

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

Titus Chapter 2

9/9/15

Doing Good for the Sake of the Gospel

Verse 1

¹ You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine.

2:1 Notice the emphasis on "sound doctrine" in Paul's instructions to Titus. This is the content of our faith. But how can you recognize sound doctrine? When a teaching is sound, it combines correct knowledge and understanding with consistent practice. It must be found in the Bible, keep Jesus Christ central, result in consistently good behavior and actions, and promote spiritual health in ourselves and others. Believers must be grounded in the truths of the Bible so they won't be swayed by the powerful oratory of false teachers, the possible devastation of tragic circumstances, or the pull of emotions. Those responsible for preaching and teaching must challenge people to understand sound doctrine. Learn the Bible, study theology, apply biblical principles, and live what you learn.

Verses 2-8

² Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. ³ Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. ⁴ Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, ⁵ to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. ⁶ Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. ⁷ In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness ⁸ and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

2:2-8 Having people of all ages in the church makes it strong, but it also brings potential for problems. Paul gave Titus counsel on how to help various groups of people. The older people should teach the younger by words and by example. This is how values are passed on from generation to generation. Does your church carry out this basic function?

2:2, 5 Self-control is an important aspect of living the Christian life. The Christian community, then and now, is made up of people from differing backgrounds and viewpoints, making conflict inevitable. We live in a pagan and often hostile world. To stay above reproach,

believers need wisdom and discernment to be discreet and to master their wills, tongues, and passions so that Christ is not dishonored. How is your self-control?

2:3-5 Women who were new Christians were to learn how to have harmony in their homes by watching older women who had been Christians for some time. We have the same need today. Young wives and mothers should learn to live in a Christian manner—loving their husbands and caring for their children—through observing exemplary women of God. If you are of an age or in a position where people look up to you, make sure that your example is motivating younger believers to live in a way that honors God.

2:6 This advice given to young men was very important. In ancient Greek society, the role of the husband/father was not viewed as a nurturing role but merely as a functional one. Many young men today have been raised in families where fathers have neglected their responsibilities to their wives and children. Husbands and fathers who are good examples of Christian living are important role models for young men who need to see how it is done.

2:7-8 Paul urges Titus to be a good example to those around him so that others might see Titus's good deeds and imitate him. Paul's life would give his words greater impact. If you want someone to act a certain way, be sure that you live that way yourself. Then you will earn the right to be heard, and your life will reinforce what you teach.

2:8 Paul counsels Titus to be above criticism in how he taught. This quality of integrity comes from careful Bible study and listening before speaking. This is especially important when teaching or confronting others about spiritual or moral issues. If we are impulsive, unreasonable, and confusing, we are likely to start arguments rather than to convince people of the truth.

Verses 9-15

⁹ Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, ¹⁰ and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive. ¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the 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 wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. ¹⁵ These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

2:9-10 Slavery was common in Paul's day. Paul did not condemn slavery in any of his letters, but he advised slaves and masters to be loving and responsible in their conduct (see also Ephesians 6:5-9). The standards set by Paul can help any employee/employer relationship.

Employees should always do their best work and be trustworthy, not just when the employer is watching. Businesses lose millions of dollars a year to employee theft and time-wasting. If all Christian employees would follow Paul's advice at work, what a transformation it would make!

2:12-13 Paul brings out two aspects of Christian living that must be stressed today. "Live . . . while we wait for the blessed hope." Both aspects of living and waiting are essential to our Christian sanity in this present evil age. The living is made bearable because we live for God—seeking to build his kingdom with whatever gifts he has given us. And it is that very kingdom to which we are looking forward. As we live and look forward, we anticipate three great benefits of Christ's return: (1) Christ's personal presence—we look forward to being with him. (2) Redemption from our sinful nature—we long for the end of the battle with sin and our perfection in Christ. (3) Restoration of creation—we anticipate the complete rule of grace when the image of God will be fully realized in people and when the created order will be restored.

2:14 Christ's redeeming us from sin opens the way for him to "purify" us. Redeem means to purchase our release from the captivity of sin with a ransom (see Mark 10:45 for more on Christ as our ransom). We are not only free from the sentence of death for our sin, but we are also purified from sin's influence as we grow in Christ.

2:15 Paul tells Titus to teach the Scriptures as well as to live them. We must also teach, encourage, and correct (rebuke) others, when necessary. We can easily feel afraid when others are older, more influential in the community, or wealthier. Like Titus, we should not let ourselves be threatened when we are trying to minister to others or provide leadership in the church.