

THE WINSOME LIFE
Titus 2:1-10

We're all pretty familiar with the bumper stickers on the back of company trucks which read, "**How's my driving?**" They always come with the employer's phone number right underneath it for you to call if they aren't driving well. The stickers hold them accountable in case they don't represent the company well by the way they drive. In the same way, if you've ever owned a business and had the advertising graphics on your vehicle, you know how much that affects your driving. I was talking with a friend the other day about this who has his company information on his vehicle and I too had a taxidermy business with the logos and number on my pickup. And we were discussing how it's amazing how much this affects your driving. People don't want to do business with the person who cut them off or tailgated them or went flying down their street while their kids were playing outside. It's not good on business to drive bad when your business is being advertised on what you drive. Advertising and how's my driving stickers hold people accountable.

Now as Christians who represent Jesus Christ and His Church, we find ourselves in a similar situation. As part of the Church we are in the business of seeing souls saved. We are workers and ambassadors who represent Jesus Christ and His kingdom. Everywhere we go, we represent Him and the product He offers which is the gospel. Jesus said in the Great Commission that as we go, we are to make disciples. In Titus, we're looking at a church that's going... and as you're going, you need to keep in mind that you have on you a bumper sticker on your life that reads, "How's my driving?" Other believers, unbelievers, our children, friends, coworkers – everyone we're around and everyone we influence – if you claim to be a Christian, **they are learning from you what it means to say that and be that**. By the way you live and act, many are taking mental notes and critiquing whether or not the message you claim to believe in really works. The old saying is that people might not read a Bible, but they'll read you. So I ask you today, how's *your* driving? How are you representing your Savior by the way you live? As we look into these next several verses in 2:1-10, we're going to see how we should be adorning and honoring the Savior and the gospel everywhere we go by living godly, winsome lives.

Just to refresh you on where we have been so far in Titus, in chapter 1, Paul gave Titus the task of setting these churches in order on the island of Crete. There are some disorganized and somewhat confused gatherings of believers, blending in with the carnal and wild culture there or falling for the legalism, and Paul wants them to grow and stand out from both. And in chapter one we saw that the first major task of Titus would be to appoint elders in every city who lead, protect, and feed the flock. They would **lead** by the example they set, **protect** by silencing false teachers, and as we open up to chapter 2, what we see here is the emphasis on the feeding element – what they are to **feed** the flock.

I. FEED THE FLOCK THINGS FITTING FOR SOUND DOCTRINE. (2:1)

What is sound doctrine? Part of it is obviously in contrast to what the false teachers were teaching and doing. "But as for you" contrasts the previous section. But sound doctrine isn't based on the opposite of false teaching. It's based on good theology which we'll look at next time in Titus. Christ didn't come into the world to just free us from sin's penalty and give us a license to sin. He came and bought salvation to free us from its power over us as well so that we live as 2:12 says, "to deny ungodliness and worldliness and live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age." **Every life that has been redeemed through faith in Christ should give evidence of redemption – the gospel produces results, especially when someone's life is cultivated by the Word of God.**

You've seen these infomercials on TV like the OxiClean guy Billy Mays. The point of the infomercial is to show people that it works! He would stain a white shirt or carpet with grape juice and grass and mud and then wash it in OxiClean and voila! White again! Can you imagine if it didn't work when he did it? Who would buy it? No one. And **in the same way, people will be more apt to believe the gospel message you share about a Savior Redeemer, if your life gives evidence of that redemption.** There should be something different about us. Our lives he said should be sound.

This word 'sound' is important. He uses it several times in Titus and it's not just referring to something you audibly hear with your ear. When something is sound **in this descriptive sense** it's like saying that it's healthy. The old Greek medical term word means good health or sound in body.¹

❖ **When something is sound it is healthy or in a state of wellness.**

When someone goes missing and is finally found, what do we say if all is well? "They were found safe and sound." When someone reaches their destination, we're relieved that, "They made it safe and sound." They're out of danger. They're in good health. That's the idea here. Paul wants these believers to have sound, healthy lives. When someone studies a believer's life, they should say, "there's something different about that individual. Their life is sound. It is healthy. It is stable. They have something figured out that I don't yet and I want to know what that is." **A sound life is a winsome life. It wins people to Christ in Christ's way.** Our mission as the church is not about being the biggest church in town or merely drawing a crowd. A lot of churches grow by using worldly ways but biblically we're to be concerned more about **how to be a healthy, Christlike church.** When a church is focused on that, and is a healthy church living sound lives, that's a winsome church that glorifies God. Proverbs 11:30 says, "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life and he who is wise wins souls." Hypocrites don't win souls.

As we move on to verse 2, what Paul has done in the rest of this portion is he has categorized by **age** and **gender** and **social status** in his day and in that culture, what a sound life looks like. Just like the elders qualities list though, these descriptions are not exhaustive. They're more of a basic profile.² And they can only be rightly applied by someone who has faith in Christ and been born of the Holy Spirit. Keeping these lists won't make you right with God. They are lists for those who are already right with God through faith in Christ. Being a good person never saved anyone. Faith in Christ saves a man.

II. **THE WINSOME OLDER MEN. (2:2)**

So for older men Paul says they, "are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance." We'll breeze through most of these qualities but some require special attention.

- A. Temperate – This means that they should be sober minded. They have stability.
- B. Dignified – They are worthy of respect based on the way they live.
- C. Sensible – This one is repeated and is a mark of a winsome person. It means good judgment and discernment; common sense. You could say **they have a good head on their shoulders**. When someone has a head on their shoulders in our language, it means they are wise at living – skillful and stable.
- D. Sound in faith – They know what they believe from being strong in the Word. Because of that, they have a strong trust in the Lord. This is especially important as they near death. They have trust in His goodness or divine plan and timing with all of that.
- E. Sound in love – They really care about people and have a heart for people. Their love is patient, kind, does not envy or boast, is not self-willed, is forgiving (1 Cor. 13).
- F. Sound in perseverance – They endure until the Lord calls them home. **A winsome life must have the element of perseverance.** Because what happens a lot of the time? The

older we get, the more bitter and critical and slothful we can be. We can get so used to sin we just don't see it anymore. We have to remember that the younger generation is watching us and taking notes. If they go to church and see people who have been going to church for decades but wants nothing to do with them and they seem be bitter and angry and self-righteous, then what will they say to themselves? "If that's where decades of being a Christian gets a person, I think I'll pass!"³ Instead, our senior saints should reflect Psalm 92:12-15, "The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are **planted** in the house of the Lord; they **flourish** in the courts of God. **They still bear fruit in old age**; they are **ever full of sap** and green, to declare that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him." I'm thankful for the many senior saints in our congregation who are persevering, being great examples to us. We thank God for you! **A man or woman who is getting up in years may not be able to do much, but they can still live a winsome life by the an godly character they exhibit.** They may not be as physically sound, needing a walker or cane, but nonetheless, they can have a sound walk with God.

III. THE WINSOME OLDER WOMEN. (2:3)

He begins with older women, "likewise" so he's saying the previous traits transfer to them as well.

- A. Reverent in their behavior – they have a worshipful, sacred heart towards God still.
- B. Not malicious gossips or enslaved to much wine – those two go together don't they? And in a day and age where women typically married younger and had children young – meaning they finished mothering their children by age 40 or 45 – they were basically disregarded by society after that and spent a lot of time sitting around, drinking and engaging in unprofitable talk. Instead of sitting around doing that he says they should be busy about the things of the Lord and His program. One thing they can do is:
- C. Teach the younger women what is good – Older women are to teach the younger women the life lessons they have learned – **mentor** them in being a godly woman. He says to encourage ('train' or 'show') the younger women to love their husbands and love their children: show them how it's done! Like someone from Missouri (show me state). Be like Billy Mays and show them in the way you treat your husband. Mentoring like this is something we need more and more as the family structure crumbles around us.

IV. THE WINSOME YOUNG, MARRIED WOMEN. (2:4-5)

- A. Learn from the older women – what it means to be a loving wife and mother.
- B. Sensible – self-controlled with common sense. Skillful at living.
- C. Pure – Faithful to their husbands and family.
- D. Workers at home – Instead of sitting around and drinking wine and gossiping and watching soap operas – he says work hard at home to support your family and show them love by it and do it for the Lord. Even younger widows Paul advised to remarry and keep house so the enemy would have occasion for reproach (1 Tim. 5:14). Paul advised young widows to work hard as well and widows were to only receive financial support if they were sixty or older (1 Tim. 5:9).

I don't want to read into this more than it says but for the man and wife, the home and the family is their main ministry and priority. And that's so backwards from the messages you hear today from the feminist movement groups who emphasize self-achievement at the expense of family, acting like homemaking and raising kids is a drudgery or hindrance to that and getting in the way of it. But the Bible holds that in high honor. It's a privilege, a

main ministry, a gift from God, a high calling and responsibility! Raising kids in the Lord is their main investment in the next generation and eternity. If you read Proverbs 31, that woman worked hard in and out of the home but **work and success was never the goal – the goal was to supporting her family and honoring God with her life through it.** It says, “**She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.** Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her. Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.” (31:27-28).

- E. Kind – Like love in action. They’re gentle and thoughtful of others.
- F. Subject to their husbands – The biblical design for marriage is that the man as the leader is to love his wife as Christ loves the Church and she as the helper respectfully submits to his loving leadership. She needs love but he needs respect (Eph. 5:22, 25). And when a married couple does that, it just works. She submits as long as it doesn’t cause her to sin against the Lord and the situation’s not abusive. I think many women have trouble with that word submission because of the men who have abused authority and leadership, but sometimes kindness and respect for their husband is exactly what it will take to win him to the Lord – just heard a story like that on the radio this week.

God created men to be men and women to be women – they are **equal** in essence and worth and are even **dependent** upon one another (Eve came from Adam but now Adam comes from Eve; 1 Cor. 14:11-12) – but they have **different God-given roles** that God integrated into their very being. What keeps us from fulfilling those roles is the fallen nature. Pride in women – complacency in men. But you have to think, when those roles of authority and submission are done God’s way, it’s **a sound and healthy marriage** that reflects God. It actually reflects **the Trinity** – Christ submitting to the Father (1 Cor. 11:3). It’s reflecting **Christ and the Church** – the Church submitting to Christ, Christ loving the Church (Eph. 5:32-33). Paul is anything but a male chauvinist. By explaining the God-designed roles here and elsewhere, he’s actually the greatest liberator the world has seen, freeing men to be men and women to be women. Compared to Roman culture, Paul elevated women!

❖ **Honor the word of God with your marriage and by the way you live.**

If we don’t live it, we dishonor it. Like the hypocritical Jews, Paul quoted Isaiah in Romans 2 saying, “The Name of God is blasphemed among Gentile because of you” (Rom. 2:24). We don’t want to dishonor the Word of God with our marriage.

V. **THE WINSOME YOUNG MEN. (2:6-8)**

- A. Sensible – for third time it is mentioned.
- B. An example in good deeds – He’s serving others and not just his selfish pursuits. The word **example** is pretty neat. It’s to **leave an impression or a visible scar.** Like when you miss the nail with the hammer and dent the wood, you literally leave an impression in the wood and a visible scar that’s not going away. Or like when you back up into that concrete post - it’s a lasting memory! Well, young men are to leave an impression on people by how they are doing good works and not chasing youthful lusts like the rest of the young men.
- C. Pure in doctrine – a young man who keep his way pure according to the Word of God (Ps. 119:9). He takes God’s call to holiness seriously.
- D. Dignified – he’s a respectable young man.
- E. There speech is sound/above reproach –He has clean mouth. Young men today, like in Paul’s day are known for their filthy talk. Paul says clean it up! Like those Orbit commercials: “Orbit cleans another dirty mouth!” Well, the Holy Spirit has a way of

cleaning dirty mouths. One of my pastor friends said when he came to Christ as a young man, he had to learn how to talk again! He had to learn a new vocabulary. God wants us to have a holy vocabulary.

❖ **Speak so that the opponents have nothing bad to say about you.**

Whether it's Satan, our Great Accuser, the false teachers, or unbelievers who like to malign Christians. There's a lot of folks out there who reject truth and will hop on any opportunity they can to malign believers whose talk and walk don't line up with their beliefs. Paul says don't let them have an opportunity to accuse us.

VI. **THE WINSOME SLAVE/EMPLOYEE. (2:9-10)**

Now he moves from age and gender **to a specific social status and that's because it was creating a particular social problem in the Early Church**. When most people read about slavery in the Bible they think of slavery in America, but the slavery in the Roman culture was different and you need to remember that when you read about it in the Bible. Somewhat like the OT in the Law, it wasn't strange or considered some great injustice for someone to sell themselves into slavery to make a better living or survive. But there were pretty severe consequences for renouncing that slavery or running away and **when some slaves became Christians in this culture, it often created a lot of problems and confusion because here you have in the Church the only place where men and women and slaves and free and rich and poor were on equal terms in Christ** – they have equal status before God in Christ. Social status is leveled at the foot of the cross when it comes to salvation – we all get in the same way, by faith in Christ. **But at the same time, those differences didn't just disappear in the earthly social world** and a lot of folks were trying to make them disappear by considering themselves equal to their boss or rebelling. So this is like you saying to your Christian boss, you can't tell me what to do because we're all equal in Christ. **But even if you and your boss are both believers, he's still your boss. That doesn't change.**

Paul says rather than doing that, live for the Lord in that condition, *especially if your boss isn't a Christian* and let him know by the way you live that there's power in the gospel message (1 Cor. 7:17-24). Stand out from the rest of the slaves by your work ethic and submission. **Wouldn't that do a better job of transforming the culture than rebelling against it? Wouldn't that have a greater redeeming effect on the boss and adorn the gospel better than rebelling against him?** What Paul is saying is to **redeem the culture from the inside out** and not simply overthrow it. And that's exactly what happened as time went on and slavery in Rome collapsed, due in large part to the Christian influence.

To make this applicable we need to think of it in terms of the employer/employee relationship. Your workplace is your mission field. Nowhere else does anybody get to watch you day to day.

- A. **Be subject to your boss in everything** – As long as it doesn't make you sin against the Lord, obey your boss. Do what they say. Ephesians 5:6-9 says to obey them as though obeying Christ. Obey your masters according to the flesh and God will honor that.
- B. **Be well-pleasing** – do a good job and do it well.
- C. **Don't be argumentative** – don't complain every time they ask you to do something. And don't mouth off when they're not around. There's nothing attractive that.
- D. **Don't steal** – Companies lose millions every year from employees who walk off property with items in their lunchbox, thinking they've earned it.⁴ Don't steal from your employer.
- E. **Showing all good faith, adoring the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect** – All good faith *for a slave* means a lot. Because of their trust in God, they can have a contentment

that God is sovereign and has a reason for them being where they are, even if they're considered the dregs of society. Was it ideal for them to be slaves? No! But God can use that anyway – He saved them while they slaves! He tends to use them to shine as slaves. **If they'll trust God in their situations and live for Him in their condition, that's going to adorn the gospel more than anyone on this list.** People are going to ask: **“how can this slave have more peace and joy and contentment and stability in his life than his master?”** The answer: Jesus Christ. That's how. Only the gospel can take the lowest member of society like a slave and make him richer than any master in town.

❖ **Adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.**

We adorn trees at Christmas time with lights and garland and ornaments, but we also adorn the gospel when we live for the Lord, especially in the conditions of life that are undesirable. Adorn the truth by the way you live. Titus teaches us we need to be careful how we live for the sake of outsiders – to **live a winsome life.**

There's a popular quote from St. Francis of Assisi that says, “Preach the gospel, and if necessary, use words.” Well he's not saying it's not necessary to use words – faith comes from hearing the word about Christ – but we can preach it by the way we live as well.

I came across a really great article a couple weeks ago. It was a man having a hypothetical conversation with God and this man was a small business owner of a landscaping business.

Business Owner: *“Should I add a little fish symbol to the corner of my landscaping company's logo, God?”*

God: *“To what end?”*

Business Owner: *“Obviously so people will know they're dealing with a Christian company.”*

God: *“Let's leave it off and see if they can figure that out by your workmanship, work ethic and honesty instead.”*

Let's see if they can figure that out by the way you live, by the way you drive. How's *your* driving? Focus on you. One of my fears in preaching this sermon today is that everyone going to start criticizing the way others in church drive. Everyone's at different places on the road in their journey. But you can't drive someone else's car for them while you're driving a car yourself. Don't worry about everybody else's driving. You focus on you. How's *your* driving?

¹ A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament, Volume II: Luke* (New York & London: Harper & Brothers, 1930), 78.

² Bryan Clark, *Living as Teaching, Living Truth: A study in the book of Titus* (Lincoln, NE: Lincoln Berean Church, 2011), 3.

³ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁴ Warren Wiersbe, *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2007), 793.