

Titus: Becoming a Sound Church

03 Model To Follow

May 14, 2017

I. INTRODUCTION

Happy Mothers Day! I was thinking the other day...now some of you are going to laugh at me but...I was thinking the other day that I really only have 30 good years left in me.

I am quickly approaching my 40th birthday and this has caused some deep contemplation. I really have done things backwards. I did 10 yrs of ministry then went to seminary, while others my age were starting their pastorate after finishing seminary, I was heading to seminary to further my understanding of God and the church.

Now as I knock on the door of my 40th birthday, it dawned on me that pastoring takes a lot of energy so 30 yrs is about all I got...then I meet Don, Jack, Pricilla, I talk with my mom and dad who are faithfully serving and committed to your membership.

And most importantly I read Titus 2, that teaches me that my greatest impact on the world is not by carrying the title pastor but pouring myself out for others to follow Jesus more passionately and with deeper understanding...discipling is where I will have impact at any age and that is the job of the church, of members of a local body of believers! Helping others follow Jesus is the great call the church was given in the great commission, “*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*”

READ Titus 2:1-10**II. TEACH (NEVER STOP) SOUND DOCTRINE (2:1)**

- A. **DEFINE** - Bobby Jamieson in a little book titled *Sound Doctrine* defines sound doctrine as “*a summary of the Bible’s teaching that is both faithful to the Bible and useful for life.*”¹

For something to be doctrine, it is a statement of belief about the teachings of the bible in a concise summary. It is sound when it is faithful to the bible, accurately summarizes the teaching of scripture.

This is why over the centuries of Church history we have creeds (Baptist Faith and Message), it was an effort to keep doctrine sound!

As an example, a sound doctrinal statement would be—Jesus is God it would become unsound if someone were to say, Jesus is like God.

Well there is a major difference between these two statements. The first affirms that Jesus is indeed God and second falsely asserts that Jesus lacks a few things.

- B. As an another example, a sound doctrinal statement would be—Jesus is fully God and fully man, it would become unsound if someone were to say, Jesus is fully God and only appeared to be human. Now they might be saying this in order to not diminish the divinity of Jesus. It is hard to

¹ Bobby Jamieson, *Sound Doctrine: How a Church Grows in the Love and Holiness of God*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 17.

comprehend how the fullness of God could also be fully human.

Though logical, it is not faithful to scripture because scripture affirms both, Jesus is fully divine and fully human. Colossians 2:9, *For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily...*

but on the other hand Jesus was born, had a human body, experienced emotions, tempted, hungry, thirsty, others saw him as human, and he died.

Not to mention that John warned us against this in 1 John 4:2, *“By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.”*

So a statement becomes unsound when it is not faithful to scripture but notice the second part of the definition we gave a few moments ago, also useful for life.

- C. So lets play out these slight variations of statements about Jesus and see how when a statement becomes unsound it is no longer useful for life. For instances, if Jesus is not fully human than Hebrews 4:15 offers no help to me, *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.”* Sound doctrine is also very useful for my life and my soul. But...
- D. **How** is sound doctrine to be dispersed throughout the church? Well, last week we saw qualified men who protect by teaching sound doctrine and confronting unsound doctrine.

But there is another crucial element to passing along sound doctrine that gives longevity to the church and breaths life into its members—**Discipleship!**

It is men meeting with men and women meeting with women for teaching and modeling sound doctrine. Deep purpose is fused into your life when you develop a willingness to pour out your life for another to help them follow Jesus!

“Discipling is deliberately doing spiritual good to someone so that he or she will be more like Christ”²

“God wants you to be in church not merely so that your needs are met but so that you will be equipped and encouraged to care for others”³

The pattern throughout scripture to spread sound doctrine and help brothers and sisters follow Christ is discipleship. The mission of the church is to make disciples! *“It is easy to build churches where consumers congregate but very difficult to build a church where biblical faith is maturing into discipling.”⁴*

This is exactly what all scripture is pointing towards—Heb 10:24-25, *And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and ^ball the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

² Mark Dever, *Discipling*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 13.

³ Dever, *Discipling*, 20.

⁴ Dever, *Discipling*, 19.

Well, what is Titus to do and model for the church at Crete. There are very specific instructions given to very specific groups but do understand that they are not necessarily culturally bond. Notice all the instructions are based on a timeless reality of sound doctrine.

We do need to understand them in their cultural context but these behaviors fly through the corridors of history and are still relevant for us today...and on this Mothers' day perhaps this will feed your soul and ground your heart in a loving God.

Perhaps we should just let the text do the work of discipling as we glance over these instructions...

III. OLDER MEN (2:2)

- A. Men who have a bit more life experience than most. Men who can see the days ahead and sense their number is small
- B. To be: Finish Strong! Show us how to stay the course in the final stretch, show us how retirement does not mean disengagement but fruitful labor.
 - 1. sober-minded
 - 2. dignified
 - 3. self-controlled
 - 4. ***sound in faith, love, and steadfastness - we need to see a stability in faith, how to maintain and pursue a thriving relationship with the Lord all the way to the end. This is the second time we have seen sound and it is directed towards a life lived...particularly to our faith, our love, and ability to bear up under difficulty. Older men you are the backbone of soundness for the church. It is you that show and model for us a faithfulness that will far outlive your own mortality.

IV. OLDER WOMEN (2:3)

- A. Women who have a bit more life experience than most.
Women who can see the days ahead and sense their number is small
- B. To be consistent in your pursuit of Christ as to have influence on younger women and in turn have effect on us all...help younger women by living out your faith!
 - 1. reverent in behavior
 - 2. not slanderers, show how to hold your tongue
 - 3. not slaves to much wine, controlled when life is stressful
 - 4. teach what is good
 - a) ***and so train younger women...here we see the purpose of considering the life you live, we see the impact it has on others, or at least the impact it should have!

On this mother's day perhaps you might be encouraged to know that your motherhood does not stop when your child leaves your home, because 1) your child always needs you and 2) mostly because of your place in the body, in the church, your membership/commitment here, we need you to show us how to handle ourselves. I was listening to a PODcast...

V. YOUNGER WOMEN

- A. Those who have seemingly many days ahead. Now a word of clarity would be helpful here, though these instructions are focused on the young women's relationship to family and home does not exclude those who do not.

Here is where a cultural element could be in play that this was the predominate situation of younger women in Crete,

younger moms...but that does not exclude its truthfulness for us today and perhaps set a course of a young women—because remember Paul is basing all this on sound doctrine.

So, if you do not have a family you are not any less significant but let these things encourage you as you head towards that one day.

B. To be focused on family and home:

1. love husband and children
2. self-controlled
3. pure
4. working at home...let me say what this cannot mean, it cannot mean that a younger woman cannot work outside the home, or pursue a career...for instances Proverbs 31 describes a women who works and perhaps has a business.

She has found a career that she devotes time to, considers a field and buys it, sells her linear garments and delivers her sashes to the merchant...she works and runs a business. There is nothing inherently sinful with pursuing a career. So what is Paul saying? Well, here is what different translations put forward

- a) workers at home (NASB)
- b) busy at home (NIV)
- c) keepers at home (KJV)
- d) homemakers (NKJV)
- e) work in their homes (NLT)
- f) good managers of the household (NRSV)
- g) fulfilling their duties at home (NET)

The point seems to be that you, ladies, have a unique role in the household that the family desperately needs, so be diligent in it and find great value in doing it.

Now this must work its way out into each circumstance, we cannot put a blanket application but what we can say is don't neglect what your family needs. This is why we celebrate Mother's today, they are warriors that need recognition.

5. kind
6. submissive to own husbands..."
 - a) This term has fallen on rough times over the years for various reasons. One would expect, in our times, lots of clarity but Paul does not feel it necessary to explain. He was not up against the backdrop we have so a few points...
 - b) Notice Paul says "OWN", *This word [own] delivers the passage from any charge of inculcating the 'inferiority' of women to men, and shews that the subordination is one of function, within the intimate circle of the home.*⁵
 - c) Second, submission is not a foreign concept in the scriptures, one scholar put it this way...*The term is also used in a variety of other contexts including, for example, the subjection of all things to Christ, the subjection of persons to civil authorities, the subjection of slaves to masters, and the subjection*

⁵ Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus* (vol. 34; The New American Commentary; Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 301.

*of one Christian to another...this term does not mean obey. Rather, [it is] understood in terms of God's taxis or 'order.' It is the responsible acceptance of a relationship in which God has placed one and the resulting honest attempt to fulfill the duties which it imposes on one."*⁶

- d) that the word of God may not be reviled

VI. YOUNGER MEN

- A. Those who have seemingly many days ahead.
- B. To be vigilantly about your desires:
 - 1. self-controlled - perhaps the one thing that young men need most...because a lack of self-control is the beginning of a host of issues—sex, greed, alcohol, food, sports...any desire can get out of hand. Proverbs spends a good bit of time instructing young men to cultivate self-control...don't let your desires get the best of you. be stable, learn now or forever struggle. Proverbs 25:28, *A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.*
 - 2. But the example Titus is to leave is also understood as what young men should be but is focused on Titus' task of working and teaching there in Crete.

VII. THEREFORE, OUR PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY IS...

- A. No segregation by age
- B. Not overly programatic
- C. We will be committed to making disciples (Matt 28:19)
- D. Centrality of the scriptures/gospel
- E. The members are responsible, of which the pastor is one, for helping each other following Jesus.

⁶ Lea, *NAC*, 301 quoting C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1979), 662.