



HG184 *Paul's Letter To Titus*
Doctrine And Duty In The Home

Titus 2:1-15

Home Group Study Notes

26 May 2019 - Pauline Woolnough



PLEASE COMPLETE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN
ON THIS WORKSHEET IN PREPARATION
BEFORE THE MEETING!

*Don't forget to take your Bible to Home Group
with you, along with any previous notes and other
resources which might be helpful for your discussions.*



Welcome (10 mins)
Ice Breaker

Do you think we naturally become more "*temperate, self-controlled and reverent in the way we live*" as we grow older?



Looking Upwards (10 mins)
Worship

In your time of worship, you may want to sing Songs of Praise; listen to a Worship CD, as well as using Meditations; Bible Readings; Prayers ...



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Home Group Sermon

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Introduction

In his letter to Titus Paul instructs him to teach the things that are consistent with right teaching that stays true to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Word of God. We are to be sound in doctrine, confident in what it is we believe and it should be reflected in how we live our lives. The gospel should lead to right living and right relationships, and if we are to avoid being swayed by the powerful and persuasive teaching of false teachers that exist in every generation, or won over by the culture around us, and be able to cope with those events that happen in all our lives that may cause us to question and waiver in our faith, then we must be grounded in biblical truths.

The Older Men

Paul addresses the four major groups in the church in terms of gender and age saying that the gospel should result in a new kind of household where men and women are models of integrity and self-control and he instructs how the various age groups in the church should relate to each other. When addressing the older men who are to model the Christian faith and be examples to the younger men he says they are to be *“temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance.”* v2. Temperate referring to restraint in the use of alcohol and being free from all forms of excesses through the control of the Holy Spirit, he says similar in *Eph 5* when writing to the Ephesians.

The older man's life is to be worthy of respect, honourable and self controlled - sound in judgement and wise in his decision making. He is to avoid anything that is inappropriate, questionable or out of bounds for a follower of Christ. Paul advises the older man to stay above reproach and to be master of his behaviour, his physical passions and in control of what he says so that Christ is honoured and not dishonoured. His faith should be rooted in his daily walk with God and immersed in the scriptures, he should be known for his love of God and fellow believers and have a heart for the lost.

The Older Women

Next Paul teaches on the older women and the message is much the same as for the older men. She is to live in a manner that is honouring to God and that befits a godly person, being mindful of her tongue, never picking up gossip and passing it on. She should speak the truth and in love. Like the older man she needs to be cautious of taking too much alcohol and careful that it does not dominate her behaviour and speech, and she is to teach and mentor the younger women.

The Younger Women

The advice for the younger women is a bit trickier in 21st century Britain, as Paul says that they should *“love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands.”* There surely can't be a problem with loving their husbands and children, being self controlled, pure and kind.... but being told to *“be busy at home”* and *“subject to their husbands,”* - I'm not sure how some of that advice would go down today and it may spark some lively conversations in our home groups.

Today women prove themselves to be equal to men in all areas of life and our lives are a far cry from the time of our mothers and grandmothers day where, an extract from a 1950s Home Economics article advised women how to look after their husbands by saying: “*Plan ahead, even the night before, to have a delicious meal on time. This is a way of letting him know that you have been thinking about him and are concerned about his needs,*” they should “*take 15 minutes to rest so they would be 'refreshed' when their husbands arrived home, touch up your make up, put a ribbon in your hair and be fresh looking. His boring day may need a lift. Speak in a low, soft, soothing and pleasant voice. Allow him to relax - unwind,*” the advice reads. Absolute don'ts included greeting men with “*problems or complaints*” they should “*let him talk first regardless of whether they had things to say.*”(Hmmm!!)

In the west women have come a long way in the last 60-70 years and the kind of lives most women lead these days means that statistically they carry out the majority of tasks around the home, they hold down a job and generally speaking they are the major child carer in the home. Not many women have the luxury of simply being “*busy at home,*” but we can't pick and choose what scriptures we like and which ones we don't, we cant simply say we don't agree with some teaching.

This is what was going on in Crete at the time and the reason Paul wrote to Titus to address the false teaching, but it would be easy to take this instruction out of its historical context and create an artificial hierarchy in a marriage, putting one partner completely in charge of the other. We need to remember that this was written at a time when women were not typically educated and when husbands legally had complete control over their wives. A Christian home in a pagan culture was a radically new thing and romantic love did not exist in marriages at the time. Paul urges the older women to train the younger women to love their husbands just as we are all commanded to love with agape love which is not always a feeling but an action. Paul also wrote to the Ephesian church in 5.21 saying- “*Be subject to **one another** out of reverence for Christ,* and v31. “*As the scriptures say, “A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are **united into one.** This is a great mystery, but an illustration of the way Christ and the Church are one.”*”

The Ephesians 5 passage is the most radical statement of equality and mutual submission in marriage that Paul could make in his first century context, but here in his letter to Titus he may have been dealing with certain problems that existed in Crete and we could assume that Titus would elaborate and expand on the brief instructions given here with the details found in other New Testament passages. Nowhere are husbands told to demand submission. Rather he is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. In the New Testament, headship is not a dictatorship or about being the boss, it's about loving leadership that takes on the character of being a servant and one that assumes responsibility for the relationship. (Luke 22:22-27).

God is not sexist, we only have to look at the ministry of Jesus and the way he interacted with women and included them in his inner circle. We are, male and female, both made in the image of God and we are to celebrate our differences not grade them in order of importance.

The Younger Men

Paul addresses the fourth group, the younger men and implies that their role models for how to live are seen in Titus himself and the older men. Paul knows that a young man needs good guidance and he is to be encouraged to be sensible and self controlled in all he does, wise in following sound teaching and he must not be fooled by false doctrine.

Discipleship

We at Emmanuel are a congregation of all different age groups we are very fortunate to regularly welcome new members. Messy church services attract numbers in excess of 70. Many of the large growing churches today have a large proportion of young people and this is reflected in their style of service, worship and outreach methods. Other churches sadly find it hard to grow and appeal to people in their community and they often tend to be made up of older or elderly members.

The challenge that faces a growing church is to maintain the different age groups and although it is natural for us to mix with those of a similar age because we have more in common with them, we need to be able to mix comfortably across the generations and to value what each has to offer in terms of youthful energy and enthusiasm and the wisdom that, (*hopefully*), comes with age. Paul is showing the worth of the older man or woman to those younger and although he does not use the word, what he is instructing Titus on here is discipleship. Disciples are made when maturing believers befriend and mentor another person and this is what Paul is encouraging the older more mature believer to do, to disciple the young.

Slavery

Few things reveal the extent of humankind depravity like slavery, treating those made in the image of God like a commodity and has been in existence from almost the beginning of time, continuing to the present day. Unfortunately Christianity did not see an immediate end to slavery and it continues its reign of terror in many parts of the world today, mainly where the gospel of Jesus Christ has not yet taken hold, but it is true to say that Christians, men like William Wilberforce, John Wesley, Granville Sharp have led the way in bringing about its abolition. So how can we apply this teaching of Paul to us living in the free world where the idea of slavery being the norm is unthinkable to us? The gospel message should lead to godliness in the believers life and become a testimony to the unbelieving world, it should also have an effect on the employee/employer relationship.

Wherever we serve in a position under someone of authority there is an opportunity for evangelism. Millions of pounds are lost to businesses every year due to employee theft and time wasting but the Christian in the workplace is to be trustworthy and faithful at all times. The gospel's transformation power is to be seen in the home, in the community, but also in the workplace.

The Amazing Grace of God

Having given Titus practical instruction on how to live Paul moves now to doctrinal foundation and we see that God's commands are rooted in His Grace and what he demands of us is not only possible, but should be wholly desirous because of what he has done for us. He gives us the reason why we should follow these instructions when he links the chapter together with the little word "*For,*" in *v11* telling us that the incentive and power to live a Christian life pleasing to God comes from two directions. It comes from looking back and looking forward. We can look back with gratitude to the Grace of God that appeared in our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ "*bringing salvation to all people*", *v11*, dying for us and reconciling us to the Father, and can we look forward to the blessed hope we have of the "*glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ*" *v13*, when he returns.

The Grace of God is his unmerited favour that showed goodness, kindness and compassion towards us when we were undeserving sinners and *v14* describes just how that grace appeared and why — "*[Christ] gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people of his own who are eager to do good deeds.*" The effect of, and our response to the Grace of God is described in *v12*,- "*it teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.*" *V14* gives us the aim of God's Grace, and *v12* gives the effect of it and our response as it appeared in the first coming of Jesus Christ. And then we are reminded of our great and glorious hope in *v13*, "*while we wait for the blessed hope -the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.*" What God's Grace has begun in our lives through the first coming of Christ he will complete through His Glorious Second Coming.

Look for His Coming

In the films Star Trek the Next Generation there is always a point in the film when Captain John Picard turns to his number one officer Riker and he says "*Make it so Number One.*" He tells his first officer to execute an order, often sending the Enterprise into the unknown on warp speed and into combat with the enemy.

It's a great line and if we use our imagination we can hear it echoing another instruction given by the Father to *His Number One*, his faithful Son Jesus Christ, when he sent him into a hopeless and dark foreign land to destroy the evil enemy that had enslaved humanity. *"Make it so Number One."* That was the command, and the plan was to eliminate rebellion and corruption, to set us free and to bring us home to the Father. In a surprise attack he dealt a deadly blow wounding the enemy, taking back his Kingdom and providing an escape route for his people to pass through into the Promised Land. Over the years though the enemy has recovered and recruited more and more followers who have infiltrated their way into believers lives and even into the King's sacred place,

His Church, but like a coiled spring the Son, the Prince of Peace sits waiting for the command to set forth again, this time to finish what was started when he hears the Father, the King say again, *"Make it so Number 1,"* and when that command comes, it could be today, next week or hundreds of years in the future, he will not come as a helpless baby, but in glory as a Conquering King.

Our Blessed Hope

If Paul's emphasis on self control, discipline, moral and spiritual fitness, good deeds and commitment to serve others seems a lot to ask at times, then look back with gratitude and reflect on the Grace of God that appeared in Christ at his first coming when he purchased our redemption. And when it gets difficult and you need an incentive to carry on living lives that are pleasing to God, that refute false teachers who attack Christ, his Word, his humanity and his divinity then just look forward and hold on to our *"blessed hope -the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ,"* v13 - the Second Coming of Christ, and if that Day invokes anxiety rather than eager expectation remember that v13 says *"we wait for the **blessed** hope."*

If something is blessed, it's good, it's something welcoming and the opposite of something that is bad. When he comes it will be a day of blessing for those who are in Christ. *1 Thess 5:9-10 "For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him."*

We do not know the day or time when he will come but we can be confident that scripture tells us he will, and John who had been a witness to the incarnate Christ tells us of the Glorified Christ in Revelation 1:7-8 as he tries to put into words that glorious day when returns, *"Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."*

Maranatha. Come, Lord Jesus.

Emmanuel Church Text for 2019

*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light,
we have fellowship with one another and the blood
of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.*

1 John 1:7



Looking Upwards (40 mins)

Bible Study

Read the text for this study, and any references given, then answer the following questions. You may find it helpful to listen to the sermon and/or read through the sermon notes as you do so. Discuss some, or all, your answers with your Home Group and, remember, these questions are only a guide to start your discussions.

1. Where do you think today's young men and women learn to think and behave? What are their biggest influences? How different would it be if they had godly mentors?

2. Verse 8 talks about "*those who oppose you.*" Who are the opponents? If unbelievers are looking at believers lives what do they hope to find? Do they find what they are looking for when they observe your life?

3. How well do think we do at Emmanuel at mixing with the different generations? What could we do to improve this and who do you think would benefit?

4. How would you explain that the Grace of God in Christ is sufficient and available to all people, but not all people will be saved?

5. When you think of the truth of Jesus one day appearing, does it excite you, are you eager for his return or just a little nervous? Discuss.

6. Of all the advice Paul gives in this passage about how to live a life pleasing to God, is there one specific area that you will commit yourself to concentrate on this next week?



Is there anything you most want to put into practice as a result of this study?



Looking Inwards (15 mins) *Caring For Each Other*

Reflecting on your life at the moment, is there anything you would like to share with other members of your home group which you feel is appropriate (this is an opportunity to share, not something you have to do, however, 'It's the sharing that enables the caring!') for:

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?



Looking Outwards (15 mins) *Concern For Others*

Is there anything concerning someone in your: family; circle of friends; neighbours or church, which you would like to share (please be sure not pass on anything that is confidential or which you think the person concerned would not wish to be shared) for:

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?

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