, my friend, to be those things for them as well—a body, working together to adorn the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Next Paul lists three positive characteristics for which older men are to be known: they should be "*sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.*" We studied the word "sound" (*hygiainō*) in an earlier lesson (see your study notes on page 31) and should recognize it as another key theme of Titus. In Titus 2:1 Paul commands Titus to "*teach what accords with sound doctrine.*" "Sound" acts as a verbal adjective in this verse, describing **doctrine** that is healthy. In verse 2, "sound" describes a **life** that is healthy. This vitality and health should be present in the following three areas of their lives:

- **faith = 4102** *pistis (noun)*

- **love = 26** *agapē (noun)*

Love is "the visible counterpart to believing."⁵ From the character sketch of Titus (page 22), we learned that Titus spent time with the believers in Corinth. he personally reported to Paul about the repentance of this church in response to Paul's letter of correction (2 Cor. 7:6-16). No doubt Titus had read Paul's letter and was familiar with the "love chapter" (1 Cor. 13). Beyond that, he witnessed the transforming nature of biblical love in this previously unhealthy church.

- **steadfastness = 5281** *hypomonē (noun)*

"It is possible...that Paul varied the early Christian triad of faith, hope, and love by substituting 'endurance' for 'hope,' thus emphasizing the need of perseverance for the older men."⁶

⁵Towner, P. H., 721.

⁶Lea, T. D., & Griffin, H. P.: 1, 2 *Timothy, Titus* (Vol. 34), (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers., 1992), 298.

Or, Paul’s use of “likewise” could possibly refer back to verse 2, indicating that the “older women” in the congregation are to behave in a similar manner as the “older men.”³ In either case, it is helpful for us to understand what qualities Paul charges the older men to possess (2:2).

- **sober-minded = 3524** nēphalios (*adjective*)

- **dignified = 4586** semnos (*adjective*)

- **self-controlled = 4998** sōphrōn (*adjective*)

Sophron appears often in Paul’s letter to Titus. If you haven’t done so already, read through Titus 1-2 and mark the word “self-controlled” every time it appears in the text. Notice that self-control applies to all believers; “this quality is explicitly identified with the new life made possible by the Christ-event (2:12).”⁴ Peter also lists self-control as one of the foundational virtues believers are to make “every effort” to add to their faith (see 2 Pt. 1:3-9). Why do you think Paul highlights this attribute in particular in his letter to Titus?

³“The term ‘likewise’ (hōsautōs) indicates that the verb forms, which are lacking in the exhortations to the older women, are to be supplied from the exhortations to the ‘older men’ given previously. ‘Encourage’ (from v. 6) the older women ‘to be’ (from v. 2) ‘reverent in the way they live.’” Lea, T. D., & Griffin, H. P. 1, 2 *Timothy, Titus* (Vol. 34), (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 299.

⁴Towner, P. H.: *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006), 720.



INTERPRETATION: *What Does It Mean?*

The goal of studying the Bible is understanding what God has communicated about himself so that we can know him. Remember, the Bible is all about a Person! Review your notes from the observation section of your study. Ask the kinds of questions found under the Interpretation section of “Bible Study At-A-Glance” to help understand the implications of these verses (2:1, 6-7; 1:14; 3:8-9). Record your thoughts.



APPLICATION: *What Should I Do?*

Record practical, specific action steps you need to take in response to what God has shown you in his Word. Plan to use what you learn! Consider your relationship to God as well as your relationships with other people. Target all areas of your life: inner man (what I think, desire, and believe) and outer man (what I do—how sin is expressed in my body). Prayerfully consider what specific action steps you need to take.



OBSERVATION: *What does it say?*

So far in our study through the book of Titus we have been “building a bookcase” (overview of Titus) and “setting bookends” in place (the gospel and eternity). We are now ready to “fill the shelves” with the specific commands and instructions given to the various groups of people within the church (2:2-10).

In the last lesson we explored several components of biblical discipleship. Relationships that help point people to Jesus require the use of our voices—we must be willing to speak truth. But they also require consistent living—we must embody the truth we are speaking; and we must come alongside others to help them grow in grace with us. In this lesson we narrow our focus to discipling relationships between older and younger women in the church. What does a redeemed, purified, and zealous older woman look like in practical terms (2:14)? We find her description in Titus 2:3-4.

Titus 2:3-4a *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.*

Discover the meaning of key words in Titus 2:3. Write the definitions in the space provided (some are supplied).

older women = 4247 presbutis; “An adult female advanced in years.”¹ While this word refers generally to age, no specific age is given; but the context of the chapter seems to refer to someone who is past the childrearing years.

Do you identify yourself in this category of “older women”? List several ladies in Scripture who fit this category: _____

likewise = 5615 hosautos; “after the same manner.”² Paul may be referring to Titus’ responsibility to “urge” the older women in the same manner in which he is to “urge” the older and younger men (2:6).

¹A Louw, Johannes P.; Nida, Eugene Albert: *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition (New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989), S. 1:108.

²Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996), S. G5615.


Responding to God

Good theology will always produce humility and gratitude. We express these heart attitudes in worship—through prayer and song. Take time to respond to God, praising him for Who he is and asking for his help to grow and change in the areas where the Spirit has convicted you. Write out a simple prayer in response to what God has shown you in his Word (i.e., prayers of confession, repentance, worship).



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.

Titus 2:2-4a



Group Discussion

Be prepared to give input on the following discussion questions with your group:

1. In which aspect of discipleship are you weakest (speaking truth, coming alongside, being an example)?

How have you seen this weakness impact your discipling relationships in the past?

What steps can you take to grow in this area?

2. In which aspect of discipleship are you strongest?

How has God used this gifting for his glory in the lives of others?

Take time to thank God for his goodness to use you in the lives of others for his glory. Pray for wisdom and enabling to grow in the areas where you are weak.

3. What particular fears do you have to overcome when you think about partaking in discipling relationships?

can and should already be striving to become women who give honor to the Lord throughout our lives. As you study, ask the Lord to show you what needs to be added to or taken away from your own portrait to make you more like Jesus and to increase your effectiveness in adorning the gospel.

translations of the New Testament in the Waali language. We were there when the pastors gathered in the literacy center one afternoon to hold the first-ever copy of the Psalms in their own language—it had arrived in the mail that day.

At the time of my visit, just like the landscape around me, I was struggling with my own barrenness. I had been married for quite a while, and it appeared that God was saying “no” to our desire for children. One night, Nancy and I stood under the brilliant stars of the Ghanaian night sky talking about life and what God was teaching us personally. I shared my struggle with her. I will never forget how Miss Nancy answered me. She too had desired marriage and children. These are natural desires built into women by God’s own design. She had come to Wa willingly, following God’s leading in her life, but still hoping that maybe his will would someday include a spouse and children. Over the years, it became apparent that God had a different way to fulfill that desire. God himself had become her dearest companion. And in her own words, “Kelly, I am going to have so many children in heaven!” I had met scores of those children already. Spiritual children and spiritual grandchildren, whole churches that had been born out of the choice to give her life to God’s kingdom work. her labor had not been in the *physical* rearing of children, but in the *spiritual* rearing of children in so many small villages dotting the landscape of the Ghanaian countryside. Their influence continues today. I determined then and there that with God’s help, like Nancy and Amy, I would never be spiritually barren.

Like the older women described in Titus 2, Nancy and Amy were *teachers of good*. Their lives were spent adorning the gospel they so cherished. Titus 2:3-4 contains in abbreviated form the portrait of what Christian maturity looks like in older women. You will find that the following verses spell out only two qualifications for older women to be able to disciple younger women: age and godliness. There is no reference to her life experiences, married state, or whether or not she has had children. You don’t have to go to Africa to make an impact for Christ. Opportunities for spiritual fruitfulness are not limited by location or even stage of life. God wants to use you right where you are.

Even if you don’t belong to the group of women called “older” (I can only imagine the discussion about this point!), this lesson also applies to you. For one thing, if the Lord tarries and prolongs our lives, each of us will someday be an “older woman.” But beyond that, all of us

4. As we see from God’s order in Titus 2:1-10, women have a vital role to play in the church. In what ways are you actively advancing the mission of your local church by discipling other women? Discuss the proper steps someone could take to get more involved in the lives of other people.
5. Vibrant relationships centered around the truth of God’s Word: this is God’s intent for a local body of believers. But in our brokenness, we tend to either isolate ourselves and live independently of other believers, or we immerse ourselves to the point of being enmeshed in unhealthy dependence on other people rather than Jesus. On which side of the spectrum to you most often find yourself? What corrective steps do you need to take to live in healthy relationships with people in your local church body?
6. What voices are competing for attention and influence in your life? What steps can you take to better pay attention to and be influenced by the right voice(s)? Are you faithfully using your voice to affirm truth to others? Take time to thank those who have done this for you.

Teachers of Good

 TITUS 2:1-4 

Sometimes the most impacting lessons in life come from out-of-the-way, unexpected places. For me, it was in a small town in the upper west region of northern Ghana, just shy of the Burkina Faso border. Although the country shares a similar land mass as the state of Oregon, it took roughly 15 hours to drive from the capital city of Accra to the small mission outpost in Wa where we were helping run a youth camp. You can learn a lot about a country and its people on a 15-hour drive. I was struck by the barrenness of the landscape. This was a land devastated by civil war and pillaged by its own people—stripped down to the dust—for survival. Perhaps living in the verdant forests of Appalachia made the contrast even stronger in my mind. I missed the trees. Especially when the sun rose to join the landscape. Along the way we passed roadside stands selling the best food available—freshly smoked rats (skewered on a stick for easy eating) and snails the size of grapefruits. I could tell you about the mud-hut villages, the women carrying large bundles of firewood on their heads, children walking barefoot to the nearest water pump to collect fresh water for their mothers, and the swarm of bugs that joined our evening services. But while those memories are still strong in my mind, something greater displaces them. I love Ghana. But not because of the place. I love Ghana because of the people. Two people in particular: Miss Nancy and Miss Amy.

By the time we visited Ghana in 2003, Nancy and Amy were already in their 60's. They had spent a lifetime loving and caring for the people of Wa. They both were compelled to go to Ghana by their love for Jesus, seeking to take the good news to an out-of-the-way, hard-to-reach place. They pioneered a new field—trekking into those mud-hut villages, living among the people, teaching the children to read and sharing the greatest story ever told. They were the first to bring literacy to that region of Ghana. They were the first to help put the Waali language on paper. During our staff training for the camp we met pastor after pastor who had both learned to read and learned about Jesus at the feet of Nancy and Amy. God used these two women to raise up men just like the biblical Titus who were now mature, well-equipped pastors leading local churches of their own. Each young person at that youth camp received one of the newly finished