

Introduction (Titus 2:9-15)

Several years ago I was at a conference for oil executives in the Permian Basin. The Drilling Manger of Occidental, better known as Oxy, came by and told me that our training was worthless. Those were pretty strong words, and he fully expected me to probe him about it, which I did. He said that many of the things we teach are not relevant to his people. He said he gets the least expensive training and then teaches his people what he thinks that they need to know about well control. In fairness to MDS, we teach sound well control principles, and their people will be tested on these principles when they take their certification exam. However, in the Permian Basin, they are doing some things that are not normal to most areas of the world. They can get by with some of those practices, but they would be dangerous to do in other locations. Our training is not worthless; it is very valuable, and we do an excellent job with it. But, his point about being relevant is extremely important. Our teaching in the church needs to be relevant to our lives.

Last week we began looking at sound doctrine in our individual lives, which is both practical and relevant to our lives. He told Titus to speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. What are those things that are fitting for sound doctrine? He told older men to be sober or temperate, sensible, reverent, sound in love, sound in faith, and in perseverance. He told older women to be sensible, not addicted to wine, not to be gossips, and to teach the younger women good things. They were to teach the younger women to love their husbands and to be submitted to them, and to love their children. These things that are fitting for sound doctrine are practical and relevant. These principles are given so that we will live godly lives that adorn the gospel.

(Tit 2:1) “But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.”

Last week we covered the chiastic structure that began with older men, and then went to older and younger women, and ended with young men. Paul also addressed another group of people, bondslaves. Some might not think this is relevant to us today. We do not have bondslaves today. Unfortunately, according to a comprehensive new report issued by the Australia-based Walk Free Foundation, there are 29.8 million slaves in the world today. They say that there are over 60,000 slaves in the United States.¹ But the slaves mentioned in our text today are Christians, and many of them had Christian masters. That was a different kind of slavery than we have today in the world. I am not aware of any slaves in our church today. So, in one sense, the section to bondslaves might not seem relevant.

But, Paul was a bond-slave. I am a bond-slave. We are servants of Christ who have put our ear to the post and voluntarily become Christ’s bondslaves. In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Paul tells us that we have been bought with a price and we are not our own, and we are to glorify God in our bodies. We belong to Christ, and are His bondslaves. In a spiritual sense, the discussion on bondslaves is very relevant and practical.

(1 Cor 6:19-20) “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? {20} For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

¹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2013/10/17/this-map-shows-where-the-worlds-30-million-slaves-live-there-are-60000-in-the-u-s/>

In another sense, it is also practical and relevant. These principles apply to all of us, whether we are bondslaves or not. We are all called to be submitted to our authorities, whether it is at home, to a father or to a husband, or at work to a boss, or to our governmental authorities, or to our spiritual authorities. Paul tells bondslaves not to be argumentative. That principle applies to all of us, not just to bondslaves. He told bondslaves not to pilfer, or steal. That principle applies to all of us. He tells bondslaves to show all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect. That is what sound doctrine is all about. All of us are to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

We will be covering the Titus 2:9-15, which is about bondslaves, and a summary to all men. I believe it is very relevant to all of us. Paul left Titus in Crete to set things in order. He needed to ordain godly elders in all the churches to bring order to the churches. He gave specific instructions to individuals so that our individual lives would be set in order. This is relevant and extremely important to all of us.

Individual Order Through Sound Doctrine – Part 2 (Bondslaves and All Men)

1. Older men (Tit 2:2)
2. Older Women and Younger Women (Tit 2:3-5)
3. Younger Men (Tit 2:6-8)
4. **Bondslaves** (Tit 2:9-10)
5. **All Men** (Everyone, Summary) (Tit 2:11-15)

4. Bondslaves (Titus 2:9-10)

(Titus 2:9-10) “Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, {10} not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.”

The first thing that Paul exhorts Titus to do is to urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything. We have looked at the Greek word for subject or submit, which is *hupotasso*. It means to be under proper order and arrangement. Children are to submit to their parents. Wives are to submit to their husbands, who are the head of the home. Young men are to submit to the elders of the church. Elders are not to be rebellious or self-willed. Everyone in the church is to have a submissive heart. We are all commanded to submit to kings and those in authority. We are commanded to submit to God, and part of that submission to God is to submit to the authorities He places in our lives. Bondslaves were to be submitted to their masters in everything.

(1 Pet 2:13-14) “Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, {14} or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.”

(James 4:7) “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

I have had discussions with people who choose what areas they will submit in. If the person they are to be submitted to, and in this case it is their master, says something that they agree with, then they will submit. But, if it is not something they like, they will not submit in that area. That is not submission.

In the marines, my son was taught to immediately obey his commanding officer. If he did not understand or wanted to ask questions, he had to do it at a later time. He may not have understood, or he may not have agreed with the order, but his first response needed to be obedience. The marines were under the orders of their commanding officers.

There are times when we should not obey our authorities. There is no higher authority than God. He is over all authority. He is over all creation. He is over the visible and the invisible. Every king, president, governor, and leader is going to give account to God, because He is Lord of All. He is the Creator of the heavens and earth. He is the Judge. He is the highest authority, and we must always obey God first. So, if we are told by an authority to do something that violates God's commands to us, we must obey God. Sometimes there are consequences for obeying God. In Daniel 3, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego did not obey the king, who had given the command for all to worship the golden image he set up. They faced the consequences and were thrown into a furnace of blazing fire. God gave grace and not a hair on their body was burned. Worshipping another god is something that we cannot do; it violates God's command in Exodus 20:3, which says, "you shall have no other gods before Me."

(Dan 3:16-18) "Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. {17} "If it be *so*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. {18} "But *even* if *He does* not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

In Daniel 6, the command was given that no prayers would be made to anyone other than the king for thirty days. Daniel continued to pray to God, and he was thrown into the Lion's den. Again, God intervened, and shut the mouths of the lions and spared Daniel's life.

In the New Testament, Peter and the apostles were ordered not to preach the name of Jesus any more. In Acts 5:29, Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men." We are commanded to preach the gospel, and we should disobey any authority that orders us not to preach the gospel.

(Acts 5:27-29) "When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, {28} saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." {29} But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."

Sometimes there are gray areas. If you are employed by a company and they tell you not to preach Jesus to everyone while on the clock, I think you need to obey. If they tell you that you can't preach Jesus at any time, you have to obey God. While on the clock, they are not paying you to preach Jesus; they are paying you to do your job, which is what you should do.

I have seen women go to a different church than their husband. They did not like the church he felt that they were supposed to attend, so they went to their own church. I have a friend who goes to a Baptist church and his wife goes to a Catholic church. She needs to submit to her husband, because he is the head of the house. He is not worshipping a false God, or doing anything that would violate God's commands. So, there is not a legitimate reason for her to not submit to her husband in this area.

I had a woman coming to the first church I planted, which was in Atlanta. She absolutely loved our church and my teaching. But, her husband told her that he did not want her attending our church, which was a non-denominational church. He wanted her to go to a Baptist church with him. I counseled her to leave our church and go to the Baptist church, which she did. I was sorry to see her leave, but I was happy to see that she submitted herself to her husband as unto the Lord. What she did was very pleasing to the Lord. We may not all be bondslaves, but all of us are called to submit to our authorities.

The second thing that Paul tells bondslaves is to be well-pleasing to their masters. They should do things that will be accepted and approved by their masters. They should do things that they know will please and honor them. Two weeks ago I was meeting with a man in Denver. He wanted us to begin teaching our classes at their facility. I told him that certain things needed to be done in the room they wanted to use in order to make it an effective training room. His comment to me was that they would just do it without permission, because forgiveness is easier than permission. That phrase has always bothered me. It strikes at being self-willed and rebellious. As bondservants, if we know what our authorities want, we should seek to do the things that will please them.

A few years ago, Karen and I had to go to Europe on a business trip. At that time, our church was renovating the building we had bought. I wanted the church members to participate and own the decisions, and I asked for people to give their input about the design, and the color schemes. We had a committee pick out the color scheme, the carpet, and the tiles. I also said that I wanted to have a final review and give the final approval on all their decisions. One of the ladies wanted a mustard color for the walls, and I had specifically said that I did not want that color to be used. When I came back from Europe, this lady had changed the tiles that the committee had selected. She disregarded the color scheme and my instructions about the mustard color and having the final review and approval of what the committee selected. In fact, when I returned she had already bought all the paint and started painting the walls with this mustard color. She knew that I did not want that color, but she was bound and determined to do what she wanted. She knew that if she asked me, that I would say no, so she just did what she wanted and would ask for forgiveness if questioned. She got what she wanted, but it was not well-pleasing at all. She was not submitted to her authorities; her heart was full of rebellion in this matter.

Next Paul tells the bondslaves not to be argumentative. Some people like to argue about everything. They are contentious people. God's people are not to be argumentative. Nobody wants to be around argumentative and contentious people. It is a terrible witness, and does not adorn the gospel message. If we disagree about something, there is a time and place to discuss the matter, and that is not out in public. Karen and I have not agreed on everything, but we did not argue in front of the children. We would discuss things privately, and come to an agreement. Sometimes we got creative in how we agreed on things. We used a numbering system to prioritize what improvements we made in the house. She would prioritize the list and I would average all the numbers to come up with a mutually acceptable priority list. That worked for us, but that may not work for you. There were other times where I had to make the decision of what I thought was best for our family. I did not want her arguing about it and constantly pressuring me about it, and she has never done that. The general characteristic of our life should be someone who is supportive and encouraging, not someone who is belligerent, argumentative, and resistant. I believe that is what Paul is getting at when he said that bondslaves should not be argumentative.

Paul's final exhortation to bondslaves is for them not to pilfer things. The KJV says, not purloining. The Greek word is *nosphizo* (Strong's G3557), which means to set apart or keep back. It was a common practice for slaves and servants to set aside things for themselves. We call that stealing. When you take something that does not belong to you, that is stealing.

When we lived in Agha Jari, Iran, we had servants, and we had servants quarters right beside our house. It was pretty common for things to disappear. Something would be moved a little bit from its original place. A few days later it would move again. Finally, it would be removed and you would not see it any longer. Items disappeared, but food also disappeared. It was common for them to set aside the food you had bought for your family for their families. Rather than use their wages to pay for their food, they would set your food aside for themselves and their family. Paul instructs Titus to exhort these bondslaves not to pilfer or set aside for themselves the things that belong to their masters. Instead, they were to show all good faith and adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect. The NIV is not my favorite version, but I like how they have translated this verse. It reads, *"and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive."*

You would think that you would not have to tell believers not to steal, but Paul does. In the Ten Commandments found in Exodus 20, God says in verse 15, *"Thou shall not steal."* We are not to take for ourselves what belongs to others. Lying and stealing erode trust, and the KJV says that they are not to steal so that they can be fully trusted.

In one church that I pastored, Murchison Drilling Schools gave our church a projector that they were no longer using. It was a nice Epson projector and had originally cost \$3,000. Someone at the church decided to take it, and we never knew what happened to it. It just disappeared and when I did the next Orientation meeting for new members, the projector was nowhere to be found. I was sorry to lose the projector, but I was grieved over the fact that someone would steal something from the church.

We are to be known as faithful stewards. A steward is one who takes care of what belongs to someone else. We may not be bondslaves, but all of us are stewards. The Lord says in Psalm 24:1, *"The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it."* Everything we have belongs to the Lord; we are just stewards that are entrusted with things. In Leviticus 27:30, God tells us that the tithe belongs to Him. We are stewards of everything He gives us, but He has set aside the tithe for Himself. Our church is a faithful group, but most believers do not honor God with their tithes. The prophet, Malachi, said, why do rob God? They were taking the tithes and offerings that God has commanded us to give, and were pilfering it for themselves. We are not to set aside that money for our own use; it belongs to God.

(Mal 3:8-10) *"Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings....{10} Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."*

In summary, I want to go to 1 Timothy 6:1, where Paul addresses bondservants. He said, *"All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against."* Notice the common thought. Our life must be lived in such a way that honors the name of our God and our doctrine will not be spoken against. That applies to all of us today in everything that we do.

5. All Men (Titus 2:11-15)

(Titus 2:11-15) “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, {12} instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, {13} looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, {14} who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. {15} These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.”

Paul transitions from talking about bondslaves to addressing all men. He has spoken to older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and finally to bondslaves. His focus has been on sound doctrine in our individual lives. Sound doctrine is teaching that produces godly lives that adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect. He said, for the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men. All men is not speaking only to men, it is speaking to all people, the old, the young, males, females, free, and also to bondslaves. The island of Crete has many Greeks and Gentiles on it, so all men would also include both Jews and Greeks. God’s grace has appeared to all men.

What is God’s grace? It is His unmerited favor. It is extending forgiveness to us and giving salvation to us that none of us deserved. All of us deserve punishment and separation from God. He wrote in Romans 3:23, “*for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*” In the next verse he says, “*being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is Christ Jesus.*” In Romans 6:23 he wrote, “*for the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” What we earned by our sins is death, but it is by His grace that He has forgiven, justified, redeemed, and saved us. That is available to all men.

What does this grace and salvation look like in our lives? This grace and salvation should be evidenced by transformed lives. It instructs us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires. It instructs us to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age. When someone receives Christ as the Lord and Savior of their life, there is to be a transformation. Our sins and old life are buried with Christ, and we are raised up as a new creation. Our baptism is a picture of us dying to our old nature, and being raised up with Christ to a new life. Notice what Paul says in Romans 6:1-4. “*Are we to continue in sin that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*” When we come to Christ, we are to walk in newness of life. We are to put aside the lying, stealing, arguing, slandering, greed, idolatry, selfishness, and worldliness. That is our old nature and it is crucified and buried with Christ. We are raised up with Christ to walk in newness of life. Jesus gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for every good deed. Paul’s message to the Cretans is to live godly lives that adorn the gospel of Christ.

Conclusion and Applications

In the introduction to Titus I mentioned that one of the subthemes of this letter to Titus is deeds. In this last section, Paul said that Christ came to redeem us from every lawless deed. He purified us so that we would be zealous for good deeds. He told young men to be examples of good

deeds. Paul said in Titus 1:16 that the people that had been teaching destructive doctrines “profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.” These false teachers that had taken advantage of them for sordid gain had denied Christ by their deeds. They were worthless for any good deed. Somehow these people had snuck into the churches and had risen up into leadership positions, and they were wolves. They were not true followers of Christ. Their deeds denied Christ. Instead of being zealous for good deeds, they were worthless of any good deed. God’s grace and salvation has appeared to all men that we might be redeemed from every lawless deed and to be zealous for good deeds.

Our lives are being watched and observed. First, God watches and sees our lives. We know that all of us will one day give account to God for all of our deeds and every careless word (Heb 9:27, Matt 12:36). Our lives are also being watched by others. In verse seven, Paul instructed young men to be an example of good deeds. Paul wants the deeds of our lives to be a model, an example, a die that leaves the reflection of Christ on others. There are believers that watch our lives, and they should be able to imitate and pattern their lives after the things we do. We are to be examples to them.

But, there are unbelievers that are watching our lives. In my childhood, I watched the life of the pastor at the church we went to and I turned away from what I saw. I wanted nothing to do with the hypocrisy that I saw. I was an unbeliever who turned away from the gospel because of the worthless deeds that I observed. God wants our deeds to adorn the gospel of Christ, so that when people see the deeds in our life, they are attracted to Christ. Our deeds are to give off the fragrant aroma of Christ. These are the things that Paul exhorts Titus to speak, exhort, and reprove with all authority. With all authority we can speak, teach, and exhort people to turn away from lawless deeds and to be zealous for good deeds that adorn the gospel of Christ. Paul ends with, “let no one disregard you.” Paul wants the whole church to receive this word about transformed lives. A church needs to have proper government to be in order. But, a church needs to have individual lives reflect and adorn the gospel of God for it to be in order.

How are your deeds? When people see your lives, are they drawn to Christ? Are they motivated to copy and pattern their lives after you? Are you an example of good deeds? Are you zealous for good deeds? Do your deeds deny Christ, or are they a witness for the grace of God in your life?

Have you received Christ into your life? One day we shall all stand before God and give account for our lives. What will you say to God when you stand before Him? God tells us that if we believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, and if we confess Jesus as our Lord, we will be saved. Do you believe that Jesus was God’s Son and that He came and died for our sins and that He was raised from the dead? Have you confessed Him as Lord? Have you made Him your Master? If you have never confessed Jesus, let me encourage you to pray with me this morning.

Father, I do believe that Jesus was Your Son, and that He died, was buried, and rose from the dead. I ask You to forgive me of my sins and I receive Christ’s payment for my sins. Jesus, I surrender my life to You and I confess You as my Lord. Transform my life and may my life be an example of good deeds that adorn the gospel. I ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Introduction (Titus 2:9-15, 1:13-2:1)

4. **Bondslaves** (Titus 2:9-10, Dan 3:16-18, Ex 20:3, 20:15, Dan 6, Acts 5:27-29, Ps 24:1, 1 Tim 6:1)

5. **All Men** (Titus 2:11-15, Rom 3:23-24, 6:23, 6:1-4, Tit 1:16)

Conclusion and Applications (Heb 9:27, Matt 12:36, Rom 10:9-10)