

- As we begin, let's review...the theme for this series is "Framework for a Healthy Church"... this letter was written by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul to prepare a younger pastor, Titus, to take the necessary steps to build a healthy framework for the churches of the island of Crete...the time is approximately AD 55 to 60, and this is certainly one of Paul's last letters...over time, Paul's focus has shifted from systematic theology treatises like Romans and Ephesians, and corrective rebukes like the pair of Corinthian letters and Galatians, to the more personal approach of letters to young leaders, those men who would lay a foundation of sound doctrine for the gospel of Jesus Christ to guide the churches of the first century, then build on it with practical guidance for Christian leaders and church members throughout the Mediterranean Basin...Pastor Tony began the series, Don covered the qualifications for elders, and Robin covered the church's responsibility to reject false teachers and their teaching...this passage extends the idea of a healthy church framework to all the saints who make up the local churches, in Crete and beyond...and as we'll see, this passage is focused on all the people of God...Paul turns his attention from Titus to the church, and shares how all of us contribute to a healthy, growing, vibrant, relational fellowship that exalts Jesus Christ, shares the gospel with the world, and raises up maturing disciples year after year after year...a fellowship marked by capable, wise leaders and committed, loving members, together changing their world for Jesus...
- Turn with me to **Titus 2.1-10**...recall the theme of this passage...**replicate yourself!**
- Let's look in the text for some answers to the question: How can we help build the Church?
- **Titus**
 - ¹ **But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.**
- This passage begins with a distinct transition...the discussion about false teachers in the previous chapter ended with this statement: ¹⁶ **They profess to know God, but they deny**

him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work. This stinging rebuke described the false teachers who were infecting the local house churches throughout Crete, and who were targets of Titus’s mission to **put what remained into order (Titus 1.5)**...this practical direction from Paul to Titus is the best way to begin, and it’s a fitting summary for his entire mission...teach the truth, impart sound doctrine to the churches...that was the way the people of God would grow and mature, and that was the way the enemies of God would be censured and defeated...and that was to be the work of Titus himself, as an elder...it was his responsibility to teach God’s word and the teaching of the apostles...Titus had to be different, a truth conveyed by the phrase **But as for you**...the people of Crete, especially the Christians of Crete, needed a godly example, a leader capable of not just teaching sound doctrine, but also teaching what accords with sound doctrine, what is consistent with, in harmony with, practically aligned with, sound doctrine...and in this passage, Paul gives Titus a double handful of that teaching as he outlines what could be called a “household code” for Christian homes and relationships...but keep our theme in mind: this passage is to give the people of God guidance for how to teach and train the next generation in the family and in the church...how to live according to the design of God, how to uphold the word of God, and how to witness to the power of God...in a word, how to replicate themselves, that the wisdom of those who have walked with the Spirit can be passed on to those newer in the faith, for the good of the work of the kingdom of God...

Older Men

- Recall the question, “How can we help build the Church?” Paul begins with older men...
Principle #1 in your outline: Live well and be an example

- Having reiterated the qualifiers and disqualifiers for service as an elder, Paul now addresses all older men...² **Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.** and note that the instruction is not about what to do, only what to be... Paul expects older Christian men to carry themselves with a certain seriousness, a gravitas, that befits their years in the faith... these men should understand themselves and their world, and most importantly, their God... they are to be serious, temperate, not given to sudden, ill-considered flashes of action or emotion... they should live dignified lives, lives worthy of honor from others, lives that could rightly be called noble or even venerable; and they must be self-controlled... many of you are likely thinking now of the same English word in **Galatians 5.23**, the list of the fruit of the Spirit, but this isn't the same word... in Galatians, the word means the trait or ability to resolutely control one's own desires, especially sensual desires, but here, it's a different Greek word, '*sophron*', from a root word meaning understanding... this word is only used four times in the NT, three of them here in Titus; this word means to be prudent, sensible, thoughtful... it's also used in Titus 1.5-9 of elders... more next week from Scott on this word...
- Then Paul uses three familiar truths to summarize a healthy Christian walk: sound – meaning “healthy” – in faith, love, and steadfast, patient endurance... the life of an older man in Christ, a man who has walked with his Lord for decades, should be marked by an unshakable faith in God, a fervent love for God and for others, and a rock-solid persevering endurance under any circumstances... it's a blessing from God when a church has older men who fit this description... and God help the church whose older men fail this scriptural test of their character and their relationship with Christ...

Older Women

- Now for the ladies...

³ **Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, ⁴ and so train the young women...**

- Paul uses the word “likewise” to carry over much of what he said regarding older men, but with some differences...he encourages the older Christian women of Crete to be reverent, Gr *‘hieroprepes’*, a single-use compound word meaning to be priest-like or bear the characteristics of holiness...this older woman is in love with Jesus and it shows in her behavior...she models what it means to revere and honor the Lord...a biblical example of this might be Anna, the godly woman in Luke 2 who rejoiced at the presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple...
- Of course, there are warnings, probably consistent with the culture and practices of Crete...Paul calls out one of the sins of the tongue, slander, that is translated from a fitting Greek word, *‘diabolos’*, meaning “adversary” ...a similar issue, the sin of gossip, is confronted by Paul in **I Timothy 5.13**, though there it is applied to younger women...based on the number of mentions in the NT, it seems to have been common enough among women to warrant more than one warning...sins of the tongue are not a uniquely feminine sin, of course, for **James 3.8** warns all believers that...**no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.** ...the warning is especially meaningful since by the time Christian women could be considered “older” they have suffered hurt from the speech of others, and so realize first-hand the damage such speech can inflict...also Paul prohibits a love for much wine...this reinforces Paul’s statement in **Ephesians 5.18, ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,** ...older women are to avoid being a “slave” to much wine, a particularly sharp statement...overconsumption of wine, or any mind- or mood-altering substance, detracts from the Spirit-filled courage and conviction required of godly older women...and both these sins sharply contrast with the positive instruction to be reverent...

- But Paul also charges older women with an especially important task: **They are to teach what is good,⁴ and so train the young women...**teaching here no doubt includes instruction from God's word based on the Greek, but it must also include modeling and mentoring of younger women through personal example, both intentional and situational... Author Susan Hunt writes: "These characteristics indicate spiritual depth and strength. They also imply vulnerability: the older woman must be willing to let a younger woman look into her life and learn from it."¹ What a blessing such godly older women are to all those in the local church...this is not to say that women of any age can't or don't learn from teaching pastors or elders, but it does recognize that the best mentor and model for a young woman wanting to learn to walk in the ways of her Lord is an older woman who has already successfully navigated the difficulties of adolescence, adulthood, courtship, marriage, and raising children, an older woman who has already been shaped by the Holy Spirit as He conforms her more and more into the image of Christ...
- In our 20s, Sharon and I were blessed with a godly couple, Harold and Ann Williams, who were then in their 70s...they significantly influenced us, both with their exemplary lives and their godly counsel, especially in some key decisions we faced...older saints like them, and many of you, are priceless in value...

Younger Women

- Now let's turn to younger believers... Principle #2 in your outline: Observe good examples and emulate them

¹ Daniel M. Doriani and Richard D. Phillips, *2 Timothy & Titus*, ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2020), 194.

⁴ and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, ⁵ to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.

- This is a thorough training plan...we should see this in the historical context of the first century, but also in the applicational context of the 21st century...that said, we must not be quick to sacrifice clear scriptural teaching on the altar of modern norms...these standards are meant for all young Christian women at all times and in all places, unless other scriptural truths apply, such as Paul's teaching on singleness in I Corinthians 7...
- To begin, young women are to **love their husbands and children**...this seems a clear and obvious command, but it is listed first for a reason...as a young woman loves her husband and children, she is following in the self-sacrificial footsteps of the Lord Jesus, and is laying her part of the foundation for a good and godly home...as I said, this is not to say that all young women are to be married, but as theologian John Stott has said, IF the young woman accepts the vocation of wife and mother, then her love for them is to be paramount and the basis of their relationship...the love of a wife and mother to her husband and children is of immeasurable worth...we all know there's nothing that compares to that love...
- They are also to be **self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind**...again, the Greek word '*sophron*' is used, meaning the quality of being prudent, thoughtful, and wise...it reminds us of the description of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31...young women are called to be **pure**, a term with broad meaning, including a moral quality...and He calls young women to work at home...this is counter-cultural in our day...not all women are called to this life, but all are called to this quality of character...if a young woman is called by the Lord to love her husband and children as she loves her God, if she pursues a life of godly self-control and wisdom, if she commits to a life of purity in all aspects of her life, and if her life is marked by kindness and goodness...then she will fulfill God's command for His young women...

- Finally, younger women are to be **submissive to their own husbands**...this can be difficult to honor, even for those young women who are called to a life of family, or anyone who is unsure of the need for this level of commitment to a husband... "submission" is not the same as "subjugation" and there is no hint here of inferiority of women or ungodly domination by men...however, it is biblical truth that God has established in marriage a headship relationship, one which includes responsibilities for both husbands and wives, and one based in the relationship between Christ and the church...we read of it in ¹² **Ephesians 5.22-27**...²² **Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.** ²³ **For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.** ²⁴ **Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.** ²⁵ **Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,** ²⁶ **that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,** ²⁷ **so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.** And while this headship relationship is clear, equally clear is a mutuality of love and respect within marriage, evidenced in **I Corinthians 11.11-12** ¹¹ **Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman;** ¹² **for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God.** Husbands and wives in a Christian marriage complement and support each other, each fulfilling their God-given roles and responsibilities...a wise and loving husband will not lord it over his wife, and a wise and respectful wife will submit to her husband out of respect for Christ...and don't miss Paul's intent in this instruction... **that the word of God may not be reviled.** ...such behavior is to be a witness of God's grace and a bulwark against the criticism of the world against our faith...JB Phillips translated this phrase this way: (**younger**

women should be) willing to adapt themselves to their husbands—a good advertisement for the Christian faith. That captures the thought well...

- My hope is that the young women in the body of Christ will see this divine command as what it is, God’s best for her and her family and the people of God... Daniel Doriani spoke well to this point: Does the Bible’s call to faithful womanhood seem oppressive? When seen in the lives of gifted, devoted, and fruitful Christian women, it reveals itself as liberation. And when older godly women give of themselves in mentorship, to encourage and equip younger women to do likewise, the precept of Jesus is seen in its glory: “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31–32).²

Younger Men

- Now for the last gender-age group...
 - ⁶ **Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.**
- Wait...just one command?! Everyone except the younger men are thinking, “this isn’t fair”...let’s see what this means...
- The Greek word here means to think and live wisely in self-control over one’s passions and desires...there are at least three ways this command is critical to godly younger men: first, such self-control is the key to cultivating the kind of character that can resist the attraction of sin in our world today; second, a clear focus on making wise life choices based on scripture can give younger men the insight to avoid sinful relationships and temptations; and third, biblical wisdom can help younger men navigate life in their earlier years when they haven’t yet had time to learn every lesson through hard experience...and younger men, listen well to the older men in the church...we have some lessons to share with you...

² Daniel M. Doriani and Richard D. Phillips, [2 Timothy & Titus](#), ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2020), 202.

Titus

- Paul now returns to personal instructions to Titus and general instructions to workers...
Principle #3: **Honor the Lord in your work and ministry**
⁷ Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, ⁸ and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.
- These are the qualities every church wants to see in young ministers learning how to lead the church...first, these young leaders' behavior is a powerful example showing others the way to a practical, love-driven, Spirit-powered ministry both inside and outside the church, as they take seriously the good works commanded by Jesus...second, biblical teaching must be present that is characterized, as Paul says, by **integrity, dignity, ⁸ and sound speech** that clearly communicates the word of God to the saved and the lost...what a blessing leaders like Titus are in a local church...to use Pastor Tony's recent analogy, because of their behavior, a commitment to good works is caught, and because of their teaching, solid theology is taught...when a leader's life matches their scriptural teaching the positive effect is powerful...those who would oppose the gospel have a difficult time with a person like this...they are blameless, and the adversary has **nothing evil to say**...
- The Phillips translation illustrates this passage well...**show that you appreciate the seriousness of the matters you are dealing with. Your speech should be unaffected and logical, so that your opponent may feel ashamed at finding nothing in which to pick holes.**
- We are blessed to have an effective ministry that, by God's provision, raises up young leaders...our Preachers' Guild, along with our pastoral intern ministry, are both intended to purposefully develop new young leaders like Titus for the 21st century church...amen!

Workers

- While we don't have, strictly speaking, legal slavery in our culture today, we do have employment relationships, and this passage speaks wisdom to us in that area...
⁹ **Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative,** ¹⁰ **not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.**
- Paul applies here a principle that is hard for our modern minds to accept, and was surely even harder in the first century: submission to authority in the workplace...slaves who had come to faith in Christ were to be submissive to their masters as a demonstration of broader scriptural principles of submission to rightful authority...it is commanded of us in the context of the family (**Exodus 20.12, Ephesians 6.1**), marriage (**Titus 2.5, Ephesians 5.22-24**), civil government (**Romans 13.1**), and the church (**Hebrews 13.17**), and here even in the master/slave relationship...Paul also gives some concrete examples: don't steal; don't argue; obey in all things, even if the master is not present; and positively, live a life of faith before the authority...
- Some might ask, "what's the point of that?" ...Paul's answer is in v 10: such attitudes and behaviors "adorn" – makes beautiful – the doctrine of God our savior...this kind of counter-intuitive, faith-fueled love is a powerful witness to the God who changes human hearts...for a biblical example, read the story of Naaman and a little servant girl in 2 Kings 5...

Application

- We've covered quite a bit in this passage...so let's focus this to some answers to our question, "How can we help build the Church?" ...points that we can put into

action...you've probably already thought of several from the text, but here are a few more...remember, the theme to this is how godly believers can replicate themselves, and pass on to other, younger believers the wisdom to seek after God and walk in His ways...

so that all of us are vital parts of a healthy church!

- o Older men: lead from godliness and integrity
- o Older women: pass on your wisdom and teach what is good
- o Younger women: build your home with love and faithfulness
- o Younger men: fight against sin and be serious about living for Jesus

Younger Christians, watch those senior to you...they were once in your place in life, and they followed these commands in their younger years...observe them well, so that when they have gone home to be with the Lord, you are prepared to take their place and raise up a generation to succeed you...

- o Young leaders: be a positive example in your ministry and teaching
 - o Workers: serve faithfully and platform the gospel in your work
- Church, look for the ways that you can help build the Church as God continues to grow His kingdom here...