

Titus 24-07-28b

Let's continue our examination of Paul's epistle to Titus. We're in chapter two, "'Speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine.'" Proper for sound doctrine. This of course is primarily aimed at Titus as the pastor and teacher in his group.

Also, when he is looking at the elders, elders that he is going to appoint in every town to speak this truth to them. And this is up and down the chain, whether we are speaking laterally, whether we are speaking up or down, our speech should reflect truth and sound doctrine. And then once again, this description of older and younger people, we pick up in verse four, that older women should admonish young women to love their husbands and to love their children.

Do you find this peculiar as I do? We assume that there is an inbuilt, instinctive, automatic maternal love for children, and that there's an automatic love that begins with infatuation and develops into romance, and then into a steady ongoing marital relationship between husbands and wives. But we in other places, such as Ephesians, see the command, husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church. And then in that context, it says, wives submit to your husbands.

And people don't often travel over to Titus to find the balancing exhortation here. And it doesn't come from the pulpit. It comes from women who have learned the truth and have come to represent and reflect in themselves sound doctrine.

These experienced women, these women who have spent years in marriage and child raising are to admonish. And this word admonish is to warn, to encourage by reminding of possible negative consequences for failure. When you admonish someone, there is an element of correction, of reminding them that bad things can happen if you don't persist and endure and practice these things.

Admonish young women to love their husbands. You can't tell somebody to love what they don't love on an emotional level. Tell me to love liver and lima beans.

Tell me to love stuffed green peppers. It doesn't matter how much you admonish me. It doesn't matter how much you encourage me or argue with me or pressure me.

I am never going to love those things. You can't exhort and admonish someone into love. And yet this says older women should admonish younger women to love their husbands.

So what's the key here? What's the answer? We are not talking about emotional, romantic, infatuational love. What kind of love are we talking about? Remember in Romans, Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated? Does God have an emotional attachment to Jacob that he lacks for Esau? God loves the world. There are different kinds of love.

We love one another. We love our neighbor and we practice a kind of love to those who

are outside. But it's different in quality.

It's different in basis. It is different in practice. And there are elements of love that reflect a policy of looking out for the wellbeing and the interest.

Looking out for the interests of others as in Philippians chapter two, not just our own interests, but looking out for the interests of others. This is love. Sacrificial to self and beneficial to someone else doesn't have to involve emotional attachment.

Doesn't have a sugary, warm, fuzzy, syrupy element. There is a need. There is an opportunity.

There is a relationship where I can express love that isn't so much emotional as it is practical. And if the emotional accompanies it, great. But it's not defined by the emotion.

The emotion can be the icing on the cake. When husbands are commanded to love their wives, they don't have to find a way to be just excessively emotionally implicated. It is a combination of respect, of honor, of duty, of something as unto the Lord.

And very often it is accompanied by emotional attachment and satisfaction and enjoyment that goes above and beyond. But even if that part is lacking, there is still love that is sacrificial to self, beneficial to others, as unto the Lord, because this is where I find myself and this is my opportunity. And it is the love of God that is shed abroad in my heart that is transmitted.

It reminds me, oddly enough, and please don't quote me on this, but you think about a rain gutter. I've been thinking about gutters on the house because some of mine need to be cleaned and I need to pipe some of what comes out the downspout so that it doesn't erode the yard. Right now we're getting little canyons in the yard.

But if you think about it, rain is a wonderful blessing. Rain hits your roof, goes down your shingles, goes into the gutters. And because there is an incline, it goes to your downspout and goes down vertically and comes out often with some force at the bottom of that rain gutter.

This is how some kinds of love function. God's love rains on us. The rain falls on the just and the unjust, but it comes to us, it hits our roof, it waters our lawn and garden, it fills the reservoirs so that we have drinking water and bathing water and running water of all kinds.

But there is a portion of that rain that hits the roof, goes into the gutters and comes down the downspout and then emerges. And you can capture it in rain barrels. We did this in a previous location where we lived.

And then you can use it in dry spells when there's water rationing in the city. You've got

these wonderful irrigation barrels. You've saved rainwater that fell freely at no charge.

And you can then put a little paddle pump or something on there and you can keep your lawn green. You can keep your flowers from wilting. At times when they say, you're not allowed to wash your car, you're not allowed to water your lawn because the reservoir is low, but we have stored up rain that fell on us and we can distribute it for benefit in our vicinity.

This is what the love of God does. God has loved us. God has forgiven us.

God has enabled and empowered and cleansed and forgiven and done so many wonderful things for us. And in appreciation of that and with that love and the benefits of that love stored up in us, it becomes a matter of course to reflect that. You think of the parable of the forgiven servant who has forgiven a great debt.

And you have another servant that he has the opportunity to love in the sense of reflecting that forgiveness that he himself has experienced. And to admonish someone, to warn and remind someone that if you fail to channel and reflect God's love, there will be consequences. This is the admonishment side.

You remember that the servant, because he does not love his underservant and does not forgive him, he himself has his debt restored and he's thrown into debtor's prison until he pays every penny. The prospect of God de-forgiving our sins is a sobering one. I am anxious to be gracious.

I am anxious to love because it is a positive expression. It is a, instead of just saying, oh God, thank you, thank you, thank you. My thank yous don't benefit God, but my re-expression of his love and his forgiveness toward others gratifies God in a way that my verbal thank yous could never do.

And if I want to truly be grateful, then I will manifest and share God's love and benefit with others. That is love. And that is why there is an admonishing feature to this teaching.

Older women admonish the young women to love their husbands and to love their children. Don't rely on an emotion. What happens if the emotion evaporates? This is why, you know, they like to say that half of marriages end in divorce.

Why is that? Well, because they were based on emotional infatuation. When that settles down or evaporates, what's left? Where is the foundation? There should be a foundation of love that does not depend on emotion. It is matter of fact, it is objective, it is godly.

It is a Christian virtue of manifesting the fruit of the spirit. You have made a pledge, you have made a promise, and you are true to it, and you trust God for the strength, the capacity, the power of God's spirit and God's word to carry it to completion because it

glorifies God. The emotion can come and go.

Interestingly, when we no longer rely on the emotional component and do it because of our love for God and our appreciation, God will often return that emotional component that we might've thought was lost. And it is all of grace, it is all of God, and we end up glorifying God for the benefits that we find in our personal relationships. But it doesn't say encourage, it doesn't say advise, it doesn't say, you know, hopefully suggest, admonish.

This is a necessity. And remember, as with, we have seen this over and over again, this exhortation for wives isn't limited to wives. Wives are in a love and submission relationship with their husbands.

They are under authority, and they have those over whom they exercise authority. Do you notice the upward and downward direction of this love? Admonish young women to love their husbands and to love their children. Love is a policy of seeking the benefit at one's personal expense.

It costs me something to be of benefit as a young woman to my husband. It costs me something to be of benefit to my children over whom I exercise authority. It costs me.

It's not easy. It's not convenient. It's not my first choice if I were to gratify myself with my time and my efforts and my resources.

Love costs me. I deny myself. What did Jesus say about being a disciple? You remember it? If anyone would come after me, let him first deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.

The rich young ruler. Well, I would love to follow you. I've kept the law from my youth.

I'm a righteous young man. Well, sell your goods, give to the poor, come follow me. He went away sorrowing.

Why? Why? It would cost him more than he wanted to allow. He did not actually love the Lord Jesus enough to part from his worldly goods and actually follow. Self-denial, putting ourselves lower down.

We can look out for our own interests, but also for the interests of others. Philippians 2, again. Admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children.

All of us have authority over us. All of us are the centurion. We have those over whom we have influence and authority.

We have those who have authority and influence over us. We should be adopting and manifesting and practicing a policy of self-denial for the benefit of those we serve and those we rule, both. Masters and slaves, it's going to be the same thing.

So older women, why does this come from the older women and not straight from the pastor? Well, some of us have lived through the feminist movement. Some of us are hearing even now that it is worth electing a woman because only a woman understands my womanly problems, my womanly status, the glass ceiling, the inequalities, the limitations, and just the fact that someone is a woman is going to make a difference for me in my life because I am a woman, let's say, and people want to identify with a characteristic and that overcomes experience, knowledge, past policy history, accomplishments or lack thereof. No, it's identity politics.

I identify because we have this thing in common. We have gender in common or we have color in common or we have other things in common other than what kind of job will this person do if they enter into the office? What is their track record? What is likely to happen to the country or the state or the county or wherever it is the election is being held if this person gains authority? Sometimes the best way to love a politician is to not vote for them because it's the Peter Principle and they're going to rise one level above their level of competence and fail. Governor of Texas ran for office some years back and he was a great governor of Texas, but he was not qualified to be president and it became quickly evident and he had to drop out of the race and rightfully so.

It was a blessing for him to not go up and fail for four years. People that go one level above their competence and instead of being a senator, now they're a president or instead of being a governor, now they're a president and their inadequacy becomes evident and people elected them for the wrong reasons. Well, it's nowhere more true than our personal relationships.

So these women who have experience, they've been down the road. This is not, well, they're pretty or they're rich, I should listen to them. They're older women and they know where of they speak.

They are qualified because they have been down this road. They have done the self-sacrificial thing. They have raised a family.

They have honored, respected, submitted to and loved their husband in difficult times. When their husband was being a nincompoop, you think about Abigail defending Nabal, whose name means fool. I wonder if that was actually his given name or if that became his name after the events of 2 Samuel.

But Abigail loved her husband and went out and stopped David from slaughtering her husband for his foolishness. God dealt with her husband. God turned his heart to stone.

God removed him from the scene. Admonish the young woman to love their husbands, to love their children and verse five, to be discreet, to be chaste. What is it to be chaste? That's an interesting idea.

This is from the word *hazomai* and it originally meant that which awakens religious respect, religious awe. You look at someone and say, the first thing that comes to her mind is, what a wonderful Christian lady. She exemplifies, she radiates the best of Christian virtues.

They used to have, she's a fine Christian woman. He's a fine Christian man. And the word Christian would go in there because it said so much.

That's what chaste actually means. Someone who is chastened, who is aware that there is propriety. There is that which reflects honor and respect, duty, recognition of vertical relationship with God.

Someone who does not violate taboos or expectations. Someone who is not loose, who is not disrespected for bad choices, chaste. And older women are to encourage younger women.

Maybe you don't need that particular thing to characterize you in your appearance or your behavior. Homemakers, you could expect the word *oikos* to be in there, the house, the home. And that is their domain.

That is their priority. That is their area of responsibility, opportunity, dominion. And the house reflects the values, the goals, the priorities of the woman.

It's a reflection, that's her area. The man reflects his character and so forth in his work, in his care for his family. The woman has the opportunity normally, primarily, not always, but often in her home.

So homemakers, it's a good translation. And you have a parallel in 1 Timothy 5.14. We saw this earlier. Paul says, I desire that younger widows marry bare children, manage the house, give no opportunity for the adversary to speak reproachfully.

It is a privilege to enter into a house and find that when the husband is at work, the wife, the mother is at home, and she is invested in making that house a home and a nurturing place for children and a welcoming place for her husband's return and so on. These kinds of concepts are very much out of phase and out of favor with a lot of the world today. That's denigrating, that's demeaning, that the pipe and slippers idea when the husband comes home.

I'm sorry, but it is a biblical value. And if we think we're smarter than the Lord, there is gonna be a day of reckoning where we're gonna find out that is not the case. God has ordained the man to earn his bread and that of his family by the sweat of his brow and for the wife to be in a support role.

I pity the military unit that prides itself on being a fighting unit, but has no logistical support, no fuel, no beans, no bullets, no supply chain. That fighting force is ultimately

going to wither, fail, be defeated and be destroyed for lack of logistics. You can say, well, but that's not as important as the front lines and putting rounds down range and engaging with the enemy.

Nobody can do those things without wonderful, steady, faithful, self-sacrificial support. It's a different assignment, but nobody in a support role has to feel second class or less than because they're in commissary supply, like my father was, instead of in one of the combat arms. Combat arms can do nothing without supply.

Your body can do nothing without the heart pumping blood. Do you think, well, the heart's less important than the hands because the heart doesn't do activities and the hands do? Take your heart out and see how long your hands function. The whole body is not an eye or a hand or a foot, but all of its parts and its components are of equal importance value and should be honored.

We should not let the world insinuate the notion that you are less than because you are supporting instead of working. It's just utter nonsense. And older women are to inculcate this truth to the younger women.

Obedient to their own husbands. Obedient. There's a tough one.

What if my husband is wrong? What if he's a fool? Obedient. The only time this obedience is in question is if that obedience violates the higher authority of the Lord and scripture. Think back to the American Revolution.

I've been reviewing, there's some great programs that have come out recently hosted by Kelsey Grammer about George Washington. You know how much I admire him and his example and his godly example. But when do you decide that you have to no longer respect and obey the authority of the King of England? It's a very vexed question.

Were the revolutionaries right in breaking away from England and actually fighting the country that birthed them and shooting the British army, many of whom were honorable Christian men? It's a difficult question and one that has to be addressed prayerfully, carefully, and in the personal case, find those who are older and experienced and qualified by their example to advise, to admonish, to encourage, to speak the truth in love about whether to persist in obedience to the husband or to not obey because there is a higher truth. If the husband says, throw the kids in the lake, we can't afford them and we're going to have to drown them. Obviously that's an extreme case in which you would not obey.

This is not a hard command to understand. You obey in the Lord. Children obey your parents in the Lord.

It's implicit here that honorable, spiritual older women are going to counsel and admonish younger women to obey their husbands in the Lord. That doesn't mean sit still

for abuse and getting knocked around or for children being abused or knocked around. And there is a time when the higher and greater obedience to God himself will mean that you leave a situation or leave a person who is not honoring God in their exercise of authority.

That's a personal individual situation. Every case is different. This is why God gives us the Holy Spirit and his word and the opportunity to pray and to have fellowship with believers who can help us be objective.

It's part of the function of the body that other parts of the body will support a part that is under pressure or is wounded or hurting or in need of counsel and advice. So admonish young women, love their husbands and in verse five, to be obedient to their husbands. Why? In order that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

Likewise, verse six, Titus, you, not the women, exhort the young men to be sober-minded. Sober-minded. Remember *sophronos*, the idea of wisdom, steadiness, reliability, integrity, that's *sophronos*.

It translates things in the Old Testament that give us insight into its meaning. It is primarily reflecting this notion of wisdom, of self-control, of sagacity, sage behavior. But this is something that can be learned.

We know this because it can be taught. So exhort, command, encourage, preach, teach, sober-mindedness in all things, showing yourself to be a pattern. You can't teach what you don't reflect.

What you don't embody, what you don't practice yourself. Do as I say and not as I do is not a biblical value. You can't teach self-control if you have not mastered control of yourself.

You can't teach patience if you are not patient. You can't teach love and obedience if you are not loving and obedient yourself. Titus has been a companion of Paul and Paul knows him to be a young man who is imbued with these qualities.

So exhort the young men to be sober-minded, *sophronos* as kind of a summary of all of these admirable and proper and spiritual characteristics. Be a pattern of good works, pattern of good works. Notice that this works aspect follows all of the exhortations and descriptions about what a person is, how they think, their character, their approach, their attitude.

That will reflect itself in a pattern of good works. Ultimately, people are going to see characteristics and qualities in how we behave, how we react, how we speak, what we do. In doctrine, integrity.

Notice the forefront aspect of God's truth. Doctrine here is the *didaskalia*, the teaching.

There should be integrity in teaching.

The word for integrity is a hard one to say. It's one of those P-H-T-H words, athonia, and it is purity. It's not corrupted.

It's not adulterated. It isn't leavened. It's not intermixed.

This is another word for no pollution, no corruption, no defilement. This means that we have to understand what the word of God teaches if we are going to speak it to others, and it can't be partly right and partly wrong. Bread dough is either leavened or unleavened.

It's not kinda unleavened, and the truth of the word of God can't be sort of right, partly right. It has to be reflecting integrity, not corrupted. Reverence, once again, this semnas idea that reflects religious awe.

This is lost when people shamle into a worship service in public, I'm talking about, looking like they have gone to the local 7-Eleven to get a pack of cigarettes. You see people coming to church in flicks and shorts looking like they just rolled out of bed unkempt. There is a reverence.

There is an outward show of respect. I am doing something special. I am joining other believers, coming into the presence of God corporately, and that's different than the rest of my life, and I want it to reflect my recognition that this is special.

This is a privilege. If you get invited to see the Queen of England, or now the King of England, or the president, or the governor, or some high official, most people have the good sense to take a shower, dress up, adorn themselves with some sort of cosmetic effort to look nice when they are presented. If you're courting somebody of the opposite sex and you're gonna meet their parents, do you wear shower shoes, ragged cutoffs, and haven't taken a shower in a couple of days, didn't bother to run a comb through your hair, and hi there, I'm interested in your daughter or your son.

People have the good sense to recognize when there is a dignity and a respect and an honor that should be shown by us taking it seriously and dressing accordingly, acting accordingly. You don't try to go through the receiving line. You get up there to the King and, well, King, I've got a funny story to tell you.

It's not the time, it's not the place. There is appropriate conversation. There is appropriate behavior.

There's appropriate appearance. And it's part of honoring God. So reverence.

Incorruptibility. This is a lack of corruption. It's got an alpha privative in the front of it.

It starts with an A, ophthartos. And that means there is no defilement or corruption.

Sound speech that cannot be condemned.

The hearer's a real truth teller. We can convince ourselves that we're good to go in other areas, but sooner or later we are conversing. What characterizes our speech? Do we shoot from the hip? Do we say the first thing that comes into our mind? Or are we careful and edit ourselves? The best way to do this is to make sure that our thinking is sound.

If our, remember the Lord Jesus said, out of the heart proceeds what comes out of the mouth. And if we ensure purity of heart, this is going a long way to ensure that we have sound speech that cannot be condemned. This is cannot be condemned either inside or outside the fellowship, either by God or by man.

We don't talk in a way that causes criticism by the world and condemnation from the world. And notice those who are in opposition will be ashamed. This is the problem with some of our people running for office is if they would just be quiet or talk only about their policies, they would not be condemned.

They would not be off-putting to people who are on the fence or in the middle or looking for a decent alternative. But when you fail to cultivate and practice speech that cannot be condemned, it's off-putting and politics aside, do you really want to be a stumbling block and an obstacle to someone finding God through the Lord Jesus Christ? Coming into relationship with the Father and inheriting eternal life and all of its blessings and opportunities because when we open our trap, our speech is off-putting. It's holier than now, it's self-indulgent, it's critical, it's condemnatory, it's ad hominem, whatever else it may be, it sounds like the world.

One who can bridle his tongue, James says, has brought his whole body into subjection. The world and opponents of our faith should have nothing evil to say of us. Now, they may have criticisms, they may find fault, but they can't accuse us of evil with any kind of traction.

Whatever else it may be, I disagree, I don't like it, but they can't say that is just evil. And sadly, there are a lot of believers who, what they say, it is evil, it's divisive, it is bringing shame on the name of Christ. Well, this brings us to bond servants.

Once again, another example of those under authority. This is where there is a different dynamic. We've seen that wives can be an example of those who are both under authority and over children.

Here, bond servants should be obedient. Notice the emphasis on obedience. We are to obey those who have the rule over us.

Wives are to be obedient, children are to be obedient, slaves are to be obedient to their masters, to be well-pleasing, not answering back, not being unruly, not being fractious, not answering back, not pilfering. Pilfering here is a watering down. The Greek word

means not thieving.

You have access to stuff and you take it for yourself. Pilfering sounds like small stuff. This is the word for theft, not committing theft, but showing all good pistia, faithfulness.

This is the same word that is used of our faith in Christ, our faith in God, our faith in His word. All good faithfulness, that they may adorn the doctrine of God. This is a concept that deserves its own entire class.

What does it mean to adorn the doctrine of God? I will give you a preview that the word adorn here comes from cosmeo, cosmos, which means the order, cosmetics. The world is in some cases referred to as cosmos. So what does it mean to cosmeo the doctrine of God? That's what we'll look at next time.

But there is plenty of opportunity for us to examine ourselves, to see if we match, if we comport, if we reflect these wonderful descriptions and characteristics. If not, despair not, let not your heart be troubled, because we don't accomplish these things. It is the power of God.

Instead of directly trying to mimic or model or otherwise outwardly act in these ways, work on the source. It is the pure heart, the good conscience, and the sincere faith. We work on that through God's word and God's spirit.

These things will follow. These are the outward reflections of inward purity, holiness, and goodness. And by God's grace, through prayer, through reflection on his word, these things will transform us by the renewing of our minds.

And we will know the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, and it will reflect itself. We will find ourselves instinctively and reflexively, obedient, faithful, diligent. All of these wonderful characteristics.

Don't go directly at it. We've got to go to the source. Let God's power make us into the kind of people for whom this is natural.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the power that is our gift through the presence of your Holy Spirit. Thank you for the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, who truly reflected and expressed these traits and characteristics, knowing when to speak, when to call out, when to hold his peace and remain silent, in everything, reflecting his self-sacrifice and benefit toward the world, and especially toward us.

We pray that as we reflect on this portion of your word, that God the Holy Spirit will minister to our hearts, do transform us, renew our hearts, cleanse us, purify us, that we may be a people that please you and are zealous of good works. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.