

God Blueprint for a Healthy Church
Discipleship: Sound Doctrine Produces Sound Living
Titus 2:1-10
July 23, 2017

We are continuing our summer series, “God’s Blueprint for a Healthy Church” based on the New Testament book of Titus. The apostle Paul wrote this letter to one of his disciples, Titus, who helped him in his ministry. The three chapters can be summarized this way, the first chapter is on leadership, chapter two addresses discipleship, and chapter three is concerned about living faithfully in a non-christian world. Today we finish last week’s message about discipleship, “Sound Doctrine Produces Sound Living, seeing that the gospel informs and transforms everyday life. **BI** – Sound doctrine applied to the lives of disciples produces godliness and exalts the gospel.

Before we read, I want to summarize the passage. In contrast to the false teachers, Titus is to teach what accords with sound doctrine. Then he applies sound doctrine to different groups of people who are struggling with different temptations and struggles in life on the Island of Crete. These are not just a list of behaviors but are appropriate responses to the gospel for Paul will go on to tell us the grace of salvation trains us to renounce ungodliness and live godly lives (11).

Remember, Paul addressing Titus writes, “but as for you, teach what is consistent, with sound doctrine (1).” Then he lists the ways the gospel informs our lives (2-10) based upon the transforming power of the gospel (11-15). Teaching what is consistent with sound doctrine is teaching what is faithful to the whole bible and is useful for life. Paul is concerned with discipleship, sound doctrine produced sound living or godliness. This is in the context of the church, which is a community of God’s people who are involved in each other’s lives and committed to each other’s growth. CCC seeks to cultivate this in Life Groups, where we can share our struggles, find support, and accountability in our growth in godliness. Life Groups discuss the bible and cultivate honest and open relationships to help each other fight sin in our lives. All of us must fight sin and cultivate godliness in our lives and that is a community project. Accountability is necessary for discipleship or spiritual growth. Some of us are uncomfortable with accountability but Scripture talks about accountability as a necessary part of the Christian life and discipleship (Heb 10:24-25; 1 Thes 5:11; Jms 5:16). So, let’s quickly review the instructions to older men and women then pick up where we left off with the younger women.

“Older men (probably those over sixty years of age) are to be godly examples for others, who display a love for God overflowing in love for others. And they have spiritual stamina because of their hope in Christ (2). We need the gray hairs to speak into the lives of younger men here. Then older women also are to be godly examples for others and teaching sound doctrine. They do not need the spiritual gift of teaching but have a good understanding of Scripture so that they can teach younger women (4).¹ The older women in the church are to teach the younger women to love their husband and children. They are also

¹ He does not mention older men teaching because the elders are to teach (1:9). The implication of older women teaching the younger women is that the elders are to teach the whole body and women are limited to teaching other women.

to teach them to be working at home, that is, make the family and the home a priority. Evidently, they were not. Wives working in the home is valuable in God's eyes, significant for the wellbeing of the family. This does not mean that a woman cannot work out of the home, there are many positive examples of women working in the bible (Jud 4:4, Mic 6:4, Acts 9:36, Rom 16:1-2, Rom 16:3-4, etc). The questions you must ask yourself is, can I effectively love and serve my family and work at the same time? Why do I want to work? Then, the older women are to teach the younger women to be submissive to their own husbands. Submitting to your husbands does not make you any less valuable than them, it just means you have a different role. *Roles describe function not value.* Then they are to teach the younger women to be self-controlled and to be kind. The gospel informs and transforms ordinary life. Then he gives the purpose for teaching the younger women this, so that the word of God may not be reviled (5) or dishonored. The motive for living according to the gospel is so that the gospel shines untarnished. A life of discipleship means that you value the reputation of the gospel (Mat 5:14-16; Phil 2:15).

Then he gives one instruction to young men, "be self-controlled (6)." Why this one? Self-control is probably the main issue with most young men because they are often driven by short term thinking, pleasure, and recognition. A young guy must control his sex drive, his tongue, his sleeping habits, his eating habits, and his recreation. The gospel impacts ordinary life. Then as long as he is talking to younger men, he gives Titus some specific instructions. He is to be an example of good works and have integrity in his teaching so that there is no reason for criticism (7). Leaders in particular, but all disciples must understand that how you live is as important as what you say. Then he gives the purpose for living this way, so that an opponent may be put to shame because has nothing to say evil about the church (8). Again, he is concerned with the gospel because it not only informs us but also transforms us. Genuine faith in the gospel brings forth new life and transformation. It also brings a love for God's glory, his reputation. If there is not transformation or desire for transformation or concern for God's reputation, then one must ask if they have genuine faith.

Lastly, Paul addresses slaves, which in our context applies to employees. Positively, employees are to be submissive to their own employers *in everything*. That is, they are to be productive, doing what their employer wants. Then they are to be well pleasing, that is, have a good attitude. Negatively, they are not to be argumentative or steal, that is, have integrity. By this, they will show that their faith is genuine and the result is that they adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. Again, making the point that genuine faith produces sound living.

Our lives are a witness to the power of the gospel to not only inform us but transform us. And the gospel's greatest impact on most of us is in ordinary life— in our day to day lives — the decision we make, the values we express, the relationships we have, the way we spend our time, and our work.