

Organizing the Mission "Order in the Home" Titus 2:1-10

Introduction

- [Slide #1] In the time remaining today we're going round out our discussion of Titus 2 by looking at [verses 1-10](#). Please open your bibles to Titus chapter 2. Remember from last week the subject of chapter 2 is sound doctrine. Like bookends to the chapter [Titus 2:1](#). *You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.* And [Titus 2:15](#). *These, then, are the things you should teach.* The verses in the middle describe the kind of sound doctrine Titus is to teach. The starting point, the primary doctrine to be taught is grace, spelled out in [verses 11-15](#). And the application of that grace is fleshed out in the commands of [verses 1-10](#).
- Now in order for the commands of 1-10 to make sense I need you to imagine a Christianity that was much more invasive than what we know of now. Here's what I mean. The Christianity you and I primarily know of now has been separated, dichotomized, into two realms, the public and the private. In other words, how we are in private, how we act often times is starkly different than the façade we put on for people in public. And so we mutter curses under our breath at home, gossip about the neighbors at the kitchen table, lose our temper and exasperate our children and then put on nice clothes and show up on a Sunday morning and pretend we've got everything all together. Reality at home in private. Sunday morning Christian Disneyland. And as [Kipling](#) put it, "and never the twain shall meet."
- How we've been able to get away with this for so long I'm still trying to figure out. Part of it is certainly a carryover our culture; a culture that says Bill Clinton or Tiger Woods or Pete Rose can be and do whatever they want in private and it doesn't really matter or affect what they do, who they are in public. That's part of it.
- But in the first century separating the public sphere, the public me and the private sphere, the private me was impossible. In the first century separating public Christianity and the private Christianity was impossible. The church didn't meet in public. It met in homes. The life of the church day in day out week in week out happened in the most intimate and private of settings, the home. You can't hide who you are all the time in that small and intimate setting. And for Christianity, when people are being transformed by Christ, that's a good thing.
- Moreover, having unbelievers in the homes of believers was a regular occurrence. The front doors of the church were the doors of people's homes. Believers and unbelievers regularly rubbed shoulders in that intimate

private setting. They were able to see how believing spouses talked to each other and how they disciplined their kids and on and on and on. In other words, you couldn't be one thing at home and then put on a veneer and pretend you were something else when you went to church in public. That just didn't happen.

- Just imagine for a second if your unbelieving neighbor could see the most intimate details of your life. The way you live, the way you talk to your spouse, how you spend your money, what you watch on TV, the various ways you spend the bulk of your time. What if the church met in your home? What kind of impression of Christ would people get from that experience?
- Grace is meant to save us. Yes. It's meant to bring us together publicly to sing and to praise God. Yes. But grace is also meant to invade our lives to deliver us from ourselves. Grace is supposed to change us from the inside out beginning with the most private and intimate then spilling over into the public.
- The reason Paul instructs Titus to teach various groups how to live is because the church's witness depended on it. If grace saved but never truly transformed why would an unbelieving world buy into something that makes them no different in the here and now? The church's credibility in the eyes of the skeptic, the agnostic, the atheist depended on the doctrine of grace being real at home, real in the family. If my neighbor watches my life change because of the God's grace they are much more likely to believe. The witness of the church depended upon grace permeating the home. And the same holds true for us now. [Slide #2]

Big Idea

- **If Christianity is going to be credible to the unbeliever they need to see the application of grace in the most private realms of your life**
- Proximity to unbelieving people matters; which is part of the whole reason for us as a church to get smaller through the LifeGroups. But that's hard. I'm speaking personally now. Every single one of the people who are a part of our LifeGroup are able to see how our family struggles and fails just like every other family. But you know what? That's okay. That's okay as long as they can also see God's transforming grace at work at the same time.
- Listen to what [John Stott](#) says. "Close contact with people involves an uncomfortable exposure of ourselves to them. It is much easier, in both fellowship and witness, to keep our distance. We are more likely to win the admiration of other people if we do. It is only at close quarters that idols are seen to have feet of clay. Are we willing to let people come close enough to us to find out what we really are like and to know us as we really are? True witness, born of friendship, requires a great degree of holiness in us as well as love. The nearer we get to people the harder it is to speak for Christ. Is not

this the reason why the hardest people of all to whom to witness are members of our own family? They know us too well.”¹ **If Christianity is going to be credible to the unbeliever they need to see the application of grace in the most private realms of your life.** That's what's behind Titus 2.

- Look at **verses 1-10**. Verses 1-10 describe...

Organizational Sentence

- **The application of grace to four different groups**
- All of the commands relating to these various groups flow out of the two main lessons of grace from last week. From last week, verses 11-15, the school of grace teaches us to say 'no' to ungodliness and worldly passions. And grace teaches us to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.² **Verses 1-10** are the application of that grace to the most private realms of life.
- If you've counted the different groups you'll already realize five, not four groups are listed in this passage. This morning we're going to focus on the first four groups listed. The last, instructions to slaves, while incredibly important in Paul's day, is not wholly applicable to us right now so we'll skip those verses.
- In Paul's day there were some 50 million slaves in the Roman Empire. How believers treated and interacted with those slaves and how those slaves interacted with their masters, usually in the realm of the home, had a powerful witness for Christ. Let me just add, if in any way, you're troubled by the fact that the New Testament seems to condone slavery, come talk to me after the service. Just so you know, the slavery in the New Testament was fundamentally different than the race-based slavery we're familiar with in American History. You can't really equate the two.
- Obviously the list here of different groups here is not an exhaustive list. Paul doesn't mention singles. Nowhere are married men mentioned. Nowhere are children mentioned. I have to believe the reason Paul singles these various groups out is because they, in particular, were the ones uniquely affected, most affected by the false teaching described in **chapter 1:10-ff**. The very fact that Paul breaks down the congregation into different parts is an implicit recognition that there are different temptations to various groups within the church.³

Transition

¹ John Stott, *Authentic Christianity*, edited by Timothy Dudley-Smith, IVP, p. 324.

² John Stott, *Guard the Truth*, p. 193.

³ D.A. Carson, Message on Titus 2:1-3-11, Irish Preachers Conference, 2006.

Look at the text. First, older women and men; similar life circumstances means a similar application of grace for these two groups. For those older in the church the overflow of grace should result in **a good spiritual example for younger believers.**

Main Points

- **Verses 1-4a.** *You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. 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 train the younger women*
- Paul instructs Titus to teach the older men and women temperance, not to be addicted to much wine. Self-control. Reverent, sound in faith, in love and in endurance. In fact, older believers should be modeling these things. Older believing men and women should be dignified and mature, respected and looked up to, *worthy of respect*, as Titus put it. Reverent in the way they live. Not perfected in grace but far enough along in Christlikeness to light the path for the greenhorns in the community.
- In other words, by the time you're a graybeard or a matriarch in the church you are to be setting the pace for what it means to follow Christ; the effects of grace should be self-evident, visible for all to see. If you've been in Christ for 20 years, 25, 30 years you're supposed to be able to point to yourself and say to the younger generation, "look at me, look at how God's grace has changed me." In other words, the simple fact of time, the overflow of God's grace working on you over a period of years should result in **a life that is a spiritual example for younger believers.**
- But that often isn't the case, is it? Which is why Paul reminds Titus to instruct the older men and women on certain things. As one who is older himself **Don Carson** points out, "sometimes as you grow older the civilized veneer you have imposed on yourself begins to decay. Things you never would have said, things you never would have done 20 years ago you say and do because you have no emotional reserve left. And you let it all hang out. 'I'm too old to put up with this rubbish.'"⁴ If you're over 60 and there isn't an appreciable difference in your life because of grace, the negative effect that has upon the whole church is staggeringly awful.
- Speaking of older believing men **John Calvin** said this. "There is nothing more disgraceful than for an old man to indulge in youthful lusts and through continuing to do this, increase the shamelessness of the young."⁵ Older men and women, you are to be an example for the younger believers. If Christianity isn't credible among you it will never gain traction among the

⁴ D.A. Carson, Message on Titus 2:1-3-11, Irish Preachers Conference, 2006.

⁵ Calvin, p. 192.

young. They desperately need to see the cumulative effects of grace on a life.

- Let me put it like this. If you as an older believer dislike the behavior of those young whippersnappers you bear some responsibility. You by your example either set the bar for what it means to follow Christ or through your lack of self-discipline, too much television, frittering away of your time, misplaced priorities, and lack of self-control, you multiply the shame of the young by giving them an excuse. “Look at that crotchety old Bob Christian. He’s been a Christian forever and still does this and talks that way. It must be okay.”
- As an older person you want respect in the church. Let me ask you this. Are you worthy of respect?
- By the time you are 60, 65, 70 you’re not only to be exemplars of God’s grace you should be teaching the younger generations; giving them advice and encouragement by word and example.⁶ Older women are to teach the younger women, [verse 4](#), to love their families. As an older believer himself, Titus, [verse 7](#), is to set an example and teach the younger men. God help the 65 year old believer who doesn’t know what justification is and can’t help initiate the younger generation. Or sanctification. Or any of the basic doctrines of the faith. God help the 70 year old believer who is as unloving and uncaring as the day he or she was saved. May we never have to say “Lord God save us from the sins of old men and women.” Older men and women, be examples, we’ll listen.

Transition

Look at [verse 4](#). Paul goes into some detail as to what older women are to teach the younger, married women in particular. [Slide #4] **Young married women are to love their families!**

- Paul instructs the young married women to be ‘home lovers.’ That’s a pretty important thing when the church met in homes. The older women in the church are to pass their knowhow onto the next generation. For us, that should be taking place in the LifeGroups as the older women watch and observe the younger women and then pass on nuggets of wisdom and truth , encouraging those young families.
- In Paul’s day a woman loving her family was a revolutionary thing. A wife loving her family was not on the horizon of most pagan or even Jewish families in Paul’s day.
- If you’re a younger married woman and you’re not convinced of the importance of loving your family just watch your friends interact with their kids at the playground. I’ve seen some of the most atrocious, unacceptable

⁶ Reinecker, p. 654.

behavior toward kids in that arena. Listen to how your friends speak of home and family next time you have a craft night. The simple act of loving your family is a powerful witness.

- Paul is not opposing a wife's pursuit of a profession, that's not what he's saying here. Look at [verse 5](#). He's opposing the habit or the tendency of young married women to be idle, insubordinate to their husbands, flitting from house to house instead of the hard work of loving your family and making a home.⁷ That takes grace. By God's grace you love your family and your unbelieving friends will begin to take note of what you believe about God. It will be a witness. If your girlfriends can see that Christianity makes people better, makes them better mothers and wives, rather than worse you will steer them toward God. That's what Paul says in [verse 5](#). Young women, love your families and your friends will be unable to malign the word of God.

Transition

Look at [verse 6](#). Young men. Paul's instruction to Titus about young men is singular. One thing. [[Slide #5](#)] **Young men—be self-controlled!** Master your desires.

- Life as a young man can be summed up in one word, desire. Desire for importance. Desire for a woman—to be loved. Desire for a career—to make a name for one's self. Desire for power and influence. If you're a young man in Christ the grace of God is meant to temper those desires and channel them in the right directions.
- Too often life as a young man is derailed by a lack of self-control. Most of the young men you know, most of your friends have no means to master their desires. They are slaves to their desires, tossed to and fro by whatever they see. It's there and they consume, they lust, they crave, they covet. And that inability to control those desires leads to destructive behavior.
- As a young man of God in Christ, by God's grace, if you master your desires, you show some element of self-control your friends will notice. They will be drawn to Christ.
- If you are here today and you're in a battle for your will, and there's a 99% chance that's the case, I urge you throw yourself upon God's grace. *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.*
- If you long for self-control to fight that addiction the school of grace is your answer. And older men, having been there and done that, as the senior

⁷ Stott, p. 189.

class in the school of grace, we need your help. We need to see your integrity, [verse 7](#). Your seriousness and soundness of speech. We need you to teach us and show us as younger men how the grace of God steels our will to do what is right and good and pleasing.

- Do you see what Paul is doing in this passage as he instructs Titus? With so much of the church's witness dependent upon home life he instructs Titus to teach how God's grace affects the most private of areas of our lives. Who you are at home cannot be separated from how we present ourselves publicly, together, here—as hard as we try. A Christianity that is credible in the basement, at the kitchen table, in the bedroom, in the backyard will be credible and believable and desirable in public.

Conclusion

- Acetylene + silver
- Picric acid + lead
- Ethanol + calcium hypochlorite
- Silver oxide + ammonia + ethanol
- The combination of any of those things, explosive.
- All of what we're doing with LifeGroups is for a purpose. We are trying to make our witness dependent upon unbelievers seeing and observing us in the place we can't easily hide, the home. Much of what we're trying to do as a church simply has to do with proximity. If we are able to narrow the distance between our lives, lives being changed by grace, and the lives of unbelievers, so that people can see upfront and personal the application of that grace, the combination of those two is explosive in a good sense.
- Grace really is everything. It is the defining thing that makes us, not perfect, but Christian. People need to see how grace is changing you. I need to hear how grace is changing you—it spurs me on. May our private lives continue to be ordered and shaped and defined by the grace of God.