

Truth

LIVE AND TEACH THE TRUTH

Focal Verses • TITUS 2:1–15

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: **SENSE** that God desires and expects us to live godly lives; **COMMIT** to display faith in God through acts and deeds; and **PRESENT** a godly example for others to follow.

In Focus

Aaron and Regina were in charge of leading the teen small group Bible study. Since black history is church history, they decided to share with the teens about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s faith and message. Aaron started

the class by saying, “There are a lot of stories out there about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The truth is that Dr. King’s strong Christian attitudes and sound doctrine guided his single-minded efforts to break down Jim Crow laws of the South. Often, we forget how difficult it was for Dr. King to fulfill his calling.”



“That’s right,” Regina added, “it’s important we remember that a lot of influential people told Dr. King to wait!”

Aaron nodded, “Yes! Many older Black ministers in the early years thought Dr. King was too radical and that his marches and sit-ins caused too much violence. White church leaders

who had never felt the stinging darts of segregation wrote, telephoned, and pleaded with him to wait. 'This was not how one handled the Southern problem,' they told him."

Regina reminded the teens, "Dr. King's posture remained dignified even while some tried to hold him back. He wasn't mean-spirited when he spoke out against vicious mobs who were lynching mothers and fathers and drowning "sassy" teenagers on a whim. Dr. King demonstrated how the gospel of Christ could combat police filled with so much hate; they would kick, brutalize, and kill marchers who wanted to vote. It was the tireless example Dr. King set that finally won over most of his detractors."

The book of Titus reminds us that regardless of the circumstances or how many well-meaning persons we find ourselves at odds with, we must teach the truth by example. Like Dr. King, we

must hold fast to the characteristics of a Soldier of Christ. Despite opposition, what should motivate us to continue sharing the truth of Jesus and leading by Christ?

Keep in Mind

“In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity” (Titus 2:7, KJV).



“And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching”
(Titus 2:7, NLT).

KJV Titus 2:1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

9 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and

purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

NLT Titus 2:1 As for you, Titus, promote the kind of living that reflects wholesome teaching.

2 Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have sound faith and be filled with love and patience.

3 Similarly, teach the older women to live in a way that honors God. They must not slander others or be heavy drinkers. Instead, they should teach others what is good.

4 These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children,

5 to live wisely and be pure, to work in their homes, to do good, and to be submissive to their husbands. Then

they will not bring shame on the word of God.

6 In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely.

7 And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching.

8 Teach the truth so that your teaching can't be criticized. Then those who oppose us will be ashamed and have nothing bad to say about us.

9 Slaves must always obey their masters and do their best to please them. They must not talk back

10 or steal, but must show themselves to be entirely trustworthy and good. Then they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive in every way.

11 For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people.

12 And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion to God,

15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

13 while we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed.

14 He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds.

15 You must teach these things and encourage the believers to do them. You have the authority to correct them when necessary, so don't let anyone disregard what you say.

The People, Places, and Times

Titus. He was a minister of the Gospel and a co-laborer with Paul in the ministry. Titus was a Greek who served with Paul on several missionary journeys. In other writings, Paul refers to Titus as his partner and fellow helper. Titus had served with Paul on a mission to Corinth and was sent to Crete to continue his service in the ministry. Paul wrote while Titus was on assignment in Crete. Paul's pastoral epistle to Titus seems to have been written from Corinth after his first imprisonment. Paul's epistle to Titus was similar to Paul's first epistle to Timothy and is believed to have been written around the same time from the same place.

Background

Contaminated teachings began to develop within the Cretan church. Paul left Titus in Crete to establish proper church government and to ordain other

ministers in the Gospel. In his letter to Titus, Paul speaks of the qualifications for elders and warns Titus to be aware of false teachers.

At-A-Glance

- 1. The Need for Sound Doctrine (Titus 2:1)
- 2. The Call to Teach the Next Generation (vv. 2–6)
- 3. The Responsibility to Live the Life You Teach (vv. 7–8)
- 4. The Duty to Comply with the Social Structure (vv. 9–10)
- 5. The Mandate for Godly Teaching and Righteous Living (vv. 11–15)

In Depth

1. The Need for Sound Doctrine (Titus 2:1)

Paul urged Titus to faithfully teach sound doctrine. Paul was aware of how different doctrines can bring division and confusion in the body of Christ. He tells us not to be like children, tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14). Sound doctrine always results in a life centered around Jesus Christ. The first chapter of Titus

ends with Paul's warning against false teachers. He then goes on in chapter 2 to remind Titus not to be moved by false teachers and their inaccurate doctrine.

False teachers began to deny that Jesus was the Son of God. They doubted the reality of the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Such teachings caused many to turn away from sound doctrine and embrace the doctrine espoused by the false teachers. While false teachers may say that they represent Jesus and that they know God, their actions often contradict a faith in God. One cannot claim to be a representative of God and deny the resurrection of Christ.

2. The Call to Teach the Next Generation (vv. 2–6)

Each generation has a responsibility and an obligation to teach the next generation. Paul exhorts Titus to teach the aged men to be calm and patient

and to teach the younger men in both word and deed. In addition, older women are instructed to teach younger women to live a life according to holiness. Older women are to instruct younger women in personal conduct, and concerning their relationships with their spouses and children.

Oftentimes, we see younger couples make mistakes early in marriage that could have been avoided if an older couple had taken the time to mentor and teach them. The body of Christ will benefit as we fulfill our responsibility to give to others, share what we have learned, and train others in the faith and teachings of Jesus Christ.

3. The Responsibility to Live the Life You Teach (vv. 7–8)

“Do as I say, and not as I do” is a popular quote within our society. However, Paul reminds Titus of the importance of living a life that aligns

with our teachings. “Faith without works is dead also” (James 2:26). Therefore, we can’t just *say* we believe in Christ and in the Word of God. We must follow the teachings of God if we say we are children of God. Genuine faith moves from belief to action. Our actions of faith produce fruit. Jesus tells us, “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit” (Matthew 7:18). Therefore, if we teach Christ, we must also live Christ. Our actions prove what we believe.

4. The Duty to Comply with the Social Structure (vv. 9–10)

Being a Christian does not negate our social responsibilities. Paul urged Christian slaves to remain compliant with the social laws of the land. Servants were to obey their masters and not respond to them with backtalk or sarcasm. Christian slaves in that

culture were expected to follow the law and allow their lives to serve as godly examples as a testimony to their masters. However, this duty is not limited to just slaves and masters. Paul goes on to speak of a Christian's responsibility to respect those in authority. In 1 Timothy 2:2, we are instructed to pray for those in authority. Such godly instructions apply to all who rule over us in one capacity or another.

5. The Mandate for Godly Teaching and Righteous Living (vv. 11–15)

God does not discriminate. He is not partial to a particular group or to those from a particular background. It is the will of God that all should receive salvation. As followers of Christ, we should take every occasion to live a righteous life. We must live for Christ in this present age while we await the return of our Lord and Saviour.

Don't allow anyone to despise you for teaching the truth. Speak the Word of God, encourage, and correct with authority.

Search the Scriptures

1. What role should older men assume in the lives of young men (Titus 2:2)?

2. What behavior is befitting of a Christian woman (vv. 4–5)?

3. How should Christian slaves interact with their masters (vv. 9–10)?

4. Why did Christ give His life for us (v. 14)?

Discuss the Meaning

1. Why do you think Paul admonishes Christian slaves to remain obedient to their masters?

2. Imagine that you work in an environment that is hostile to Christianity. How can you continue practicing your faith while remaining

employed at this company? What is your greatest witnessing tool?

3. Imagine that your best friend was recently married and is experiencing difficulty with his or her new spouse. Who could he or she turn to for godly counsel? How might Paul's letter to Titus provide guidance in this particular area?

Liberating Lesson

Recent scandals in the business world have caused people to question the integrity of others. Individuals often say one thing and do another. This has become so common in our society today that less and less weight is given to a person's word. In fact, it almost seems expected that an individual will break a promise. Think about times when you said you would do something and failed to do it. What kept you from following up on your

promise? How can you avoid a similar situation in the future?

Application for Activation

Think about a time when you have followed after godliness in both word and conduct. Then think of another time when your actions didn't represent righteous, godly living. Write down the reasons you believe you followed after godliness. Then, write down the reasons you believe you didn't follow after godliness. What steps could you have taken to behave in a manner that follows the teachings of Christ? Make a commitment to take the necessary steps to behave in ways that will please the Lord.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

More Light on the Text

Chapter two, concerned with the pastoral care of the Cretan Christians, is the second main division. In verses 1–10 Paul gives Titus instructions on how the various groups in the congregations are to govern themselves ethically. In verses 11–14, Paul points out that the empowering motivation for the Christian life is the grace of God.

1 But speak thou the things which

become sound doctrine: 2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

In these verses, Paul outlines the manifestations of spiritual healthiness as it applies to different groups, designated by age and gender. The “aged men” referred to here are not necessarily the “elders” of the church. This is a designation of longevity, not office. Because these senior male members were looked up to for leadership, their example had great influence. They needed to have moral character. As such, they were to be “sober” (Gk. *nephaleos*, nay-FAL-eh-os, meaning temperate, clear-minded, having presence of mind in all circumstances), “grave” (Gk. *semnos*, sem-NOS, meaning honorable, worthy of respect), “temperate” (Gk. *sophron*, SO-frone, meaning of a sound mind, sane, self-controlled — curbing one’s desires and

impulses), “sound (Gk. *hugiaino*, hoog-ee-AH-ee-no, meaning to be in good spiritual health) in faith” (Gk. *pistis*, PIS-tiss), in charity” (Gk. *agape*, ag-AH-pay, meaning brotherly affection and benevolence), in patience” (Gk. *hupomone*, hoop-on-on-AY, meaning steadfastness, constancy or perseverance).

3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

“The aged women likewise” indicates that the apostle expects the same demeanor from them as he did from the “aged men.” They are to have “behavior as becometh holiness.” The NIV says that they “be reverent in the way they live.” The word “holiness” comes from the word *hieroprepes* (hee-er-op-rep-ACE), meaning reverent, befitting the sacred things to God.

Such behavior springs from a spiritually healthy inner character and displays a life totally dedicated to God.

Reverence like this requires that they not be “false accusers” (Gk. *diabolos*, dee-AB-ol-os, meaning slanderous). In essence, they are not to engage in gossip or spread unfounded rumors about people. Also, they should not be “given (Gk. *douloo*, doo-LO-o, meaning to make a slave of, reduce to bondage) to much wine.” Slander (gossip) and intoxication are grouped together in this verse to show a connection between the two. On the contrary, these older women in the church are to be “teachers of good things” or “teach what is good” (NIV) by example and speech.

4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at

home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. 6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

The older women who are spiritually healthy are qualified to teach the younger women to love their husbands and children. The word translated as “teach” is *sophronizo* (so-fron-ID-zo) and means to train in the lessons of self-control, to moderate or to admonish earnestly.

They are to encourage the younger women to be “discreet” (temperate or self-controlled), “chaste” (Gk. *hagnos*, hag-NOS, meaning exciting reverence or pure from carnality), “keepers at home” (“busy at home,” NIV). The stresses of the constant demands of home management can lead to exasperation. Therefore, she must cultivate the quality of being “good” (Gk. *agathos*, ag-ath-OS, meaning pleasant, agreeable, or

joyful). Finally, the older women should train the young wives to be “subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God” (NIV). The idea here is not that of a dictatorship, but a voluntary acceptance of their husband’s headship. This supportive role is an expression of the love the young wives are to give to their husbands.

These duties grew out of the patriarchal society that existed during that time when the roles of men and women were strictly defined. Today, many women are no longer just administrators of the home; many work full-time jobs outside of the house. There are many single parent homes, and the roles once assigned to women have changed. Most women today have duties in the church and society that extend beyond the home. Women’s cultural status has evolved over the

years. Yet, the basic principles of self-control outlined by Paul still apply.

Similarly, Titus encouraged the young men to be “sober minded” (Gk. *sophroneo*, so-fron-EH-o, meaning to exercise self-control). As a young man, Titus was in a good position to deal directly with other young men. Thus, he was to do more than “teach,” but to exhort them. The Greek word for “exhort” is *parakaleo* (par-ak-al-EH-o), meaning to call to one’s side or admonish.

7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

Now Paul reminds Titus that his teaching will be confirmed by how he carries out his ministry: “in all things shewing thyself a pattern (Gk. *tupos*, TOO-pos, meaning the mark or figure formed by a stroke or impression)

of good (Gk. *kalos*, kal-OS, meaning beautiful, excellent, surpassing, or commendable) works.” The NIV renders this, “set them an example by doing what is good.” Seriousness and integrity must be the mark of Titus’s ministry in Crete. In light of the sacred nature of his commission, Titus’s motives must be pure (integrity), and his conduct must reflect high moral standards with dignity (seriousness). The same should be true of us as ambassadors of Christ (Ephesians 6:20).

8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

“Sound speech” must mark the ministry of Titus. His teaching and conversation must be in accord with “healthy doctrine.” Thus, he would be beyond condemnation to such an extent that his critics would be put

to shame, having nothing on which to base their diatribes. This is especially crucial in light of the false teachers who constantly tried to undercut the ministry of Paul and Titus.

Like Titus, our teaching may not be popular. Sometimes, being true to “healthy doctrine” will lead us to take a stand that is not politically correct. But, with dignity and integrity, we can persevere and outlast any opponent.

9 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

The church in Crete had a cross section of society in its ranks. This included servants. In his instructions to Titus, the apostle Paul lays down guidelines for how they should represent who they are as members of the body of Christ.

We must remember that the servanthood Paul referred to bore no resemblance to American slavery. There have been those who used Paul's words to teach that he would have been in full agreement with the American slave system. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, when addressing Christian slaves in Corinth, Paul stated, "...if you can gain your freedom, do so" (1 Corinthians 7:21, NIV). The closest contemporary equivalent to the master/ servant relationship is the employer/employee relationship.

When Paul instructs Titus to "exhort (encourage) servants to be obedient unto their own masters," the aim is to demonstrate the Gospel of Jesus Christ, not to endorse the institution of slavery. To maximize the effectiveness of their witness, they were to seek to "please them well" (Gk. *euarestos*, yoo-AR-es-tos), meaning their masters, in "all things." They were not to

perform their duties with bad attitudes. The only exception to obedience in “all things” would be if the master demanded that the Christian servant do something contrary to healthy doctrine or clear biblical teaching. Otherwise, they were to perform their assigned tasks with dignity, “not answering again” (Gk. *antilego*, an-TIL-eg-o, meaning to speak against or to talk back).

10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Like Titus, the Christian servant must also demonstrate integrity. Honesty was to distinguish the work of children of God. For example, they were not to be guilty of “purloining” (Gk. *nosphi-zomai*, nos-FID-zomahee, meaning to set apart or separate for one’s self, to steal

or embezzle) from their masters. In Roman households, petty theft among servants was common. This was not to be the case for followers of Christ. They were to show “all good fidelity” (Gk. *pistis*, **PIS**-tiss, meaning conviction of the truth of anything, faith). To show such good faith is to demonstrate that one can be fully trusted. By this, they “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” If we are motivated by true Christian spirituality, it will show in ethical conduct. In other words, the teaching about God’s salvation through Christ is made attractive through the integrity of the Christian servant.

Those of us who are employees would do well to implement these principles in our various careers and professions. For many of our employers, the quality and integrity of our character and work may be the only Bible they will ever read.

11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

The grace of God is the foundation for godly living, and this grace has appeared (Gk. *epiphaino*, ep-ee-FAH-ee-no, meaning to become visible or clearly known) in the person of Jesus Christ—His birth, life, death, and resurrection.

Humanity could never have accomplished redemption. Why? Because human nature is sinful and weak. Only Jesus was able to bring salvation, and it is applied to us by grace through faith. God's grace not only saves us, but empowers us to rise above the ethical meritocracy surrounding us. It teaches us to say no to "ungodliness" (Gk. *asebeia*, as-EB-i-ah, meaning the lack of

reverence toward God) and worldly “lusts” (Gk. *epithumia*, ep-ee-thoo-MEE-ah, meaning desire for what is forbidden). This transforming grace leads us to live soberly (self-controlled—the inward dimension), righteously (the outward dimension), and godly in our present circumstances. Grace is not visible until it becomes visible in the way we live.

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purif[ied] unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. 15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

As we receive instruction from God’s grace and seek to demonstrate it in the present reality, we eagerly anticipate

the fulfillment of our “blessed hope,” the glorious return of our Lord and Saviour. This is what gives meaning to all the sacrifices we make in our pursuit of righteousness.

Jesus, the only perfect man who ever lived, gave himself for us. We were hopelessly lost in guilt and shame. Still, He redeemed “us from all iniquity (Gk. *anomia*, an-om-EE-ah, meaning wickedness), and purify unto himself a peculiar (Gk. *periousios*, per-ee-OO-see-os, meaning that which is one’s own possession) people, zealous (Gk. *zelotes*, dzay-lo-TACE, meaning most eagerly desirous of) of good works.”

From the beginning, God has been after a people to call His own who are eager for good works. In Christ, God has brought forth such a people. We can become God’s own people in Christ by grace through faith. Having received such a privilege, we will live the rest of our lives in gratitude to God. How are

we to express our gratitude to God for His saving grace? By following Paul’s instruction, it means being eager for good works.

Sources:

Henry, Matthew. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Edited by Leslie F. Church. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1961. 1884–85. *Life Application Study Bible*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1996.

Say It Correctly
Kalos, kal-OS

Daily Bible Readings

DAY 316

Romans 15:1–33; 16:1–27
Psalm 144

DAY 317

1 Corinthians 1:1–31; 2:1–16
Psalm 145

DAY 318

1 Corinthians 3:1–23; 4:1–21
Psalm 146

DAY 319

1 Corinthians 5:1–13; 6:1–20
Psalm 147

DAY 320

1 Corinthians 7:1–40
Psalm 148

DAY 321

1 Corinthians 8:1–13; 9:1–27
Psalm 149

DAY 322

1 Corinthians 10:1–33; 11:1–16
Psalm 150

Notes
