



Sermon #5 - Titus 2

Men & Women pt 1 - Becoming Women.

Intro

A couple of weeks ago we looked at what the bible says about manhood. Both what a man is called to be AND how to become a man. We talked about the importance of older men stepping out and investing into younger men. We did that because in his letter to Titus, the apostle Paul is laying out what its going to take to have a faith that lasts for the long haul of life. And core to these first two chapters has been 2 things: The Gospel & The Church. God's saving love and God's loving people.

This letter is instructing those people who have received God's love on how to encourage one another to grow into the men

and women God is calling them to be. And today we look at what God says to the women of the church.

And I cannot imagine a more important time in recent history than right now to bring this up. There is a seismic shift right now happening in our culture that is exposing the lack of dignity that women have been suffering for a long time. We are in desperate need of a compelling vision of womanhood that inspires women and that ALSO challenges men to see women for who God created them to be. So just like last time we are going to see who a real woman IS and HOW you become a real woman.

Now I know you are excited to hear from all of my experience in this area of becoming a woman. I grew up with brothers no sisters. Then I got married and living with a girl...very eye opening. Now I have two little girls. And they really are different creatures than boys. They are wonderful. And I love them fiercely. And I know God's vision for them as women is way better than anything else out there. And so I as their dad need to know what target to raise them towards. So I'm not giving you my experience today, I'm giving you God's word. Like every week.

But listen dads of daughters aren't the only men who need this. God designed women differently than men and so every arena of life will be better when women are flourishing. So all men need to know how to encourage their sisters in the faith.

So today I'm going to take the first half of this sermon to talk from God's word and then the second half talk with a couple of

women from our church who I believe exemplify what we are going after today.

One last thing before we go into the passage: I think you need to be aware of a hurdle we face in talking about what the bible says about women. The hurdle is that this is one of those areas where our western culture just has a fundamentally different belief about women than the bible does.

The bible affords women a much greater dignity and value than the culture will. The bible says a woman is made in the very image of God. It's the highest possible value you can put on someone. She has a uniqueness in reflecting God, showing the character of God, in a way that a man will never have. Her femininity is by divine design and is to be exalted and when it is, all humanity flourishes. Our western culture agrees with the bible that men and women deserve equal respect. But it stops there. It devalues gender distinctions where the bible celebrates it. It devalues human dignity where the bible exalts it. Now many non-christians will try and flip that saying the bible has an archaic, oppressive view of women but that isn't true. That's just spin. And if you come in here today thinking that I hope you'll be at least challenged a little to see the high calling of womanhood. Let's get into it.

FIRST place we are going to go is a quick review of verses 11-14.

[11] For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, [12] instructing us to deny godlessness and worldly lusts and to live in a sensible, righteous, and godly way in the present age, [13] while we wait for the blessed hope, the

appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. [14] He gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people for his own possession, eager to do good works.

See all of the instruction in verses 1-10 are motivated by verses 11-14. This is the heart of a life that believes for the long haul. And a lot of times people will come into church thinking they want to be better people. And if you are not careful you'll just leave with a check list of how to behave differently. But changing your morality isn't what becoming a Christian is about. It's this. You are worse than you thought you were. You can't clean yourself up. And your sin, your defiance of God's authority in your life, has sentenced you to an eternity separated from him. The message of the gospel is that you don't need to be improved, you need to be rescued. So verse 11 says the REASON, the MOTIVATION, the POWER for living comes from the grace of God that has appeared bringing salvation to all men. See Jesus doesn't improve us, he saves us. He gave himself for us (verse 14). That means he stepped into the judgment seat that we were in. And in doing so he SAVED us from that judgment. We are free!!! And Paul says that grace...verse 12...it instructs us. It frees us, it empowers us, and conditions us to live the way we were meant to live. So last time we said: **EVERYTHING** about how we live is a response to what we experience in the gospel!

Last time was how older and younger men are to live. This time, its women. Here we go. Verse 3...what does it look like for a woman to lead a full and meaningful life.

[3] In the same way, older women are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not slaves to excessive drinking.

Older women, he talks to you first. And if you think I'm going to put an age on "older" you are incorrect. If there are females younger than you in the faith and in life, then you already are stepping into this "older women" role in some capacity. if you aren't here yet you will get there.

Reverent in behavior – It means you carry yourself in a way that is worthy of the respect of others. You aren't quick tempered. This is like what he says about the men from last time. You show self control in all things. You carry yourself in a way that says you have come to rest in the identity God has spoken over you as his daughter. You are the daughter of the king. You don't need anyone else's approval. No you have the King's love. And older women have been walking in the kings love for a while so they will be a pillar of that love and the moments of life won't shake their heart and therefore won't cause them to be out of control. Because God's love in their hearts is a steadying force stronger than any other.

See age is a very powerful revealer of who you really are. There was an older pastor who said age strips away the masks over time. The masks of Physical Beauty... and social filters. PAUSE – YOU KNOW. Proverbs 31.30 – Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting....

As people age they often don't care as much about what people think about them and so what they think, they say. So when

you are young you can make yourself look and sound pretty. But as you get older physical beauty fades and those filters fade. And what is left is the real you.

And what happens is older people who have been walking in the love of Jesus for some time...they pour out more love on others than they ever have before. When their true self comes out...the true self is joy, generosity, and kindness. Life experience has made them MORE loving. Proverbs 31.30 – Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting... but a woman who fears the Lord will be praised.

Robyn Eason – spiritual mother even though I was her pastor. I don't care I'm just gonna say it...but what always followed was love, encouragement, and kindness.

But if as time peels back those masks, you have an ugly spirit, there will be nothing left to hide it anymore. And most likely it will be marked by things you try to find comfort in that can't comfort you.

- Slandering tries to bring you comfort by tearing others down so you can feel a sense of superiority. It works for a fleeting moment but you keep doing it because the security it brings is fake. It doesn't last. So you always need the latest gossip to tell someone so you can feel valuable. That desire to gossip is a false god that is eating you from the inside out. The gospel says you are secure in Christ. In fact Christ was humiliated for you, disparaged for you. And because of that you are secure with God forever. You don't need to tear others down to

build yourself up. In fact in Christ you will find joy in humbling yourself to LIFT others up.

- Excessive Drinking tries to bring you comfort by escape. But again the comfort is fleeting. Leaves you hurting. Regretting. And the more you go to it the more damage it does to you. The gospel is the only comfort that will not only never hurt you or let you down, but will never leave you! This is only one escape. I asked the women in our worship planning meeting to give me others: FOOD, Netflix, Shopping, exercise. All good things but cannot carry the weight of your soul.

How do you carry yourself in a way worthy of respect? It begins by seeing yourself the way Christ sees you. A daughter. SO VALUABLE TO HIM he died for you. You don't have to look any further than the cross & empty tomb to see all satisfying love that can give you identity & comfort and the power to walk through this life.

That old pastor summed it up this way: if you seem beautiful at age 20, big deal. It's easy to hide the real you behind those masks. But if you are ugly at age 80 its all your fault.

They are to teach what is good, [4] so that they may encourage the young women...

Then these older women are to teach. To train up younger women. Ya'll I love preaching God's word to you but there is a place in your life for an older woman, a mother in the faith, to step in and help you apply this gospel message into your life in a way I am not equipped or called to do. There are plenty of roles in the church that a man or a woman could fill, but this

one, like it was for older men last time, is the unique responsibility of older women. If you don't fill it no one else will. Women you cannot sit back. Gospel Sacrifice for you is allowing the gospel to change your heart and your life. And then patiently & graciously training the next generation of women. NOT IN YOUR OPINIONS... THIS IS HUGE. There is a difference between good advice and gospel advice. Discipleship is follow me as I follow Christ. And that means another woman watching you seek to apply the gospel to all areas of life. You will know you are discipling someone correctly if it is deeply challenging to YOU as well.

Older women are to encourage. To speak words that instill courage. That, like the very word of God, breathe life into you. To do what? Here we go. You ready?

to love their husbands and to love their children, [5] to be self-controlled, pure, workers at home, kind, and in submission to their husbands, so that God's word will not be slandered.

Can anyone find any controversial phrases in this passage? Whenever someone wants to bash the bible as outdated and misogynistic this is one of the places they go. See! How can a woman lead a fulfilling life through this?

A lot of people WRONGLY interpret this to say the bible teaches male superiority and dominance. But that's not what Paul is saying at all. Let me address two spaces where this is most misunderstood.

First: "Workers at home." This does NOT mean women can't work outside the home. We know that because there are women

in scripture who work outside the home and their work is AFFIRMED & CELEBRATED (Prov 31)...Her work is portrayed as valuable.

Paul is acknowledging there is a temptation for women, like men, to find fulfillment in something other than their God given responsibilities. And there is no question from scripture that God has given mothers a particular responsibility in the home.¹

And those responsibilities often come with sacrificing other things outside of the home. Sometimes its backing off hours of work and sometimes its even stopping work altogether for a season. And that will have a sense of loss.

AND in that sense of loss one of two views of the world is going to win out. Because our culture is just filled with a completely contradictory view of what you are to think in this moment. See the gospel says that when you feel that loss you can remember that the primary goal of your life isn't self-fulfillment, its faithfully serving the God who saved you. And in those moments where serving God comes with sacrifice, you embrace that moment with joy and actually find fulfillment in a way you never realized.

The feminist movement of Linda Hirschman and Betty Friedan rightly understood women felt a sense of unfulfillment. But gave the wrong prescription to the problem. They said if women will have the same career opportunities as men they

will be fulfilled. But listen: For both men and women: Work was never designed to satisfy your soul. So if you try to find it there, it will consume you and leave you empty. Plenty of stay at home moms discontent. Plenty of working moms discontent. In fact...

THE PROBLEM with this thought is that it is self defeating. Because if your aim in life is you achieving your highest earning potential and highest level of fulfillment, then you will never really love others. You'll just use others to get where you want to go. Children will be an accessory to you, You wont have friends but instead a network of people who can improve your standing in life. Hirschman's view doesn't lead to a fulfilling life of love but a shallow, empty life of ultimate loneliness. That's what false gospels do. Promise fulfillment, deliver emptiness.

Christians find their fulfillment in serving others. Jesus is the perfect model of this. In washing others feet he was choosing others over himself because God called him to it. And Christians almost always find more joy in that. So if for a season God calls you to sacrifice for your kids you can do so knowing you have been a faithful servant and you don't need the praise of the world.

By the way A LOT of this applies to dads too ok? If you think raising children is a task for women you need to get your head out of the sand. The bible is very clear on the sacrifices you are going to have to make also. I don't delegate child raising to my wife. We do that together and I'm responsible to God for it. I

¹ This Phrasing & some of the ideas for this section inspired by J.D. Greear's sermon "Extraordinary Ordinary" preached on this passage.

COULD STAY AT WORK Later at night BUT I DON'T. Why? I'm having dance parties in my kitchen to the greatest showman soundtrack.

Peter Kreeft, one of the great minds of our time, once was asked which of the books he had written was his favorite. He said: the one I didn't write while my kids were growing up.

Second phrase that gets a lot of heat is the "submission to their husbands" phrase. That word submission is like a red alert panic button.

This is more thoroughly explained in Paul's letter to the ephesians but listen. This is gospel reenactment. Not male dominance. God says husbands and wives are to be cooperating reflections of the gospel message. The husband does it by loving his wife as Christ loves the church. I say this in every wedding I do. This means a husband sacrifices himself for the needs of his wife. It often practically looks like deferring to her desires in places that do not conflict with scriptures.

Submission is the wife reflecting the church that submits itself to the leadership of Christ. Practically that means it is the role of the husband to seek God on behalf of his family, to lead his family in its submission to Jesus. He is to lead in conflict resolution and in decision making. And where there is decision making disagreement, the husband is the one who is accountable before God for the deciding vote. And submission is allowing the husband to stand before God there.

One female author said submission is the woman ducking so that God can punch the man. "God is going to have words with Scott" so I need to help him. That's a big responsibility.

This is WHY YOU CAN'T MARRY A BOY WITH A BEARD. YOU ARE UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP.

Matt Chandler said a husband sacrificially loving his wife, and a wife submitted to her godly husband creates a relationship that the world would never look at and say how disgusting and archaic.

Interestingly, A lot of people are turned off by the Christian teaching on headship in marriage but are attracted to the Christian marriages they see lived out.

Which is Paul's whole point: So that the word of God may not be reviled. How you live gives evidence of what you believe. And how you willingly, joyfully sacrifice for others will be an incredible testament to the power of the gospel.

Ok here's what I want to do next. I want you to hear from a couple of women who have sought to apply this passage to their lives over time. In the spirit of Titus 2 I'm going to invite Michelle Bender and Dawn Deeeeemas up on to the stage. They are members here and I've asked them to allow me to briefly interview them on what this has looked like in their lives and how they would encourage younger women to apply this. Would you welcome them up for us?

1. To Both: Give us your life story in 30 seconds

2. **Dawn:** Did someone do this for you? When did you start stepping into the older woman role?

3. **Michelle:** How do you get started in a Titus 2 type relationship? do you “ask her out?”

4. **Dawn:** What does a single woman do with all of this?

5. **Michelle:** How have you found submission to be a good thing and maybe give an example of what it has looked like.

6. **Both:** How do you reconcile passions God has given you with being a mom and a wife?

7. **Both:** You have the floor for 1 minute. how do you want to encourage older and younger women?