Living with Integrity
Believers are to live so that they bring honor to Jesus.

Session 12

TITUS 2:1-15

MEMORY VERSE: TITUS 2:13

READ Titus 2:1-15, First Thoughts (p. 124), and Understand the Context (pp. 124–125). As you read, note the actions and attitudes repeatedly called for by Paul.

STUDY Titus 2:1-15, using Explore the Text on pages 125–129. Identify ways believers are to help train other believers. Note instances where you see this happening in your group to affirm their actions.

PLAN the group time using ideas under Lead Group Bible Study (pp. 130–131) and More Ideas (p. 132). Prepare to lead your group to live with integrity and follow Christ. Consult QuickSource for additional questions that you can use in leading the discussion and an Object Lesson idea for this week’s study.

GROW with other group leaders at the Groups Ministry blog (LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry).

GATHER the following items: Personal Study Guides. Prepare to display the following Pack Items:

PACK ITEM 2 (Outlines of 1,2 Timothy; Titus); and PACK ITEM 6 (Key Verse: 2 Timothy 2:15). Make copies for the group of: PACK ITEM 8 (Handout: Memory Verse Bookmark); and PACK ITEM 9 (Handout: Models of Church Structure).
**FIRST THOUGHTS**

Most of us want our hometown to be represented well. We want to take pride in claiming ties to the city or area we consider home. A city is usually defined by its people more so than by its geography or other features. Even though we may no longer live in that city or area, we contribute to the identity of that city or area by the way we represent it to others. In the same way, we contribute to the way people perceive Christ by how we represent Him in this world.

(In PSG, p. 109) **What or who gives your city or region its identity? How did it get that identity and how does that identity impact your city or area now?**

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**UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT**

**TITUS 2:1-15**

Although written around the same time as First Timothy, Paul’s epistle to Titus contains several differences. For example, in First Timothy Paul gave specific direction about servants (1 Tim. 6:1-2). While he also addressed the role of servants in this letter, Paul went further to include older men, older women, younger women, and younger women (Titus 2:1-10). Perhaps Paul expanded the scope of his directive because Titus was working with new believers.

The two letters also contain similarities. For example, in addition to delineating qualifications for pastors, Paul admonished Timothy and Titus to be examples for the believers. If they wanted their church members to live godly lives, these young preachers must be consistent in their personal conduct. (See Titus 2:7-8; 1 Tim. 4:12.) Paul required Titus not only to teach believers to maintain consistent integrity but also to illustrate this principle in his behavior.

This chapter links orthodoxy (right beliefs) with orthopraxy (right living). Paul’s reference to sound teaching not only resonated in contrast to the false teachers but also provided the foundation for personal conduct (Titus 2:1,7). Titus’s doctrinal instruction should be reflected practically in his life. His ministry stood in stark contrast to the dishonest teachers involved in doctrinal error and sin.

Paul addressed generational relationships by calling on the older women to help the younger women learn proper conduct (Titus 2:3-5). Interestingly, while Paul did not task the older men with training the younger, he told Titus to encourage both regarding godly behavior. This guidance went into much more detail than First Timothy (1 Tim. 5:1-2). Again, the Cretan Christians might have needed extra guidance, while Timothy ministered to the more established church at Ephesus.

In all matters, the basis for requiring standards of Christian behavior was Jesus Christ. Because God extended His grace through Jesus, believers...
should live for His glory. Another motivation for godliness was their anticipation of Jesus’ return. The fact that first century Christians believed in Christ’s imminent return should not create doubt for modern readers who also await His Second Coming. Jesus instructed believers of every generation to be watchful, being constantly prepared for His appearing. (See Luke 21:29-36; Mark 13:31-37; Matt. 24:42.)

EXPLORE THE TEXT

SPOKEN (TITUS 2:1)

VERSE 1
With the contrasting conjunction, but, Paul referred to the previous chapter, highlighting the difference between Titus and the defiled unbelievers. Unlike their deception, Titus was to speak the truth of the gospel. Paul urged Titus to proclaim these things. Paul’s choice of words can refer to preaching, but usually involves more informal speech. In our public statements and private conversations, we are to testify about the truth of the gospel.

Titus was expected to teach matters consistent with sound teaching. These included Paul’s instructions to various groups in Crete. It also completed the contrast between sound teaching and the false teaching which Titus was to refute (1:9). By remaining faithful to the gospel, Titus could speak with authority. In the same way, when we speak consistently with Scripture, we cooperate with the Holy Spirit who leads people to the truth.

(In PSG, p. 111) What is the danger of failing to verbally present the truth of the gospel, relying on actions alone to speak?

VERSE 2-5
Older men are to be self-controlled, worthy of respect, sensible, and sound in faith, love, and endurance. In the same way, older women are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not slaves to excessive drinking. They are to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands and to love their children, to be self-controlled, pure, workers at home, kind, and in submission to their husbands, so that God’s word will not be slandered.

VERSES 2-5

ACTED (TITUS 2:2-10)

VERSE 2-5
Gospel truth needs expression through believers’ lives. Paul instructed Titus to direct various groups according to their generations. He began with older men, perhaps because people looked to them for guidance and wisdom. Although the term has the same root as elder, it specifies men of a certain age rather than the office of pastor. Paul emphasized character, out of which good conduct proceeds.

First, these senior saints should be self-controlled. Paul previously used this word to describe qualifications for the pastors and the wives of deacons (1 Tim. 3:2,11). In this instance, he referred to the need for older men to be temperate and self-restrained.

Second, these men should live in a way that is worthy of respect. This phrase translates a word meaning to be dignified and honorable. The term emphasizes the way a person generates respect.
A third quality involved being **sensible**. Sometimes translated as self-controlled, this characteristic involves being prudent and of sound mind. Their speech and actions should demonstrate spiritual wisdom expected of a mature believer.

The final description for older men involves three aspects. They should be **sound in faith, love, and endurance**. Invoking the idea of wholesome behavior, Paul wanted these elders to exemplify qualities others could follow. Their faith should not only reflect personal belief in Christ but also exhibit practical trust in Christ. They were to love others with Christ’s love. Through everything, they should demonstrate endurance, showing patience even during trying times because of their hope in Christ.

The opening phrase of verse 3, *in the same way*, could imply that the qualities of the previous verse also applied to the women. More likely it meant that Titus’ instruction was of similar manner and importance. Paul expected the older women to reflect godly characteristics following the same pattern as his charge to the older men.

As with the previous teaching, this list contains four emphases. First, these women should be **reverent in behavior**. Their character and conduct ought to reflect holy lifestyles.

Twice, imperatives were stated in negative terms. These women should not be **slanderers**. Earlier, Paul warned the deacons’ wives not to be gossips (1 Tim. 3:11). Although the current use applied to all older women, it carried the same idea. We should not gather that these passages meant that improper speech was a problem limited to aged women but understand it in the context of instruction to relatively new believers.

The second of the two negative directives urged the women not to be **slaves to excessive drinking**. Two erroneous implications might be made. First, some readers could imply that use of alcoholic beverages was permitted as long as the user did not get drunk. Second, others might suggest that excessive drinking was a problem experienced by the Cretan women and not the men, since this directive is not included in the previous verse. Either interpretation would be false.

Paul addressed expectations of mature believers for the sake of glorifying Christ and setting examples for younger believers. This understanding carries additional weight in light of Paul’s fourth instruction—that the older women teach what is good.

All four qualities provide a foundation for the mentoring relationship between generations. These mature believers not only were to demonstrate godly characteristics for their personal benefit, but so that they may encourage the young women.

We might assume that the younger women should not need extra encouragement to love their husbands and children. However, Paul felt Titus should make this point as he instructed the older women. While a different letter emphasized husbands’ love for their wives (Eph. 5:25), Paul’s letter to Titus shows the equal importance of wives loving their families.

In addition to love, the younger women were expected to be **self-controlled**. This quality mirrored one characteristic of older men (Titus 2:2). Christian women should exhibit moderation. Some commentators
point out that since the word *pure* followed the term *self-controlled*, the phrase meant the younger women should keep impulses under control. However, if these words were linked, the relationship probably would have been more direct. In either case, Paul wanted the older women to teach the younger ones to be morally pure and temperate in all things.

Godly wives would be diligent *workers at home*. This does not mean that women could not be employed outside the home but rather emphasized the important role of wives and mothers in the home. This idea complements the admonition for them to be in *submission to their husbands*. Paul believed the way wives related to their husbands was a vital witness of the church. (See Eph. 5:22-24; Col. 3:18.) A right relationship in the home was necessary so that God’s *word will not be slandered*. If Christian husbands and wives could not model a godly marriage, unbelievers would have a basis for attacking the gospel.

Between these last two characteristics lies the simple, but important, attribute of being *kind*. This term often translates as “good.” Some writers suggest the word should be understood in connection with the phrase that follows. In that case, Paul was describing women as kind and submissive in their interactions with their husbands. Believing women should be good and kind as basic character qualities.

**VERSES 6-8**

As in verse 3, Paul used the phrase *in the same way* to tie instructions for one group with those for a second. While he did not specifically include the character qualities for the *young men* with those of other groups, Paul apparently meant for them to be understood. He felt it sufficient to *encourage* them to be *self-controlled*. Although the phrase *in everything in all things* begins verse 7, it appears to fit best as modifying the term *self-controlled*. This statement seems to be all-inclusive. The term *self-controlled* comes from the same root as that applied to the young women in verse 5. These men were expected to act wisely in all aspects of life.

Paul changed his focus back to Titus’ personal conduct by using the personal pronoun *yourself*. At the same time, since Titus was young, Paul’s admonitions could be included in the advice to the other young men. He should not set standards for other believers unless he could make himself an example of good works.

A pastor cannot successfully lead a congregation unless he exhibits integrity and dignity. The context suggests this charge applied especially to Titus’ teaching. As Titus trained various generations, they would be examining his life to see if it was consistent with his teaching. The normal sense of *integrity* involved trustworthiness in all areas of life. This term added a sense of moral reliability as Titus modeled godliness for the believers.

Similarly, Paul expected Titus to demonstrate *dignity* in his ministry. This word has the same connotation as the expression in verse 2 that described the way older men should be worthy of respect. If he expected the esteem of his hearers, Titus had to be serious about the subject and the manner of his teaching.

Not only must Titus’s personal life be exemplary, his message should be *sound beyond reproach*. Titus had many adversaries. They watched for
any basis for attack. With the word us, Paul included himself as participant in Titus's struggle. Paul knew that their antagonists did not have anything valid with which to attack them. He wanted Titus to be sure not to give them any ammunition.

VERSES 9-10

Paul did not endorse the practice of slavery but offered advice about how believing slaves could turn their condition into a positive testimony for Christ. He encouraged them to submit to their masters. Paul made similar statements in other epistles (Col. 3:22; 1 Tim. 6:1). At the same time, he urged believing masters to treat their believing slaves as brothers instead of slaves, giving them what was right and fair (Col. 4:1; Philem. 1:16).

By including a warning against stealing, Paul dealt with a problem among slaves in general rather than a specific issue among Christians who were slaves. As they showed themselves to be completely trustworthy, these believers would further their witness.

Paul’s reasoning offered an interesting metaphor. By showing themselves to be honest and loyal, the believing slaves would adorn the teaching of God our Savior. The phrase portrays the transforming power of the gospel. If those persons who were treated so poorly could live out the virtues of Christ followers, their uprightness would lend further credence to the message of God’s salvation. Similarly, modern believers should reveal godliness in their lives regardless of their age or station in life.

(In PSG, p. 114) How can the way we live our lives and conduct our business be a means of advancing the gospel?

VERSES 11-13

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, instructing us to deny godlessness and worldly lusts and to live in a sensible, righteous, and godly way in the present age, while we wait for the blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

EMPOWERED (TITUS 2:11-14)

VERSES 11-13

The gospel is motivation for a godly life, which cannot be achieved apart from Christ. Paul’s reference to the appearance of the grace of God pointed to Jesus. God’s grace not only provided salvation through Christ but was embodied in Christ. Jesus’ atoning death and victorious resurrection made it possible for all people to be saved. This statement does not suggest that every person will be saved but rather that anyone can be saved through Christ.

God’s grace not only provides the means of salvation but also offers guidance in living out our salvation. It teaches us to deny godliness and worldly lusts. Contrasted against a godless lifestyle, God’s grace teaches us to live in a sensible, righteous, and godly way. To live sensibly involves properly moderating our behavior to honor the Lord. Righteous living describes a right relationship with God that exalts His justice and righteousness. The final descriptor, godly, means that which is pleasing to God.

Maintaining godly lives prepares us for what is to come and what is to come motivates us to maintain godly lives. We wait for something greater
than what we experience in this world. Ever since Jesus was taken up into heaven, believers have anticipated the blessed hope. Such hope does not involve weak wishful thinking, but is a firm expectation.

Our hope is blessed because it involves the appearing of Jesus Christ. Jesus was received up into glory and will return in glory (Acts 1:9-11). When He appears, believers shall appear with Him in glory (Col. 3:4). The hope of His glory causes us to rejoice (Rom. 5:2).

VERSE 14
Jesus is our Savior because He gave himself for us. The word gave encompasses more than we can imagine. Jesus left His throne in glory to take on human flesh. He suffered and died to redeem us from all lawlessness. Through His sacrifice, Jesus freed us from the control and consequences of sin (Rom 6:17-22).

The second result of Christ’s redemption was to cleanse for himself a people for his own possession. Only by His blood can the church, Christ’s Bride, be cleansed and presented to Him as spotless and pure (Eph. 5:25-27). Having been freed and cleansed, believers should be eager to do good works, not as a means to salvation but as the result of salvation (Eph. 2:10).

(In PSG, p. 115) How do you see evidence of Christ’s power in you for godly living?

AUTHORITY (TITUS 2:15)

VERSE 15
Being ignored can be worse than experiencing opposition. Paul did not want anyone to disregard Titus. The phrase let no one suggests Titus had a responsibility in making sure people took him and his message seriously.

As mentioned in verse 1, Titus was to proclaim these things in such a way that people listened. The good news was too important to be disregarded. Second, Paul wanted Titus to encourage and rebuke. These twin aspects of love offered comfort and conviction, reassurance and reproof. The gospel admonishes the sinner while consoling the one who comes to Christ for salvation.

Titus could speak this good news with all authority. Jesus possesses all authority in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). He grants authority to His followers as they speak on His behalf (John 20:21). When believers boldly teach godliness in the authority of Christ, people are impacted by His gospel and, through Him, can be changed forever.

How does having Christ’s authority enable you to succeed even in intimidating situations?

VERSE 15
15 Proclaim these things; encourage and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.
LEAD GROUP BIBLE STUDY

FOCUS ATTENTION (FIRST THOUGHTS)

STUDY: As the group arrives, invite them to share childhood experiences when it was difficult to demonstrate integrity (stealing something small, cheating in a game, etc). Ask: What made it difficult to do so? What lessons did you learn from those experiences that impact you today?

STATE: We contribute to how people perceive Christ by the way we represent Him in this world, which reminds us of the importance of having integrity as believers.

ASK: What do repeated actions and attitudes reveal about the importance of that specific action or attitude?

TRANSITION: Today we’re going to discuss how vital our integrity is to the sharing of the gospel. Give a brief review of Titus using Pack Item 2 (Outlines of 1, 2 Timothy; Titus).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

READ: Invite a volunteer to read Titus 2:1, as others listen for the reason behind the contrasting conjunction but.

STATE: Titus faced a communication task that was decisively at odds with the false teachers who manipulated truth and twisted Scripture for their own advantage. Therefore, the spoken Word of God wields the power to change lives, and changed lives can revolutionize entire cultures in every tribe and nation around the world.

HIGHLIGHT: Review the Key Doctrine (Sanctification) on page 124 (PSG, p. 115). Lead the group to discuss how the statement relates to how Paul encouraged Titus to live.

ASK: What is the danger of failing to verbally present the truth of the gospel, relying on actions alone to speak? (PSG, p. 111) Point out Pack Item 6 (Key Verse: 2 Timothy 2:15). Emphasize how this verse applies to every person, not just church leaders.

READ: Call on someone to read Titus 2:2-10, while others circle the behavioral qualities that should be evident in believers.

LIST: Guide the group to list the four qualities found in verse 2 (“self-controlled, worthy of respect, sensible, and sound in faith, love, and endurance”). Explain that this extended to the young men needing to be taught how to be self-controlled in their actions.

ASK: Lead the group to create a chart using the headings “Older Men,” “Older Women,” “Younger Men,” “Younger Women,” and “Bondslaves.” Invite them to call out the actions identified by Paul for every group. Then guide the group to compare the actions of each group, looking for any shared themes or goals.

ASK: What are the connections between what the older and younger generations were to do? How does one generation impact the other? Review Pack Item 9 (Handout: Models of Church Structure). Ask: What role do generations have in church leadership?
DIRECT: Highlight the comments about Titus 2:9-10 in the PSG (p. 113). Ask: What principles are working in the background?

ASK: How can the way we live our lives and conduct our business be a means of advancing the gospel? (PSG, p. 114)

TRANSITION: Not only are we to have standards, but we are to empower others to follow Christ.

READ: Call for a volunteer to read Titus 2:11-14, as the group listens for the source of power for living righteously.

EXPLAIN: Paul explained that the gospel acts as the motivation for integrity. The gospel that transforms a life is demonstrated by how the individual begins to say “no” to those things that are ungodly. Finally, the gospel encourages us in our time of waiting for Jesus’ return to pursue integrity.

ASK: How do you see evidence of Christ’s power in you for godly living? (PSG, p. 115)

TRANSITION: The power that we have to serve Christ comes from His authority.

READ: Read Titus 2:15, while the group listens for the commands given by Paul.

EXPLAIN: Paul stated three commands within this verse (say, encourage, and rebuke) that were to encourage behaviors and attitudes that sought integrity.

ASK: Why would it have been important for Paul to remind Titus of acting in God’s authority? Could these actions be carried out successfully outside of God’s authority? Explain. (PSG, p. 116)

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE (IN MY CONTEXT)

INVITE: Call for volunteers to name one action they will take this week as a result of today’s study.

RESPOND: Guide the group through the third question set under In My Context in the PSG (p. 117): Discuss with your group ways of encouraging other generations to live godly lives. Include identifying ways for the group to be examples to other believers. List insights gained from the discussion.

CHALLENGE: Encourage the group to pray through Titus 2:13 this week, asking God to reveal an area that they should focus on improving in the example they set. Have copies of Pack Item 8 (Handout: Memory Verse Bookmark) ready to give to those who need one.

PRAY: Close in prayer, thanking God for the power to live godly lives through the truth and power of gospel.
**PRACTICE**

- Contact your group and encourage them to know that they are empowered to follow Christ this week. Ask if there is any major decision coming up in their family that you can pray for individually.
- Consider new ways to make guests feel welcome in your group. Gather input from the newest members of your group for insight.

**MORE IDEAS**

**FOCUS ATTENTION (FIRST THOUGHTS)**

To replace the Focus Attention idea, introduce the session by reading the first paragraph on page 109 of the PSG. Then ask: *What or who gives your city or region its identity? How did it get that identity and how does that identity impact your city or area now?* (PSG, p. 109)

**EXPLORE THE TEXT**

- To supplement the teaching of Titus 2, read Deuteronomy 6 and identify the call to pass on the truth of God’s Word from one generation to the next.
- To provide further study of Titus 2:11-14, create teams and ask each to complete the Bible Skill activity on page 116 of the PSG. After allowing time, call the group back together to discuss: *How would you explain redemption to someone?* (PSG, p. 116)
- To enhance the teaching of Titus 2:11-14, explain the power that was given to the church in Acts 1:8-10 to share the gospel. Emphasize the Key Doctrine (Sanctification) on page 115 of the PSG: *Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God’s purposes and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him (Eph. 2:8-10).*
- To supplement the teaching on Titus 2:15, share the promises given in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 to make disciples based on the authority of Christ.

**SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE (IN MY CONTEXT)**

Read the bulleted points under In My Context (PSG, p. 117) and discuss practical ways to demonstrate godliness. Lead the group to identify obstacles that might need to be overcome and to brainstorm strategies for overcoming those obstacles.

**SUGGESTED MUSIC IDEA**

Review the lyrics of “Even If,” by MercyMe, and discover how the words encourage believers to still worship and serve the Lord through all circumstances.