

Titus 24-07-31b

We pick up our study now, we're in Titus chapter 2, and we see this wonderful gut check for Christians. This is the quick rundown of what we should be like, and therefore what we should look like and what we should act like. We have come all the way down to verse 9, the last verse in this section, and notice the word *exhort* is in italics, and by not being there, you have to go up to the *exhort* in verse 6, *exhort* young men to be all of those characteristics, sober minded and so on, with sound speech that cannot be condemned, then it just says bond servants to be obedient to their own masters.

It's interesting to me that the people most accustomed to receiving commands and exhortations are servants, they're the lowest on the totem pole, so to speak, and the young men are the ones that really need exhortation. If you look carefully, speak things proper for sound doctrine so that the older men are this way, the older women are this way, and the older women can admonish the young women, but notice the older men are not told to admonish the young men. The young men get their instructions from the pulpit, and it is a reminder that throughout the New Testament scriptures, you see the structure in family and in the church always is the same.

It is always respected. Women are to ask their husbands questions at home. They are to be submissive to their husbands.

Younger women are to learn from the older women. Older women are to look out for, encourage, admonish the younger women, but the men, their line of instruction and the line of authority goes from them to the pastor who is simply passing on the apostolic witness, the apostolic authority. The pastor doesn't really have much authority of his own.

He is to be sure things are done decently and in good order, but he is told to teach, *exhort*, and rebuke with all authority, but he is invoking the authority that comes from the scripture and comes from the Lord Jesus and ultimately traces back to God in heaven himself. So the only *exhortation* here really is in verse 6, and Titus is to *exhort* his fellow young men. Timothy and Titus are both relatively young men, and so they speak words of sound doctrine to those who are older than them.

The older men and older women, they don't say, look, even though I'm 26 and you're 76, I'm going to *exhort* and rebuke you with all authority. They speak the words of doctrine, and the authority of doctrine impresses the older men and older women. And the younger women, Titus isn't telling them how to live.

He is *exhorting* the older women to pass along these truths to the younger women. It's important to be sensitive to these roles because all of us are in them. And many times we can resolve tensions and disputes and differences of opinion by remembering not only who we are and why we are here, but where we are.

And it's possible that some of the vibration and some of the irritation and some of the discord that can exist in the fraternity, in the fellowship, may be due to us trying to exhort or to admonish when what we should do is communicate the sound words of doctrine and let them do the work. There are limits for the direction of the exercise of authority. And the advantage of being in a church that emphasizes teaching is you can concentrate on the Word of God and it's beneficial for everybody.

I don't have to say, you know, wag my finger and say, I'm the pastor and I say you better do this. We look to the Word of God. But the Word of God says we had better do this.

And I'm out of the picture, which is a good place for me to be. So even bondservants, the word exhort isn't really there. And I encourage you to scratch it out.

There are reasons why God uses words and doesn't do words. Bondservants to be obedient. And there's a parallel here.

The senior most people in this picture are the older men, right? And look at verse 2, that the older men be. And now here, if you looked at this in a symmetry fashion, not exactly a chiasm, but the symmetry is the bondservants get the same kind of indirect encouragement as the older men, whether they are at the bottom of the chain or the top of the chain, to be, bondservants to be obedient to their own masters. Now we saw obedient to their husbands up in verse 5, remember? Obedient and we said that is hupotasso.

And so you come down to the bondservants for them to be obedient to their masters. Very same word, hupotasso. Now does this mean that husband is to wife as master is to slave? No.

What it means is the desire to please God by functioning in our assigned location and do what we do as unto the Lord is the same. You will notice in both of these, the emphasis is not on husband authority or master authority. It is on the self-discipline and the worthiness and the character of the wife, the self-discipline and the worthiness and the character of the bondservant to voluntarily go above and beyond in the performance of duty under that authority.

The word of God is not setting up a system of oppression and of grinding someone down and well, you've got to do it no matter what. This is encouragement to be the kind of person that doesn't really even need that authority to speak or to oppress or to function. I know what my role is and I'm going to do it even without being told.

I don't need someone to come down on me with rebuke or with dissatisfaction or with a bunch of commands. When you tell me to do a thing, guess what? I already did it. I've done it with good cheer.

I've done it as unto the Lord, heartily, not as unto you. So these bondservants, obedient

to their own masters, notice their own masters, not any master in the same way that a woman is not subservient to any man. There is an assigned man and he's going to be held to the fire for the way he exercises that authority.

Masters who have slaves, they are going to be their feet held to the fire for whether or not they were fair, generous, merciful, compassionate, good masters or poor. Their own masters, to be well-pleasing in everything, well-pleasing. I am going to endeavor to please the master, not because I want him to be pleased, but because God will be pleased if I please my master.

Wives can endeavor to be wonderful, loving, and obedient wives, not because they're trying to garner curry favor from the husband, but because it's as unto the Lord. If the Lord is pleased when I please this guy, that's what I'm looking for. It's not an end in itself to please the husband or the master, the end is to please God, to please the Lord Jesus Christ, to conform to the image of His Son, who was obedient even unto death, showing all good faithfulness.

Showing all good faithfulness, faithful to the master, not undermining him, not undercutting him, not going behind his back, not slandering him, not telling tales out of school, getting with the other slaves, and gossiping, and judging and maligning. Have you ever seen these upstairs, downstairs, things where people live in the house? I can't remember the name of that show with all those people who lived in that house. Yeah, Downton Abbey.

There's a whole lower level in there. There's all kinds of shenanigans going on amongst the help for the people who own the place. That's not Christian.

That's not spiritual. Spiritually, you are showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. To adorn the doctrine of God.

This is a fascinating concept. Adorn is from the word *cosmeo*, *cosmos*. And you know from our English word *cosmetics* that there are two concepts combined here.

One is order. The *cosmos*, love not the *cosmos* or the things that are in the *cosmos*. This is the worldly order.

This is the way man sets things up. Not God's ordained structure. God's ordained authority.

God's ordained response to authority. The *cosmos*, this is the world at large. It's the false godless order.

And in the New Testament, we find the concept applied in terms of something that enhances the appearance of a thing. Enhances the appearance. And so it is used of the temple when it says that the temple was adorned.

It's used in Revelation talking about the new Jerusalem and the foundation stones that are decorated or adorned. And the city does not rest on the jewels that are put in place in the foundation stones. The appearance is enhanced.

It is decorated. So when you think about this, to adorn the doctrine of God means to enhance the look of something to outward eyes, to make it appealing. This is what cosmetics do for ladies.

I don't believe in cosmetics for men. I wouldn't to each his own, but I think makeup for men is certainly not my cup of tea. There might be occasions if you've got a really horrific scar and you want to cover it up.

Once in a while, when I was a teenager and I got a horrible blemish, even as an adult, you get a horrible blemish, I'd go over and get some of Patty's paint and try to tone the thing down so it's not so obvious. But in general, anytime anybody is applying cosmetics, it is to enhance rather than detract from the reception of a thing, the appearance of a thing. How does it look? How is it received? And to adorn the doctrine of God doesn't mean to just decorate it.

It means to enhance its favorable presentation. It looks better. You can get a Christmas tree and just stick a spruce or a pine in the corner of your living room.

But what do we do? We decorate it. We adorn it with ornaments. Why? It becomes more festive.

It is now a special tree. It's an attention-getting tree. Hopefully, this is positive attention.

It's not a Charlie Brown Christmas tree. It's a beautiful tree and the ornaments, the adornments, very often have sentimental meaning. You have dates on them.

They were gifts from the past. You remember when you got it or who gave it to you. It has a meaning because it represents someone's interest or someone's experience.

And instead of just a lot of glass bulbs, most of the things that you see on family Christmas trees, some of them are homemade by little children. And when they grow up to be adults, they come home for Christmas, they look and here's the thing they made when they were six. And it is evocative.

It is attractive. It enhances the reception and the enjoyment of a thing by its presence. That's what it means.

And notice, it's not the older men, the older women, or the wives, or even the husbands that do this. It's the bondservants, bondservants by their behavior because it is least expected of them. People inherently understand and realize that bondslaves are most likely to be oppressed, most likely to have a grievance, most likely to be unhappy with

their lot in life.

They're at the bottom end of pretty much everything. And by their obedience, their endeavor to be well-pleasing, they're not answering back. Aren't you impressed with politicians when people ask them leading, abusive, caustic questions? When people try to put them on the spot, try to make them angry, and they are impassive, they're ironic, they get back to the issue in their answer, they don't take the bait, they don't let someone throw them off stride or throw them off message, they have self-control.

They see the ploy. They see through the tactic that someone is trying to get them to act in a certain way or reveal some alleged character flaw, and they don't answer back. They give an answer that is well-pleasing, that makes sense, that is a soft answer that turns away wrath rather than grievous words that stir up anger.

And it impresses you. It doesn't matter what side you're on or who the person is, if they look past the cheap tactics of whoever is questioning them, and they're pleasant, they're focused, it's like drops of rain that just flow off the duck's back, and it is as though they didn't hear it. It has no traction.

It doesn't penetrate. You have to admire someone like that, that's got that kind of focus. And you think, whatever office this person is running for, if they can be that focused in the face of persecution and affliction and opposition and bitter accusation and so on, and they just hold their peace, they hold their tongue, you think, this person's got an exceptional character to do that under fire.

I like somebody who keeps their head when all others are losing theirs. And regardless of their position, you admire their character. This is what bond servants are called to.

Paul doesn't say, look, we sympathize with the fact that you're in a horrible situation, ripped away from your country in many cases and subject to the whims and slings and arrows of outrageous attitudes and so on. He says, look, I don't care what your circumstance is. Everybody knows what the life of a slave is.

Most of the people in Rome were slaves. Slaves outnumbered the free master population by thousands in the city of Rome and elsewhere in the Roman Empire. He says, look, you strive to be well-pleasing.

Don't answer back when you're wrongly accused, when you're denigrated, when your best efforts are criticized, you don't answer back. And you don't take revenge. You don't pilfer and say, this person's unjust and unfair to me.

I'm going to be unjust and unfair to them. You don't give as good as you get. Not pilfering.

Showing all good faithfulness. You keep your hands to yourself. You keep your thoughts

to yourself.

You rein in your mouth, rein in your opportunities to aggrandize when nobody's looking. To adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in everything. Adorning the doctrine of God in everything.

Women, that the word of God may not be blasphemed, in verse 5. That young men exercise sound speech that cannot be condemned, in verse 8. An opponent will be ashamed having nothing evil to say. Notice that these behaviors are motivated not only by a desire to please God, but with sensitivity and recognition that we are representative. Others are looking at us.

Is the word of God going to be blasphemed? Are others going to have evil things to say? Are we adorning the doctrine, the practice of our theology? It's daily outworking. Doctrine isn't something you pour into a cup in your soul and carry around. Doctrine is the application of what you have poured into your soul and carry around.

When we talk about the Monroe Doctrine, or you talk about combat and warfare, there are doctrines that pertain. Well, that's the practice. It's the application.

It's what you do in the situation. That's the doctrine. What do you do when a situation arises? Well, we've got a doctrine that covers that.

It's policy. You can often substitute the word policy anytime you see doctrine. Adorning the policies of God.

The policies that He calls us to practice and to follow. And they don't come under criticism. This is interesting because we know that there are people whose conscience are seared.

We know that the world doesn't understand. The carnal mind can't understand the things of the spirit. They're spiritually discerned.

And yet we are called to avoid criticism from the world. To the extent that it is possible, live peaceably with all men. Peace.

Not conflict. Not argumentation. Not opposition.

Not marching. Not rioting. Not abusing verbally one another and forming into camps and waving signs and burning things in effigy.

Believers are not to do that. I submit to you that it is difficult to think of a situation where Christians should band together and go into a public protest. I see no authorization for that in the Word of God.

We are to stay at home, work quietly with our hands, and not be criticized by the world

for our faith. Interesting. Not be criticized by the world.

Think about that. That brings us to verse 11. 4. All of this that precedes adorning the doctrine of God, and really that applies to everyone, to that entire checklist of practices, of characteristics, of what to be, of how to be a pure person for whom all things are pure.

This is the checklist. If we're failing in any of these areas, go to the power of God to fix it. Because, 4, verse 11, the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

That brings ought to be in italics because there is no verb for bring. This is the saving grace of God. That's what it is.

But the word saving, it's an adjective, but it has been displaced to emphasize its importance. We can't do this in English. I can't say the grace of God saving has appeared.

If I would do that, you'd say, wow, saving is getting some emphasis here because it's not in its usual place. You can get away with it in Greek. You can't get away with it in English.

But there is no word for brings. And one of the things to note here is that the idea here is not that grace is bringing salvation. It is saving grace.

Grace, by definition, is characterized by deliverance. When God's grace is present, when God's grace appears, this reminds you of Malachi when it says the sun arises with healing in his wings. The very fact that he is present and has wings, healing is a part of his identity, part of his presence.

When Jesus was present, healing took place. The woman came up and touched him from behind and there was healing because he embodies the idea of healing. The grace of God embodies deliverance.

It doesn't just bring it. There's some salvation over here. I'm going to put it in a bucket and haul it over here and dump it out on you.

God's grace is, by definition, delivering. That's what grace is. Grace greater than all our sin? Grace delivers us from our sin.

It may seem like a small thing, but the grace of God comes and it appears. The word for appearing is like epiphany. Malachi 4.2 that I just quoted, to you who fear my name, the son of righteousness shall appear, shall arise.

And in the Septuagint, you have this epiphany manifestation idea. In Luke 1.79, to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace, the light appears. There is an epiphany.

It dawns. We're going to see in chapter three, verse four, if you look later in the page, the kindness and the love of God, our savior toward men appeared. It is manifested.

And so you have grace appearing here. And as soon as you see God's grace, you see deliverance. There's really no such thing as grace apart from some form of deliverance.

That's what grace is. That's what grace does. Just like the Lord Jesus, when he is there, healing takes place.

Malchus in the arresting party, Peter cuts off his ear. Jesus just touches it and it's healed. So the grace of God has appeared.

And anytime you have this idea, Luke chapter two, verse 30, my eyes have seen your salvation. Remember, this is down at the temple. You have Anna and Simeon and Simeon says, now I can go to my grave in peace because my eyes have seen your soterios, your deliverance.

And what's he looking at? He's looking at baby Jesus. I have seen your salvation. To see him is to see salvation.

This is the grace of God incarnate. Chapter three, verse six of Luke, all flesh shall see the salvation of God. It's an old Testament quote.

Acts 28, 28. Let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles and they will hear it. The salvation of God has been sent, not just rescued from the lake of fire, but everything that our life entails.

Ephesians 6, 17, take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. It's a palpable thing, this deliverance. So God's grace makes its appearance and it's a saving appearance.

It rescues us from the greatest possible evil, which is separation from God due to sin. And it bestows on us the greatest possible blessing, which is relationship to God through Christ. We saw this in 1 Timothy 1, verse 15.

The worthy saying, another one of the worthy sayings. We've got one coming up here in Titus. Worthy of full acceptance.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Came into the world. Simeon saw it.

And so this grace that we see here, the grace of God, the saving grace of God has appeared to all men. This is indirectly referencing the Lord Jesus Christ himself and his salvific work on the cross, redemption, reconciliation, propitiation. And notice it has appeared to all men.

What does this mean, all men? It's appeared to all men. What about dead men that died before he came? What about people in Africa that have not yet gotten the gospel? What do you mean this grace has appeared to all men? What are the first three rules of biblical hermeneutics? What did we just have in the first part of this chapter? Old men, older women, younger women, younger men in that order, by the way, and then bond servants. This is people in all different levels of life, right? The saving grace of God has appeared whether you are old, whether you are young, whether you are a man, whether you are a woman, whether you are a master, whether you are a bond servant.

The same saving grace is both necessary and available. It has epiphanied. It has been manifested, made available.

You don't get an extra kind if you're a slave because you need more deliverance. You don't get a special kind because you're a woman and women need some special saving grace. It is the same grace of God wherever you find yourself.

All kinds of people in terms of their place in society, their place in circumstance, their place. So what does the Bible have to say about identity politics, gender politics, oppression politics, social justice based on where you are? Well, I have white privilege. I saw a lady talking the other day and she said, well, you know, I'm a woman and I'm white.

And so we white women, we need to use our white privilege to undo the injustices of the past and to support this person and vote this way. And we're just hopelessly afflicted with white privilege. And so all we can do, because we're hopelessly white and hopelessly privileged, all we can do at this point is just use it to lift up the oppression.

That is nowhere in the word of God. You know where salvation is? You know where deliverance is? Notice how Paul never says, masters, set your slaves free. Slaves, run away from your masters.

God's against slavery. It's evil. God's saving grace has been manifested to everyone.

It saves you right where you are. Don't worry about man or woman when it comes to salvation. Worry about it when you're looking at your place in God's structure and your opportunities to glorify him in response to authority and the exercise of authority.

He doesn't say exit the structure because you're in a place that is conducive to oppression. The grace, the salvation, the deliverance, the vindication, the power, the opportunity isn't in changing your place or destroying the structure or upending the structure. It appears to the people who are in the structure, wherever you are, it's the same delivering grace.

People are wasting their time. This is such a human affliction. We try to address symptoms.

We try to address outcomes. We try to paint over the rash instead of getting at the cause. Fix the people.

You don't have to change the system and you don't have to exit. You don't have to do anything other than respond to the manifest saving grace of God. There's well people and sick people.

There's affluent people and poor people that aren't specifically listed here. The same saving grace is available whatever our problem, whatever our difficulty, whatever our challenge. The same saving grace has appeared to everyone.

And what does it do? Teaching. Verse 12 here, the word teaching. This is not didaskalo.

You know what it is? It's from paiduo. Paiduo, paidos. This is training a child.

This is taking someone who is new to the concept and training them, exercising them, raising them up from a place of naivete and unfamiliarity. Paiduo is to train a novice. We're new at this.

To learn how to live right where we are and glorify God and manifest His power, His love, His patience. All of the things in the checklist earlier in this context, the saving grace of God paiduos us, trains us, takes us from a place of inexperience to experience, of ignorance to cognizance. It's like the young man we saw in our Proverbs study.

Young man who's not wise to the ways of the world to gain wisdom right where we are. We're saved in place. Don't have to move.

It's like the doctors that used to come to your house. Instead of you going to the hospital, you stay right where you are. The saving grace comes right where we are and trains us to do what? Teaches us that we deny ungodliness.

Remember that usabea that was godliness? This is asabea, lack of orientation to our spiritual self, our spiritual identity. Our identity is not gender. It's not race.

It's not ethnicity. It's not economic. It's not social.

It is spiritual. And we deny spiritual insensitivity, spiritual ignorance, forgetting God, forgetting who we are and why we're here and how we were saved, forgetting the Lord Jesus in whom we have righteousness. He has been made to us righteousness and peace and sanctification.

All of the sevenfold things that you see in Ephesians chapter one. You've got to remember those things. Who am I? It's not about the boss.

It's not about the policy. It's not about the hardships. It's not about the overtime.

It's not about the affliction. It's not about the suffering. It's not about the insensitivity.

It's not about the failure somebody had. What is it? It's godliness. I am here for a reason.

And whatever happens to me, whatever pressure God puts on me, when you squeeze a lemon, you get bitter lemon juice. Squeeze an orange, you get orange juice. Florida orange juice.

Sweet. Tasty. Beneficial.

Vitamin C. When we're squeezed, what comes out? We're supposed to deny ungodliness and worldly desires. If any unbeliever can do it, it is probably not the Christian life in evidence. Any unbeliever can complain.

Any unbeliever can gossip. Any other unbeliever can shift bitter, acrimonious criticism onto somebody else. Denying ungodliness.

Denying worldly, interestingly, very same word, cosmos, cosmo, cosmic desires. So there's nothing wrong with the cosmos per se, but is it a cosmos that adorns the doctrine of God, or is it a cosmos that drives us into epithumia, which are these lusts, lusts of the flesh. When lust has conceived, it brings forth sin.

Sin, when it is finished, brings forth death. Denying these things. Notice you first have to turn away.

Same thing you have in Hebrews. Therefore, not laying again the foundation of change of mind away from dead works and faith toward God. You have to first turn away before you can embrace and turn toward something else.

Hebrews 6, 1 and following. Deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. To deny it, what do we first have to do? Identify it, figure out what it is, and consciously reject it.

I deny this. I turn away from it. This is our, oh my.

This is Peter denying the Lord. I don't know him. I've never heard of him.

What are you talking about? Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should turn toward something else. Live soberly, soberly. Haven't we seen sobriety a couple of times in our context here? We should live soberly.

This is our friend Sophranos. Lots of words for obedience. Just going to get to him this time.

We'll get to him next time. But there is obedience coming up here. Soberly, righteously, godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope, glorious appearing of God's savior, gave himself for us that he might redeem us from every lawless deed.

And how do we get that purity? The Lord Jesus will purify for himself a special people, zealous of good works. Notice the purification precedes the zeal for good works. Our purification makes it possible for us to have a desire to do good, not a desire that comes from the world.

Such a powerful passage here. But it is the natural outgrowth of the checklist. What we become in Christ fulfills this potential to be a special people, a unique people.

Boy, that word unique is really something. We'll see it this coming Sunday when we continue our study. But we'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the opportunity to be special people, dedicated to and a special possession of your son, our savior, the Lord Jesus. We pray that as we reflect on these truths, the Holy Spirit will help us to see how we can bring them into active influence in our lives, how we can root out that which impedes our progress, slows us down, prevents us from developing and manifesting and exemplifying these characteristics so that we can truly be the presence of the Lord Jesus in His absence in this world to shine the light of your glory, to draw others to you through the Lord Jesus as we are stewards of the time that remains to us. May we be good stewards, redeeming the time, even though the days are evil.

We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.