

Attachment: The Gospel and Our Families

The Gospel and Womanhood

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May 11, 2008



THE GOSPEL AND WOMANHOOD
Titus 2:3-5

If you have a Bible, and I hope you do, then I invite you to open with me to Titus 2. You might need to use your Table of Contents to find Titus. It's really small, in the back of the New Testament. The subject we're going to talk about today is the gospel and womanhood.

And I've got a feeling there's some people thinking, "Dave, what do you know about womanhood?" And so, what we're going to dive into is a passage in Titus 2 that's in the context of instructions to younger men, older men, younger women, and older women. And we're going to focus on biblical womanhood in Titus 2.

I want you to look with me at verse 3. We're going to dive right in. We've got a lot of ground to cover. And I want you to see what he says about – what the Bible says about older women and younger women. And then we're going to jump to the end, because we have to connect the dots, is what happens at the end of Titus 2 with the paragraph we're going to focus on.

Titus 2:3 says,

"Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God" (Titus 2:3-5).

Now skip with me over to Titus 2:11,

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you (Titus 2:11-15).

What I want to do is I want to kind of take this from the back to the front, and we're going to work our way back to that main paragraph in Titus 2:3-5. But I want us to start in verse 15. We've got to realize that these words about womanhood, Biblical womanhood, do not just come out of a vacuum. There's a context here. And what you've got is a letter that Paul wrote to Titus, a church leader, about how to instruct young men and older men and young women and older women.

A Couple of Reminders...

And he says at the very end, listen to the confidence he says, "*These, then, are the things you should teach*" (Titus 2:15). Verse 15, "*Encourage and rebuke with all authority*" (Titus 2:15). And I want to remind you – I want to give you a couple reminders. And they're key for the series. They're really key for us to understand every week we gather together and look at the Word. But I want to remind you of them especially in the beginning of this series.

The Word is the preacher's only source of authority.

First reminder is this – the Word of God is the preacher's only source of authority. The Word is the preacher's only source of authority. He says, "Encourage and rebuke with all authority as you teach these things, the Word." Now we live in a day when there are men and women, for that matter, who stand before the people of God and speak nonsense. Who speak that which God's Word does not say, and claim to have authority as Spiritual leaders. This is one of the things I'm most burdened about in our church culture is the absence of spiritual authority and spiritual leadership.

And as soon as I say that, there are some of you who are like, "Well what makes you think you've got authority?" And this is where I want to remind you of a few things. Number one, the preacher's authority is not personal. It's not personal. It's not based on who he is. Some people think, "Well if the preacher said it, then he's right. That's the way it is." Some of you are far from thinking that. You think if the preacher said it, he's probably wrong. And if that's – I can take that.

But some people think, and we know – we know that there are many people today who have not placed their faith in Christ, they have placed their faith in a charismatic communicator. And their faith revolves around this person as opposed to the person of Christ. The preacher's authority is not personal.

Second, it's not organizational. And by that, I mean there are many church organizations, denominations, cults – we won't go into mentioning specifics at this point, but that say apart from Scripture, the teaching of the church is authoritative. And what the church says or what this cult says, that's authoritative in addition to Scripture. And it's not true. It's not true. The Word is the preacher's only source of authority. It's not organizational.

Third, the preacher's authority is not intellectual. There are lots of people, lots of preachers who think their ideas and their thoughts and their theories carry authority, supposed theologians and Bible scholars who begin to elevate as they study, as they grow in supposed intellect, they elevate their minds over the Word of God and they criticize the Word of God as being under them. This is rampant across college campuses, especially Christian college campuses – supposedly Christian college campuses, where a supposedly Christian professor is so criticizing the Word he has exalted his intellect above the Word. And at that point, he has absolutely no authority – none whatsoever.

And this happens among preachers, too, pastors who begin to share, though many pastors or preachers wouldn't say, "Well I think my ideas are better than God's." The way many pastors and preachers preach, they show that they believe that. Because they don't share what God has said, they share what they think – their thoughts, their opinions, and I want to remind you that my authority before you is not based on my intellect or lack thereof. My authority is not based on how many degrees I do have or do not have. The preacher's authority is not intellectual.

Next, the preacher's authority is not psychological. I am not Dr. Phil. And you need to know this. And we laugh, but there are many people in our church culture today who look at their pastor as a glorified psychologist, a glorified counselor who has the answers to all the things they're going through. And it affects the way we preach, because many times preachers feel this pressure to try to answer all the questions that everybody's asking. Well, Walter Kaiser sums it up best. He said,

Many pastors preach whole messages with little more than a tip of the hat to a clause or two taken from a Biblical context that few, if any recognize. Even more pastors have decided that using the Bible is a handicap for meeting the needs of the different generations. Therefore, they have gone to drawing their sermons from the plethora of recovery and pop psychology books that fill our Christian bookstores. The market forces demand that we give people what they want to hear if we wish them to return and pay for the mega sanctuaries that we have built.

My goal is in no way intended to criticize psychology or counseling. But I do want to remind you that if your desire is for self-help doctrine, this worship gathering is not the place where you will find it. My authority is not based on any psychological prowess that I bring to the table. Preacher's authority is not personal, organizational, intellectual, psychology.

Finally, it's not experiential. And this may be the most deceptive, maybe the most dominant trend in our day – this idea. And it's prevalent in the church that someone can speak about some thing only if that person has gone through that thing. That's the only way they can speak with authority on it.

And so we've got this idea that if I've gone through adultery, then the best person to help me at this point is someone else who's gone through adultery. If I've gone through this sin in my life, then the best person to help me – the one that has the most authority is someone who has also gone through that sin. That is ludicrous, ladies and gentlemen. If that were the case, then Jesus Himself would have nothing to offer us.

Praise God that Jesus did not once give in to adultery, immorality, lying, cheating, any of the things we find ourselves struggling with. He didn't give in once, and as such, He alone is able to help us walk through those things. It undercuts the whole foundation of what the gospel is and who the person of Christ is, to say that authority is experiential. Preacher's authority is none of those things, because the preacher's authority is only biblical.

And I want to remind you this from the very beginning. The only authority of someone who stands before the people of God is based in the Word of God. As long as that man, or that person, speaks the Word of God, what he speaks is in line with the Word of God, then he has – Titus 2:15 – “All authority.” But the minute he goes beyond this Word to thoughts, desires, opinions, at that moment, he has lost his authority, she has lost her authority.

It's all based on the Word of God. Prophet in the Old Testament would come before the people of God, what would he always start? He'd say, “Thus sayeth the Lord,” and then he'd tell us a message from God. “Thus sayeth the Lord.” If you're going to stand before the people of God and say, “Thus sayeth the Lord,” you better know what the Lord sayeth. You better know it really well, if you're going to represent the Word of God.

And so that's the picture – the authority is all tied up in the Word of God. Now some of you are thinking, “I thought we were talking about womanhood. Why are you talking about preaching? This is like preaching class. What's the point?” I want you to follow with me

here. I want to remind you of this because over the next six weeks, we are going to talk – we are going to talk about womanhood and we’re going to talk about singleness. We’re going to talk about marriage. We’re going to talk about parenting. We’re going to talk about children. We’re going to talk about manhood as we close out on Father’s Day – so men, your time is coming. But we’re going to talk about all of these things.

And I want to remind you from the very beginning, this is something that needs to be present in our minds week after week, but especially in a series like this. I want to remind you that my authority is not personal. Any authority that I bring to the table is not based on who I am. If it were, I’d be in a lot of trouble this morning because, well quite frankly, I’m not a woman. And that would make it very hard to preach on womanhood if my authority was based on who I am.

It’s not personal. It’s not organizational, or intellectual. I am not claiming – please hear me, from the very beginning of the series – I’m not claiming to be the wise one that has all the answers to your struggles, situations, marriage, family. That’s not what I’m claiming. It’s not intellectual, it’s not psychological, and it’s not experiential. And this is huge, because there are so many circumstances represented around this room when it comes to our families. Different situations, almost in every single seat – every single family unit, for sure. Different pasts, different situations now, different struggles, emotional, many times painful struggles from the past or maybe in the present right now.

And the reality is, as we look at the Word of God, there will be times when the Word of God – I’ll go ahead and be honest with you, kind of from the start, there’s going to be times when the Word of God’s going to confront us to speak very boldly, powerfully, even challenge us. And I believe there will be a very strong temptation – the adversary will begin to whisper in our ear and say, “He doesn’t know what he’s talking about. He doesn’t know what you’re going through. That doesn’t apply to you.”

And you will be tempted to go and try to find someone else who agrees with what you think. And you can find someone else who agrees with what you think. But I want to remind you from the very beginning of our time in this series – I – I really could care less what you think about me. I simply want you to ask the question, when we look at the Word of God today and over each week in this series, is “Is that what the Word of God says?” And if it is what the Word of God says, regardless of what you think about me, that places a high priority on your life. It places demands on your life if you are a follower of Christ.

And the question is, when you see what the Word of God says, is He going to be your King then? That you will subject your life and the way you respond in your family’s situation to this Word. I want to remind you that I bring no authority to the table when it comes from the gospel and our families apart from this Word. And I want more than anything to stay as close to this Word as possible. If I stray from this Word, you can tune me out. But as long as this Word is what’s being clearly communicated, then I want to encourage you, urge you to listen and I – even that, I’m praying – I’m praying because I know all of the situations that could be represented around this room. And there are statements that I will say, I hope based on the Word of God that even this morning, one woman over here might encourage her, but at the same statement over here might offend this woman.

And I’m praying that God, by the power of His Spirit, would take his Word and apply it appropriately in each of our lives across this room. And so I invite you to pray according to that with me. And let’s open ourselves up and say, “God, whatever your Word says, we want that to be evident in our families. And so, we’re open to hear what your Word says.” And with that openness, we’ll dive in – in light of the fact that it’s not based on what David

brings to the table, it's based on what the Word brings to the table, which leads to the second reminder I want to give you.

The Word is the preacher's ultimate source of accountability.

Not only is the Word the preacher's only source of authority, but the Word is the preacher's ultimate source of accountability. And this is why I share this with you this morning, because there is a day – I hope this will encourage you – there is a day when I will stand before God to give an account for what I have said. And that's why some of the tough things we're going to see in Scripture, and in the coming weeks, that I – I pray I will speak boldly. Because I have a responsibility before God to do that. And I think that it's best for the people of God.

The preacher is accountable before God to proclaim the Word, regardless of whether or not it tickles the ears of those in 21st century culture. The preacher has a responsibility, accountability to God to proclaim the Word and the preacher's accountable before God to live the Word. To live the Word – this is Titus 2:7, he tells Titus, "You need to set an example in everything you do, Titus." This is the reality of preaching a series on family and to see already this week, even though I'm looking at womanhood, which doesn't apply as directly to me, the picture is still challenging for a husband and a father, perspective on my wife and the mother of my children, this picture. And in the coming weeks, to look at marriage and look at Biblical manhood and to look at some of these different issues, and to know that God has said to me, as Paul said to Titus, "You need to set the example."

And so, I would ask you to pray for me, and pray for my family that God would give us grace to live according to this Word. So with that foundation, two reminders that are so key. What I want to do is I want to begin to connect the dots between the series we've been in the last six weeks, looking at the gospel, and what we're doing now, looking at families. I want to bring these together, and I want you to see how the gospel affects our families in two primary ways.

The Gospel Is the Foundation for Biblical Womanhood...

Number one, especially when it comes to womanhood this morning, the gospel is the foundation for biblical womanhood. We talked about this over the last couple of weeks. The gospel is not just one class that you will participate in as a Christian. The gospel is the entire building in which all the classes are contained. The gospel undergirds every dimension of our lives.

And that's what he's saying, here in Titus 2:11-14. You read that, "*The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good*" (Titus 2:11-14).

That's gospel. He just spent ten verses saying, "Young men, do this. Older men, do this. Young women, do this. Older women, do this. Servants do this." And he says for – the reason why we do these things is because the gospel undergirds the whole deal. How does the gospel undergird the whole deal?

God's grace covers our past.

Well number one, His grace, the gospel, God's grace covers our past. That's what verse 11, this is kind of back to back to back, 11, 12 and 13 – 11, God's grace covers our past. He has brought us to salvation. This is what we've been talking about – being born again. The way we are born again is by the grace of God. So his grace enables us to come to faith in Christ.

But it doesn't just stop at this point. Now you've got out of line going to hell, you're in the line going to Heaven and everything's all good. No, this is the beginning of salvation. You are saved, born again, born again forever.

God's grace empowers our present.

But the picture is now; His grace not just covers the past. God's grace empowers our present. This is what verse 12 says. His grace, I love this phrase, "teaches us," literally trains us, disciplines us. Grace is your teacher, Christian. Follower of Christ in this room, grace is teaching you, training you, disciplining you on a daily basis to grow in the image of Christ. What it says in verse 14 to purify, be purified.

This is the picture, how – there's no woman who can live up to the picture in Titus 2 on your own. You need grace to do it. There's no man who can live up to the picture of Biblical manhood. You need grace to do it. Grace empowers the present. The only way to live in marriage, to live as parents, to live as children – it's all grounded in the gospel, in the grace of God. His grace trains us for these things.

God's grace guarantees our future.

His grace covers our past, His grace empowers our present, and His grace guarantees our future. That's verse 13. "We wait for the blessed hope, the appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." So you see how the gospel is the foundation for all that we're going to read about it. His grace undergirds the whole picture.

The Gospel Is the Purpose of Biblical Womanhood...

Not only is the gospel the foundation for biblical womanhood, but second, the gospel is the purpose of biblical womanhood. And I want to show you this in three different verses in Titus 2. Three different times where Paul uses what's called a purpose clause, which basically means he's just given a command and he says why you're supposed to do this, what is the purpose of following this command.

Look with me in Titus 2:9 and 10. And you'll see it at the end of verse 10. He's talking about servants here. "*Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that,*" here's the purpose clause, "*so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive*" (Titus 2:9-10).

So they need to obey this command to show the attractiveness of God our Savior. Look up in verse – look in verse 8. Actually, we'll start in verse 7, just midway through. This is talking to young men. "*In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that*" here it is again, "*so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us*" (Titus 2:7-8).

And then you look in verse 5, where we're about to focus on, actually just start on verse 4, when it's talking about younger women. *"They can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that ,"* there it is, *"So that no one will malign the word of God"* (Titus 2:4-5).

And so the picture he gives is you act these ways, you behave in these ways so that no one will malign or blaspheme the Word of God. So that no one will have anything bad to say about us. So that people will see God our Savior as attractive.

The purpose of biblical womanhood is NOT ...

And this is where I want to remind you, when we talk about womanhood today, the purpose of Biblical womanhood is first of all, not for cultural convenience. It's not so that we can be molded into the mold of the culture around us, so we can be shaped into what this culture deems as womanhood.

You got to realize that in the first century, Paul is writing to a people who – I mean, this is the birth of Christianity – he's writing to a people who for the first time are showing what the affect of Christ is on a home. For the first time, moms and dads and husbands and wives, children, are having to consider and show the world – a pagan world that surrounded them in the first century – what kind of difference does Christ make in the home.

And it was not easy to do. What they were being called on to do all across the New Testament was counter-cultural. And we're going to see that, though it's not a direct correlation between us today and the first century then, there is no question that the picture of a Christ-centered family in our culture is under attack. There's no question that the things the Bible's going to teach us over the coming weeks will set us in many ways against the culture in which we live. And we've got to decide from the very beginning whether or not we want to be molded into what our culture says is right, or if we want to be molded into what God says is right.

This is not about cultural convenience. As a result, there are some unpopular things we're going to look at. It's not about cultural convenience. And second, the purpose of Biblical womanhood is not about personal preference either. And this is key. We're going to dive into this more two weeks from now. We need to realize that the purpose of marriage, the purpose of parenting, the purpose of family is not for your or my individual fulfillment or personal preference. The commands we're going to look at in Scripture are not intended to make things as comfortable as possible for you. They're not to suit your preferences and what can most fulfill you according to what you think.

Now I want to remind you of that because I'm not saying that marriage is not fulfilling, parenting is not fulfilling. These are good things. We're going to see that. These are great things, when they're done the way God has designed them. But the reality is we need to know from the very beginning, we are not the end game here. God's glory is the end game here, and the purpose of marriage is to put the glory of God on display, to make the teaching about our God and Savior attractive.

The purpose of parenting is to put the glory of God on display. The purpose of our lives and our families is to put the glory of God on display. And we sacrifice our preferences, our comfort toward that end.

The purpose of biblical womanhood IS ...

And that is key, from the very beginning, to realize that. The purpose of Biblical womanhood is not for cultural convenience or personal preference. The purpose of Biblical womanhood is to show the beauty of Christ, to make teaching about God our Savior attractive.

This is where we are going to focus. How can we live today, women, how can you live in a way that puts the gospel of Jesus Christ on display in your life? And that is the consuming question. As long as the consuming question in your life is what can work best for me or make things easiest for me, then we will not be able to engage Scripture on a meaningful level. At the point when we realize that our purpose is to show the beauty of Christ, now we're getting to what God has designed for our lives as men, women. To show the beauty of Christ, and to advance the mission of Christ.

So no one will malign the Word of God, so that nobody can say anything bad about us, so that people in this pagan culture around us – first century, 21st century, will see the affect of the gospel on families. Do we realize how huge a need this today? An unbelieving world, in America, is looking at families in the church and saying, "What difference does it make? What difference does your gospel make? Your families look just like all the families outside the church."

And I want to be very careful here. I want to be very careful because I know – I know that there are men and women, family situations represented, where the glory of Christ may not have been displayed in the past. And I know that there are painful instances of divorce, that there are men, women – not only who are divorced in this room, but men and women who maybe have left children. And this is why – this is why I want to keep this picture of grace from the very beginning in front of us. God's grace – Praise God – God's grace covers our past. It covers our past.

It's the last thing I want to do – if you are in that situation, where there's some things in your past where the glory of Christ and the mission of Christ has not been advanced, and this way in your family, it's the last thing I want to do is heap guilt on you. His grace covers our past. At the same time, I am confident there are women today, there are men today throughout this series who are struggling to hold on in marriage, and struggling to hold on in parenting, struggling to hold on in different facets of family. And I want to urge you to hold fast by the grace of Christ. I want to urge you with everything that is in me over the next six weeks to hold fast by the grace of Christ.

And I want to speak to men and women, specifically women to say it is time that we raise the bar in the church and say as women, "This is what the gospel of Christ looks like in action." The world needs to see this. The world needs to see this in you. The world needs to see this in men in the church. And I'm praying, and I hope that you will join me in praying that God will – this is what I'm praying. I'm praying that God will platform the gospel in the families of The Church at Brook Hills.

I'm praying that God will show the power of His gospel, in bringing healing and bringing restoration and bringing freedom and bringing joy to families all across this faith family. I'm praying that God will forge marriages that show the power of the gospel in this faith family so that people in Birmingham, unbelievers in Birmingham and in all nations will see that the gospel is good, and will see that Christ is attractive because of the way marriages look and families look in the context of the church. Will you pray with me for that? Pray that God will platform the gospel.

That's the purpose of biblical womanhood. When we talk about these things today, and what Scripture's going to teach us in Titus 2 about what a woman should look like in Scripture, the purpose is so that the gospel will advance to the nations. That's why we're talking about this. Because we want the beauty of Christ to be evident.

Okay, with that said, we're about to go Secret Church style. And what we've got is we've got this passage, this paragraph, split up into two groups – older women and younger women. And most people think that older women is referring to women who are beyond the age of child bearing and probably child rearing, and then younger women would be of child bearing or child rearing age. There's no set line or anything here.

But what you've got is a picture of Paul saying, "Titus, encourage older women in these three ways, and encourage younger women in these seven ways." And so some of them are very self-explanatory. We're going to fly through. Some of them, we'll camp out a little longer on. But I want you to see the picture of Biblical womanhood in Titus 2.

And I'll go ahead and let you know, we've talked about this already a little bit. This may be one of those passages that is the most maligned and misunderstood passage. Radical feminism, secular feminism has swept into the church, has swept into the church and says that passage like Titus 2:3-5 is chauvinistic, is sexist, it is outdated. And there are many people in the church who look at a passage – there's many people in the church who look at the passage like Titus 2:3-5 and say, "Well, this is outdated, and therefore it's optional in my life." And I want to remind you that God's Word is not optional. As soon as we understand what the Word is saying, we will not say it is chauvinistic. We will not say it is sexist. We will not say it's outdated. We will say this has been God's plan from the very beginning of creation, and we want in on it. We want to experience all that He has for us in our families. That's why we're going to listen to the Word and subject our lives to the Word.

The Gospel and Older Women...

I'll start with older women. The gospel and older women. Three basic commands, they're in Titus 2:3, "*Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.*"

Be holy.

Command number one, the gospel and older women – the gospel encourages older women around this room, be holy. Be holy. Live your lives reverently before God. Older women, set a Godly example for younger women. Show what life looks like before holy God. Demonstrate that with the way you live. Be holy.

Build up the body of Christ.

Second, build up the body of Christ. Now he describes this in two ways – build up the body of Christ. First, he says, not to be slanderers. Build up the body of Christ with your tongue, with the way you talk. Older women speak in a way that builds up the character of Christ in others. Speak in a way that builds up the body of Christ in the church. Do not gossip. Do not slander. Do not say anything that is not useful, Ephesians 4, for building up others according to their needs in Christ Jesus. Do not let your tongue get out of control to where you're not building up the body of Christ.

You see how awkward this is? Like I feel like I'm telling my grandmother how to live. This is not an easy thing. But it's the authority of the Word, so we're going to stick with that. The

Word is saying, "Do not be slanderers. Don't speak in any way that does not bring glory to Christ."

And not just control of our tongue, kind of a corporate picture of building up the body of Christ, but a more personal picture, "*Do not be addicted to much wine*" (Titus 2:3). Do not lose self control, which is mentioned all throughout Titus 2. So the picture is guard your body as a temple of the Holy Spirit. Build up the body of Christ. Be holy. Build up the body of Christ.

Make disciples.

Now here's where it gets really good. Listen to what it says last. "*But to teach what is good.*"⁴ *Then they can train the younger women*" (Titus 2:3-4). So here's the picture. Be holy, you build up the body of Christ. Why? So that you can teach and train younger women. Be holy, build up the body of Christ and here it is, third, make disciples. This is disciple making at the core. This is the Bible saying to older women, "Make disciples with younger women. Show younger women what the life in Christ looks like."

This is a God entrusted task to older women across this faith family. Younger women in this faith family need to see this in you. This is why Paul says this. I love this, 'cause he's talking to Titus, and basically the underlying current is, "Titus, let's be honest. Your forte is not going to be with older women and younger women, encouraging them how to live. And so you encourage older women to train up younger women and show them what this mission looks like. Show them what the Christ life looks like." This is the responsibility of older women throughout this faith family.

And I want to pause here for just a minute and just thank God. We are predominantly a younger faith family, on a whole, than a lot of faith families, a lot of churches. But we have been entrusted with some incredible older women in this faith family, valuable older women in this faith family.

I'll never forget, when I just started preaching here, and I got here early one morning and I was walking down the hall over there. I had just preached here just a few weeks. And an older woman met me in the hall, and she pulled me aside. And I had never met her before, and she said, "I want you to know how thankful we are for the Word you're sharing with us." And I said, "Well, thanks." And she said, "I told somebody that you should be our next pastor." I said, "Well, okay." And she said, "You want to know what they told me back?" I said, "Well, what did they tell you back?" And she said, "They told me that would be a possibility, but in order to be a pastor of The Church at Brook Hills, you have to be at least 35 years old." And I said, "Oh, okay." And she looked back at me and said, "Do you want to know what I told them?" I said, "What did you tell them?" She said, "I told them that if that's the case, then Jesus Christ Himself could not be pastor of The Church at Brook Hills." I was like, "Yes, Ma'am. Yes, Ma'am."

That conversation, and ever since then, there have been – even when Heather and I first came in what we used to call RBF and there was some older groups of RBF that invited us in and welcomed us in. And some of you are part of that, and have encouraged us since then. God has entrusted this faith family with some incredible older men and women who are leading us out in this mission, who are showing what this mission looks like in action. I want to encourage you – this – Titus 2, this right here is senior adult ministry in action. This is older women saying, "I am going to show a group of young mothers. I am going to show some young wives what it looks like to follow Christ." That's the picture. Make disciples. That's the three affects of the gospel on older women in Titus 2.

The Gospel and Younger Women...

Love your husband.

Seven effects of the gospel on younger women. Number one, first and foremost, love your husband. "*Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands*" (Titus 2:3). Now I'm going not to sound self-serving in this part of our time together. But you've got to realize, here in Titus 2, these commands to younger women, there's bookends here. Beginning starts with "love your husband." End, it says, "Be subject to your husband." So the picture is you've got this picture of a Biblical woman in Titus 2 encapsulated in the picture of her loving her husband. And this is a picture we see in other places in the New Testament as well.

Even in the Old Testament, you look at Genesis 2:18, you look at 1 Corinthians 11:8 and 9. And here's where I want to remind you – we've talked about this before in Colossians. I want to remind you, ladies, that this command to love your husband comes before, in Scripture, your command to love your children. And the reason I mention Genesis 2:18 and 1 Corinthians 11:8 and 9 is because those two passages remind ladies that they are first and foremost their husband's helper, not their children's mother. Their husband's helper, not their children's mother.

And I just want to remind you of that because the way Scripture depicts a biblical woman, and a wife and mother, the picture is her love for her children flows out of the spring of her love for her husband. That's the picture we've got here in Titus 2. That's the picture we've got in other places that we will be looking at over the coming weeks. And this is huge.

Ladies, the priority – apart from obviously your relationship with God – the priority in your life – now we're going to talk about singleness next week. For those of you who are married, apart from your relationship with God, the priority in your life is loving your husband.

Now, what I love about Titus 2 is the fact that it says older women should train younger women to love their husbands, which means this is not something that happens automatically. It's not something that just happens easily. Let's be honest, there are a couple of men in this room who are not easy to love. And those guys have some things to work on.

But, I was actually having a conversation with Heather about this passage this week. And she looked at me, and she actually kind of helped me realize this. She said, "You know, you're not easy to love all the time." I was like, "Oh, well thanks." And she's right. She's exactly right. Who in here is always easy to love? If you even begin to raise your hand, you're getting an elbow to the gut right next to you. There's no chance. This is a love – this is a picture we've got in Titus 2 – this is a love that requires great determination.

It's not always easy. As soon as I say – I know that as soon as I say, "Ladies, the priority in your life is to love your husbands. Love your husband," I know that there are ladies that are saying, "You don't know my husband." I know. There are difficult situations represented across this room. You say, "Well there are a lot of reasons not to love my husband." This is where I want to remind you, women, that your love for your husband is not based on his worthiness to be loved. It is based on God's command in you to love them. And that is huge.

Your love for your husband is not based – this is what the world says – the world says it's based on what you get back. It's based on how much they deserve it. It's based on what is most fair and right. And if they don't do something right, they don't deserve your love. That is not what Scripture says. Scripture says, "Ladies, love your husbands." And this is why – this is why we need to see the connection between the gospel and our families. How can women who live with unlovable husbands love them?

The only answer is the gospel. This is the picture of the gospel. The whole picture of the gospel is a God, not who loves the lovable, who loves the unlovable – who gives his life for us when we were the most undeserving. How in the world can you love your husband? By the love of God in you. It's His grace in you. It's 1 John 4:19. We love, why? Because He first loved us. This is a love that God alone can give in us. This is why the gospel and grace is at the foundation of our families, because His grace is the power to do this.

I'm not saying that I know exactly what you're going through, but I can imagine there are certain situations around this room where there are struggles to love. I can imagine there's a wife over here who's – and I'm not saying over here like I know someone over here. Just over here – over here – there. There's a wife somewhere whose husband is spending long hours at work and comes home and watches TV and engages her for a minute or two of the day. I know there's a wife in here whose husband is back on the internet looking at pornography again. I know that there's a wife in here whose husband is not a Christian and who is antagonistic toward everything that is Christian, and all of her Christian friends.

And you think about these situations, and you think, "Well how can God call you to love your husband in those situations?" And the answer is the gospel – it's the Cross. It's you going to God and saying, "God, my husband is very unlovable right now." And God says, "Loving the unlovable is my specialty." And He gives the grace – God never gives a command that He doesn't empower us to carry out. Say that one more time. God never gives us a command that He doesn't empower us to carry out. His grace – this is why we need the gospel, this is why we need grace.

Culture says as soon as things are inconvenient in marriage, when things just – it's not working out with your preferences – well, then you move on. No, the gospel says when things are inconvenient, when things are not working out in preferences, then you love your husband. You love your husband, you love your husband. This is priority, you loving your husband.

This is the picture of Biblical womanhood, and it's a love that requires determination – great determination. It's a choice to love and not just determination, but it's a love that brings great delight. It brings great delight, and that's the picture that God has designed here in Titus 2 – this word for love. "Love your husbands." Word originally was in the New Testament's *phileo* – it's the word that's used for friendship love. It's a tender, affectionate love, like a love between best friends.

This is the picture that God has designed for marriage. And this doesn't happen automatically. This isn't something – you're thinking, "Well that's the last thing that I experience right now." You're thinking, "Well, my feelings have faded for my husband. I love someone else. What do I do? Should I leave this picture?" No, you love your husband. You love your husband.

Now this can be twisted. This can be twisted. This must be balanced with all of what Scripture says. There are certainly situations, and Scripture addresses those, where – for example, physical abuse – where this is not saying – Titus 2 is not saying, "If your husband

is physically abusing you, then you go back day after day after day after day.” That is not what the Scripture is teaching. You can definitely be abused, but the picture is clear. Love your husbands in a way that is determined – in a way that God says will bring great delight. This is his design for this love. So love your husbands.

Love your children.

And second, love your children. Love your children. Again, we have to be trained to love our children. It’s not always easy to love children. Don’t “Amen” too loudly if they’re sitting right next to you. But the picture is it’s not always easy to love children. The picture we have in Scripture, I think it’s borne out in our experiences. There is no profession that requires – and husbands, I just want to give you an opportunity, our husbands, dads, just know that about to set you up for an “Amen,” and I want you to take advantage of this opportunity, all right?

There is no profession that requires more work or greater sacrifice than motherhood on a day by day basis. That was weak. I set you up! This is your chance, like – you may have realized this morning it’s Mother’s Day, you don’t have a card. Like, this is your chance. I’m trying to help you out here, man. I’m going to say this one more time, and I want to give you an opportunity to respond with a little more gusto. Come on, here we go.

You know, there is no profession that requires more work, greater sacrifice than motherhood on a day by day basis. There you go, there you go. I’m trying to help you here. Love your children. Love your children. This love involves deep demands. It involves deep demands. No question, for a mom to take a son or daughter and to care for them spiritually, physically, emotionally in every way, to lead them through the ups and downs and the ebbs and flows of their life.

This is an incredibly picture. And the reality is, Titus 2 is saying no woman, please hear this – no woman is up to the task of mothering. You can’t do it. That’s the picture the gospel is giving us. You can’t do it. It’s the grace of God in you that enables you to be the mother that God has designed you to be. It’s all based on grace, involves deep demands that sends you to God to say, “God, I need you. Christ, do this.”

And not just involving deep demands, but this is a love that brings – and I use the same word here because it’s the same word in the original names of the New Testament. It’s a love that brings deep delight. Again, it’s the same word – tender, affectionate love, like a love between best friends. Now think about this. Think about this. What does an unbelieving world do when they see a mom whose love for her children is like a love that she has with her best friend? That shines in our culture today. It shines so brightly. This is what shows the beauty of Christ, that makes the teaching about God, our savior, attractive to a lost world.

Discipline yourself.

Love your children. Next, discipline yourself. “*Train [them] to love their husbands and children, to be self controlled*” (Titus 2:4-5). This is something that’s mentioned with each of the different groups in Titus 2. Self control. It’s something that comes up over and over and over again, and it comes right on the heels here, in Titus 2:5 of talking about children. And it makes sense. How can we ever expect to discipline our children if we cannot discipline ourselves? How can we ever expect to discipline our children if we cannot discipline ourselves?

It says, “Be self controlled. Discipline yourself.” And this is the picture we’ve got over there in verse 12, where we talked about grace teaches us, trains us – grace disciplines us. So

this is not you getting up and doing the workout and saying, "How can I make this thing, mothering thing work better?" It's you saying, "God I need your grace today, every single moment of today, to enable me, to train me, to discipline me, to mold me in the image of Christ, to purify me," verse 14.

Grace does this in our life. Grace disciplines us to say "no" to the world and to say "yes" to Christ. No to the things of this world would put before us and our families, our children and our husbands, that would pull us away. Grace to say "no" to those things and grace to say "yes" to all that Christ is for us and in us. It's grace that does this.

I love what Proverbs 25:28 says. Listen to it. "A man without self control," and we'll kind of put "woman" in there. A woman without self control is, "*like a city whose walls are broken down*" (Prov. 25:28). A woman without self control is like a city broken into and left without walls. It's a great picture, that self control is literally a wall of defense around us, against the enemies of our souls.

Now, with each of these things we could preach whole different sermons on each of them. But Scripture all over teaches self-control in a variety of different ways, teaches us to guard our heart. Grace teaches us to guard our heart. It is the wellspring of life, the Psalms say. Ladies, women, guard your heart. Guard your mind. "Whatever's pure, whatever's noble, whatever's right, whatever's excellent or praiseworthy. Think about these things." Philippians 4, guard your body. Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Guard your eating and your sleeping and your drinking. Guard your body. It's a temple of the Holy Spirit. Be self controlled, and guard your will – and guard your will.

I would encourage you, maybe as just kind of a take away from Titus 2, when it comes to this picture of self control, there are so many areas in all of our lives, men and women alike, as we're talking about womanhood and we think about self control, areas where we've left our guard down. Maybe where we need to grow in self control. And that can almost be a little overwhelming.

I would encourage you, maybe as a take away from this morning, maybe in your time in the Lord this week, ask him to show you one, maybe two, maybe small areas in your life where you need to grow in self control. And say, "This is where I'm going to focus on. And I want – God, by your grace, I want you to develop self control in this area in my life." What you'll have – what'll happen – I guarantee it, what'll happen is when you start to focus on this little area here, you'll begin to see that little area has affects on all of these other areas over here. So just begin to unpack that little by little. Discipline yourself.

Be faithful to God and to your husband.

Next, be faithful to God and your husband. "*Be self-controlled and pure*" (Titus 2:5). This is a picture of marital faithfulness, in heart, mind and body. Pure, innocent, uncontaminated. This is radical faithfulness to God and to your husband. And the context of this word "pure" really is focused on sexual purity.

And the picture is be faithful. Be faithful. And we know – we know the adversary wants to attack this area in women's lives, in men's lives, in our marriages. To attack moral purity and faithfulness to each other. We know sexual temptation is no respecter of persons, male or female, young or old, happily married or unhappily married. Sexual temptation is a reality, and that's why Scripture warns so strongly against it. Because there is not one of us in this room that is able to withstand that temptation on our own.

So what does Scripture say? Scripture says "flee immorality." Flee immorality. If you – ladies in this room, men as well but focusing on womanhood this morning. Ladies, if you are toying with thoughts, if you are walking away from immorality, start running. Run from immorality. Literally take flight – gospel, grace of God gives you wheels. Get out of there. Run away from immorality. Flee it. Do not think you are able to withstand, apart from the grace of Christ. Turn to the grace of Christ, the grace of Christ will pull you away. Pull you away with radical abandonment. Do not go anywhere near it.

We know how all of these things connect together. When our love for husbands begins to fade, then this begins to become that much more vulnerable. We've got to guard all of these together. Flee immorality.

And embrace purity. Embrace purity. This is 2 Timothy 2:22, 1 Corinthians 6:18. Run from unfaithfulness. But you don't just run from immorality, you're running to something. You're running to your husband. You're running to purity. You're running to God's design for marriage, which He shows all throughout Scripture. You've got a whole book in Song of Solomon about it.

He designs marriage for unabashed enjoyment and union together physically. That's the picture. Embrace purity. You're looking for a little spark, spend a weekend in Song of Solomon. Do a little date night or something. This is the picture. We need to guard this area of our lives, our marriages. Flee immorality, embrace purity. Be faithful to God and your husband by the grace of God.

Care for your home.

Three more. We'll go through these kind of quickly. Well, not really – this next one's kind of tough. Care for your home. Some of you are thinking, "Well I've kind of been waiting for you to get to this one." "*Be self controlled and pure, to be busy at home*" (Titus 2:5). I know that as soon as I read that, there were red flags all across the room. "What do you mean 'be busy at home'? What does Scripture mean by this?"

Care for your home. That's what it means. 1 Timothy 5:14 says that women are to manage their households, to manage their households. The picture we've got here – let me kind of give it to your notes, and then begin to explain it. The picture we've got for biblical womanhood is, women, you have a God-entrusted responsibility. The language here is literally you've been assigned a task. You have a God-entrusted responsibility. What is that responsibility? The responsibility is to create a God-centered home. To create a home that makes teaching about God, our Savior, attractive. "So that no one will have anything bad to say about us. Will not have accusations to make against us and they will not malign the Word of God."

You have a God entrusted responsibility to create a God-centered home. Now, it's at this point that we see in Titus 2 the responsibility is focused on wife, mothers, women, entrusted with the responsibility for managing the picture of home. Now that can carry out in different ways, obviously. And you look at Proverbs 31, it's a great example of this. Because in Proverbs 31, what you've got is a picture of a woman who's involved in doing all kinds of things. But it's for the sake of the responsibility she has to care for her family, to care for her home. We'll talk about the responsibility men have in the home later on.

But the picture is, obviously around this room, in Scripture, we need to realize that homemaking is mentioned as a high and noble calling in Scripture. And we need to affirm that in the church today. A high and noble calling. One writer put it this way – talking about our culture today. "Much of the world would agree – much of our culture would agree that

being a housekeeper is acceptable as long as you are not caring for your own home. Treating men with attentive devotion would also be right, as long as the man is the boss in the office and not your husband. Caring for children would even be deemed heroic service for which presidential awards would be given, as long as the children are someone else's and not your own."

And the picture is, it is Godly, it is right to care for your home. It is godly, it is right to pour your life into raising children. It is godly, it is right, to do those things. It is a responsibility God's entrusted to women to create and care for a God centered home. Now, at the same time, obviously there are a multiplicity of scenarios represented around this room where that – staying at home is not an option at all times. And there are working moms, single moms, different pictures. And this is where God's grace, and I pray that you'll take his Word, apply it to your life where you are. God's grace will enable you to say what does this look like in your life?

To say, "What I do," and we got to realize, just because you stay at home doesn't mean you're fitting in with Titus 2. You could stay at home and watch soap operas all day and blog and spend time on the internet. You're nowhere near Titus 2. The picture we've got in Titus 2 is taking responsibility for what God's entrusted to you. And that's going to look different in different ways all across this room.

And so I encourage you, if you are a working mom, working single mom, that kind of picture that I want to encourage you – there is great grace there for how that looks in your life. But the picture is the same across the board. We have a God-entrusted responsibility, women have a God-entrusted responsibility to create a God-centered home. And God gets great honor in a home that reflects the goodness of God.

Serve with kindness.

Which leads to this next picture, to serve with kindness. To be busy at home, to be kind amidst all that she does. Amidst, sometimes, let's be honest, ungrateful kids and every once and awhile, ungrateful husbands. That the wife, mom is said to be kind in Titus 2. What does it mean to serve with kindness? It means, number one, to desire the good of others, to desire the good of her husband, to desire the good of her children, to desire the good of outsiders who are looking at her home. To desire the good of others, and to work for the good of others.

You might read over in 1 Timothy – there's a lot of this stuff in 1 Timothy, 1 Timothy 2:9 and 10, 1 Timothy 5:9. 2:9 and 10 and 5:9 both talk about a woman who is marked, adorned with good works. And her reputation is for kindness. It's an incredible picture, serve with kindness.

Submit to your husband.

Last picture of how the gospel affects younger women – submit to your husband. Submit to your husband, to be subject to her husband. And here's where I'm going to do something almost a little bit cruel. I'm going to leave us hanging right here, and we're not going to dive into all that that means. We'll have to take another Sunday to really dive into that.

Instead what I want to do is this. We have looked at the picture of the gospel, and older women and younger women. And we talk all the time here at The Church at Brook Hills about the making disciples of all nations, of accomplishing The Great Commission. What does that look like? And the reality is there are women across here who are moms and wives, who maybe are not moms or wives, who care for, nurture, and display the characteristics we've seen here in Titus 2. And I want us to take some time this morning to

remind mothers across this room, wives across this room, women across this room of how – what you do and how God has uniquely shaped you and gifted you and entrusted much to you – how what you do on a daily basis has an impact on nations for the glory of Christ.

I want us to have an opportunity to pray for the women in this room.

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