



***2** But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: **2** that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; **3** the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things— **4** that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, **5** to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.*

***6** Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, **7** in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, **8** sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.*

***9** Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, **10** not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.*

Trained by Saving Grace

***11** For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, **12** teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, **13** looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, **14** who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

***15** Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you. (Titus 2, NKJV).*

We are now back studying the book of Titus. We began it back in November right before the Christmas season. Now we will take this Sunday and next Sunday to finish it up, and then we'll move on to Paul's letters to the church in Corinth. Concerning Titus, remember that Paul had left Titus on the Island of Crete. This was the seat of the ancient Minoan civilization. Sandy and I visited there and marveled at the painted walls and distinct simplistic culture of Minoan art. Titus was there. He was young but was the pastor left to minister to those on the island who had come to faith in Jesus.

In the first chapter, the big idea was: we should know the Word, preach the Word correctly, and live the Word. Recognize the faults of those under your teaching, but encourage them to follow in living holy lifestyles. Don't be fooled by fake holier-than-thou Christians who just cause division.

In my years in the pastorate, I've found these to be quite proud of their biblical understanding. In a nutshell, they are proud of their humility.

In this second chapter of the letter, Paul continues to give instruction on the importance of sound doctrine, but the greater majority of the letter describes what is to be taught concerning how we are to live it out. Our lives are to be consistent with the message. Let your life match your faith. Our lives are supposed to match our confession of faith. It is no wonder that unbelievers are confused by the behavior of many Christians. Paul is telling Titus how we are to treat one another in a church body. Have any of you ever seen the way a healthy family interacts with one another? Many hearing this message might have grown up in dysfunctional families so you're going to need to unlearn some things you learned to know how to interact properly with those in the fellowship to which God calls you.

Briefly, I want to explain the meaning of "sound doctrine." This merely means sound teaching. So, what constitutes sound teaching? I think sound teaching includes but is not limited to:

Being solidly biblical: All that is taught is based on scripture and is proved by God's word.

Having theological integrity: Meaning it reflects the core beliefs of the Christian faith as have been taught since the first century beginning with the apostles. If you don't know the apostles' creed, it would be worth memorizing it. It lays out some of the fundamental matters of the Christian faith that are non-negotiable.

Including practical application: The teaching that you receive from this pastor, and any others you sit under, should give you clear instructions and guidelines of how to apply the truths of God's word to your life. That's why I always include a BIG IDEA in what I teach you. I want you to know how what we've studied can have application in our lives. My style of doing this is by telling you what I've gone through and how God's word applied to my circumstances. Why do I do this? It is not to talk about myself, but rather because my experience reflects my own journey and my experience in wrestling with the truths in God's word. It also demonstrates how I've found truth in God's word.

Promotion of unity: Good teaching in a church should equip you to basically fulfill the two greatest commandments that Jesus taught. One element of those commandments is truly learning how to love God with all of your heart, soul, and might and how to love your neighbor as yourself.

Clear warning of falsehoods: Sound teaching is learning what the legitimate truth looks like so that when you see a deviation you will recognize it as such.

Provision of a path for growth: You'll be given clear guidelines of how to grow in your faith. This is why I lace my teaching with stories. Stories can be remembered. Stories can

have an effect in altering our lives. That was the point of Aesop's Fables. For example, if you hear the story of "the boy that cried wolf," you will learn and remember truths about exaggeration, victim mentality, truth, and proportionality. If I define all of those things, you might remember them for a moment and then they might be forgotten. But, if you hear the story of the boy who cried wolf, you'll never forget it. AND, YOU'LL BE LESS INCLINED TO "CRY WOLF."

So, get into a church that teaches sound doctrine that is essential for a solid Christian life and a solid Christian community. We need solid biblical truth to navigate our way through the difficulties and complexities of life.

Paul now gives Titus instructions concerning the different age categories in the church. He has a specific order in which he does this.

Concerning older men, Paul instructs Titus that they should be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience. That is the picture of a clear thinking, unexcitable, respectful older man who has self-control. This man should be sound in his faith, meaning he is a man of spiritual integrity. He knows what it means to be a believer, walking out his faith in integrity. He is also a man who has matured enough to clearly demonstrate the love of Christ and utmost patience in how he deals with others. He's the top role model in the church.

Concerning older women, Paul instructs Titus that they should be reverent, not slanderers, not ones who lean on wine to get them through life's problems, and should be teachers of "good things." This is a picture of older women being solid believers. They're not irreverent kind of women who stir things up and complain about things too readily or easily. They have wisdom in discerning problems in the church. They also are women who know how to hold a confidence. They have no part in the spread of gossip. They've walked with Jesus for so long that they are well equipped to instruct the younger women in matters of the faith.

These older women are the very ones who can give good instructions in how a young mother should love her husband and how she should love her children. This reminds us that the proper behavior for being a wife and a mother is something that must be taught and learned. It is NOT NATURAL. It is learned behavior. The instructions these women will give should be based in biblical truth and not based on a lie that the world gives. The more that husbands and wives base their relationships on the world's advice, the more divorce, damage, and brokenness we see in society. I don't need to give the statistics. We all know that the dysfunction is tremendous. In addition, these older women are the ideal teachers of how a young woman is to be discreet, chaste, a homemaker, good, obedient to her husband, that the word of God may not be blasphemed (see Titus 2:5). These older women can teach the younger women the skills necessary to administer a home and how to be a really super supportive helpmate to their

husbands. Why? So that God's word will be lived out in the lives of these young women. I think it's interesting that it doesn't just tell mothers to teach this to their daughters. Some mothers never learned these biblical truths from the mothers so they are ill-equipped to really teach their own daughters how to be good wives and mothers. Wiser older women are to fill in that gap.

Concerning young men, Paul gives copious instructions. He tells Titus to instruct them to be clear-minded. This might include that they are not to be day dreamers with their heads constantly stuck in video games and things that are really of no import. Instead, these young men's lives should be filled with solid "good works." They should be instructed in the sound doctrine of the faith and be doing their best to live it out. They are to be reverent young men. That means they are respectful. They know how to say yes sir and no sir. They are incorruptible. I've told our young men that they should be so incorruptible that if a woman were to walk naked in front of them asking for companionship, they should have the integrity of Joseph in Potiphar's house and have the control to lovingly tell her to go put on some clothes. That's incorruptibility. Their habits of speech are positive, and they don't enjoy telling the stories of their sordid past. As such, none can condemn their conversations, and no one can find a single bad thing to say about them or their character.

Concerning all who are employees, Paul gives instructions as to proper work habits. Godly employees should never be "clock watchers" or those trying to get by doing the least possible amount of work. They should be assets and not liabilities. They should be positive, contributive employees who are not complainers or grumblers. He adds that they shouldn't pilfer things. That means they shouldn't be involved in petty theft from their employer. You might not steal a stapler or envelopes, but when you don't give your employer an hour's work for an hour's pay you're pilfering. You're stealing. Don't do that. Don't rationalize saying, "I don't get paid enough to work that hard." If that's how you truly feel, then go find another job or go work for yourself. Just don't steal time, money, or confidence from your employer. By being the right kind of employee, you will be a credit to yourself, your church body, your Christian faith, and you'll be working in partnership with God to fulfill his purpose for your life.

Verses 11-15

In this portion of the reading, Paul gives specifics on living a godly life versus living a fleshly life. He says that we do indeed have salvation by grace, but as such we SHOULD live with an awareness of what's going on around us, and we should strive to live lives of holiness that are reflective of our identity in Christ. Let's all be involved in good and godly work, knowing this is all temporary. We should be on our best behavior as we look forward to His coming someday. Paul adds that we have been bought back (redeemed) for a good and godly purpose. Our lives should be filled with goodness, and mercy, and Christlike behavior. That's real living! That's godly living! Paul tells Titus to teach and preach this kind of doctrine.

If you come to church week after week and are never challenged to live differently, then something is wrong. God loved us each exactly as we were in our sins, but He loves us so much He will never leave us as He finds us.

You may know that you're saved, but you can't seem to be making any progress. Let me give you an illustration of how you can get on to the right path toward being more like Jesus. This might help some of you to replace the worry you have in your life of what you can or can't do with wonder in your life at what God can do in and through you.

Years ago, Sandy and I used to watch a television preacher as we dressed to go to church. I specifically remember hearing him say that worry has no place in the heart of a believer. Most of what we worry about happening never really happens. He said, "if you can change your circumstances, then work to do so. But if you cannot, then stop worrying about it and leave it to God to work out." This was great advice. In college, I used to worry about an upcoming test. I learned that the best way to not worry about it was to get down at my desk and master the material. When I first began speaking to groups, I would worry about not choosing the right subject or not having the right thing to say about it. I learned that preparing a good teaching is 99% perspiration and 1% inspiration. Whatever you're doing, stop worrying and give your task your best effort, and leave the rest up to God. I used to tell my kids, "work as though it all depends on you, all the while knowing it really all depends on God." He blesses our efforts.

I recently bought e-bikes for Sandy and me. There are many different kinds of these bikes, but most do absolutely nothing on their own. You must exert some pressure on the pedals for the electric motor to engage and provide assistance. The Holy Spirit similarly empowers our lives. Think things through, and choose the course that you desire to take. Make absolutely sure that it's the direction in which God desires for you to travel. You might have to spend a good deal of time in prayer and reading God's word and listening to sound doctrine to set out in the right direction. But, once you've decided on a course, **START PEDALING**. As you make your efforts, the power and wind of the Holy Spirit will come along behind you and give you the extra boost you need to get up those hills and navigate your way through rocky roads you can't do on your own. If you do this, you will find your heart is less troubled. Reader, Jesus will give you a peace unlike the peace the world offers. "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." That's excellent advice. Now take it! Paul tells Titus what to teach those precious saints in Crete. God preserved those letters so that we too might learn Kingdom secrets. Take them to heart. Now, do them. The Bible graciously gives us instructions in how to live out our faith. It is a good life. It is an abundant life. It is ours for the taking. Are you pedaling? If not, get into the lane and start moving. Be a doer and not a hearer only.

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.