

Living That Fits Healthy Doctrine, Part 2

Titus 2:6-10

July 28th, 2019

Intro –

Sometimes we need many reasons to do the right thing. I was reminded of that recently by a series of pictures I saw online.

Jon Acuff photos – people destroying sand dunes on Tybee Island, a barrier island off of Georgia near Savannah. They were climbing on them to take pictures but they were fragile ecosystems due to the hurricanes that have come through.

You would hope people would see the damage, recognize that their own actions could contribute to the harm, and stay off by their own initiative. But they did not.

A sign was posted a sign warning people to keep out with a maximum fine of \$1,000.

When that didn't work they gave them another reason to keep out: venomous snake nesting area.

Titus 2 is loaded with instruction for life, broken down into commands for older men, older women, younger women, and younger men.

But it also gives us several reasons why we should live this way.

The first is the big idea for the whole section – our lives should fit sound doctrine

But he also explains in v 5 that it honors God's word when we show that we trust God and His word enough to live as He says we should live, but it dishonors the Word when we refuse to.

The second half of our passage will give us two more reasons.

1. Big idea: Our lives should ***fit*** sound doctrine. (2:1)
 - a. The model of older men (2:2)
 - b. The lifestyle of older women (2:3)
 - c. The characteristics of younger women (2:4-5)
 - d. Three Takeaways
 - i. A healthy church body should have a wide range of ages.
 - ii. A healthy church body should have interaction between different ages.
 - iii. Your lifestyle matters but it can't save you. Only Jesus can.
2. The urgent need for young men: ***be sensible*** (2:6)
 - a. Six qualities for older men, four for older women, seven for younger women, but for young men only one quality is emphasized.
 - b. Sensible refers to self-mastery, self-control, doing what makes sense.
 - c. Young men have a particular need to be sensible. To live wisely and in self-control.
 - i. Don't just think of teenagers. This is referring to guys through their 30's and 40's as well.
 - ii. There is a tendency for young men to live for present fulfillment instead of looking at the big picture of life and eternity.

iii. Employment

1. Making plans for the future – what will provide for me and my family?
2. Top answers to the questions, what do you want to be when you grow up?
 - a. Common answer have long included athlete, astronaut, fireman, teacher, doctor
 - b. In some surveys the top answer is now “youtuber”
 - c. Shouldn’t be too surprised – it’s what they see that influences them. Nor should we roll our eyes too hard, the odds of making a living as a youtuber are probably similar to the odds of playing in the NBA or being an astronaut.
3. But a young man who is sensible (and remember this was urged of young women and older men as well) will make plans for his future and work hard even if he pursues a parallel path for something like sports or entertainment.

iv. Finances

1. **Proverbs 24:27** Prepare your work outside And make it ready for yourself in the field; Afterwards, then, build your house.
 - a. In an agricultural economy, the counsel was take care of your means of providing for yourself before you start spending the money on a house.
2. Should I take out a \$500/mo car payment when I only make \$800/mo? Is it wise to get \$45,000 in student loans when my future job will only pay \$25,000/year?

v. Sexual purity

1. **Proverbs 6:32** The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; He who would destroy himself does it.
2. Other reasons are given in scripture but this verse highlights that the one who commits adultery lacks sense.

vi. Spiritual life

1. Plant deep roots spiritually now. Set a habit of church attendance that doesn’t depend on a wife who will bring you.

d. A suggested resource: *Disciples of a Godly Man* by Kent Hughes

- i. Relationship – purity, marriage, fatherhood, friendship
- ii. Soul – mind, devotion, prayer, worship
- iii. Character – integrity, speech, work
- iv. Ministry – church, leadership, giving, witness

3. The command for Titus: be an ***example*** (2:7-8)

- a. Titus is himself a young man so Paul rolls right into urging Titus to not just teach this but be a model, an example.
 - i. The word for example is used literally of a mark or impression left by an instrument like a hammer or tool.
 - ii. Reminder for all those who lead, whether in the church, in their homes, in a small group study, at work, or in government that personal example must precede their effective teaching.

- iii. Parents, you know this but your example will teach much more than your words.
- b. Good deeds
 - i. **Titus 3:1** Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,
 - ii. **Titus 3:8** This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men.
 - iii. **Titus 3:14** Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.
 - iv. Titus is to be an example of these good deeds
- c. Purity in doctrine
 - i. Truthfulness in what he taught; healthy, accurate, sound teaching
 - ii. Even here see the continued emphasis on good deeds and pure teaching
 - iii. Early in the Titus series I interacted with a friend who expressed understandable concern that people would take the emphasis on good deeds in Titus and allow that to confirm their suspicion that people who take theology seriously are the real danger. They might say, “we just need to love people and do good things! We shouldn’t be sticklers about theology!”
 - iv. And yet the book of Titus provides a correction against that as well. We are to value “purity in doctrine.” That takes study and thought and interaction. That requires us to have some knowledge of church history to see how these issues have been worked through over time. Sure, we need to distinguish between primary and secondary issues. But we should still strive for accuracy in secondary issues.
- d. Dignified
 - i. Serious life that is fixed on God and honors whatever honors Him. Distinguish between that which is important and that which is trivial – be serious about serious things and humorous about things that you can joke about.
- e. Sound in speech which is beyond reproach
 - i. Probably not repeating himself about purity in doctrine
 - ii. This is probably referring just to everyday conversation, everyday speech
 - iii. It is to be beyond reproach – a term we saw in chapter 1:6 as the overall category for elders.
 - 1. Pictures a courtroom where the judge can find no basis for the accusation against the person accused
 - iv. Known as the Jesus guy but also tell off color jokes, are quick to complain at work, harsh when confronted
- f. Our behavior should ***silence*** our critics.
 - i. **1 Peter 2:12, 15** Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation. . . . ¹⁵ For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.

- ii. This applies not just to Titus or young men, but each of the groups listed above.
4. The unique opportunities for a Christian worker (2:9-10)
- a. Bondslaves were workers in a form of slavery that varied throughout the Roman empire.
 - i. In some places they were well treated, relatively free and independent
 - ii. In other places they were harshly treated and abused, more similar to what the system of slavery in America was like.
 - iii. 85-90% of the population of the Roman empire may have been slaves during the 1st century.
 - iv. While not approving of slavery (specific texts condemn the practice of kidnapping for slavery, affirm the dignity of all image bearers), the Bible speaks into these real situations of life and paved the way for the eventual abolition of slavery.
 - v. Slaves were encouraged to acquire their freedom when possible
 - 1. **1 Corinthians 7:20-22** Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called. ²¹ Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that. ²² For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.
 - vi. A Christian slave in the first century could read about Jesus' care for the often overlooked and crushed. He could lean on God's love for justice and pray for just in his own situation. And he could also find practical instruction for how to live underneath slave in such a way that the gospel is highlighted even if his own awful circumstances didn't change.
 - vii. For further reading, *Confronting Christianity: 12 Hard Questions for the world's Largest Religion* by Rebecca McLaughlin has a great chapter on Christianity and slavery.
 - b. Some of the principles apply to workers in a free system as well, even though it wasn't parallel. Most of the things that should characterize a bondslaves attitude and conduct in Titus 2 should characterize your conduct at work.
 - c. Subject to their masters in everything
 - i. Unless commanded to sin or violate your conscience, we should be known as workers who support their boss's leadership.
 - ii. Of course the main difference, and this is a glaring difference, between a worker today and a bondslave, is you can leave if the environment is difficult, or your boss is cruel.
 - iii. But while you are there, be known as an employee that is teachable, receives instructions, and follows directives.
 - d. Being well-pleasing rather than argumentative
 - i. Not known as the employee that always talks back, always gives push back
 - e. Not pilfering – we would usually call it embezzling, stealing from your employer
 - i. Showing all good faith – the opposite of pilfering, showing that you are a person that can be trusted.
 - f. Our behavior should adorn the gospel.
 - i. The term was used of setting jewels in a crown or on a ring in such a way that they display their beauty.

- ii. When a guy picks out a diamond for an engagement ring, he looks at the four C's – cut, color, carat, clarity.
 - 1. A certain cut (square, princess), usually a pure white color, largest carat as the budget allows, and a brilliant clearness to the stone.
 - 2. The diamond is the important part. The setting just displays it, draws attention to it.
- iii. The gospel is the jewel. We don't add anything to the jewel by our lives.
- iv. But our lives can be a setting in which the jewel shines brightly as we are transformed even in adverse circumstances.
- v. A church characterized by countercultural lives in all the ways described in Titus 2 will display the glory of the gospel in all the individual lives.
 - 1. Older men will be continuing to grow in wisdom and love
 - 2. Older women will be using their time to invest in younger women rather than tear down others
 - 3. Younger women who are married with kids will be cultivating homes that display gospel-centered compassion.
 - 4. Younger men will be sensible, pushing back against a cultural emphasis on maximizing their freedom or living for the moment without considering the long term.
- vi. Zack Eswine has observed that we, as a culture and within the church, we want to do large things that are famous and fast. Yet what truly matters is often small, slow, and overlooked.
 - 1. That would be true of cultivating lives like this that characterize a church.
 - a. Easier to do a big program that gets lots of attention, like VBS. And it's a wonderful program, something that God can use and often does use.
 - b. But more significant over time will be our small lives, transformed day by day by the gospel, having long term impact on those around us.

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Part 2
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