



## Sermon #4- Titus 2.1-15

Men & Women pt 1 – Becoming Men

### Compassion Sunday Celebration

- We showed up! Goal: 60. They gave us 150 packets just to send it. All together we sponsored 138 children!
- Ya'll that generosity breeds more generosity. So EXCITED FOR THE DAYS AHEAD! We do have 12 left over. If you weren't here or you went home and had to think through it, well you've got a shot after service. We asked them to let us hang on to these remaining 12 in case someone missed service.

### Intro

For those of you newer to Mercy Church we have been walking through the book of Titus. So if you got your bible head over there. We've got a lot of ground to cover today. So go to chapter 2.

Chapter 1 was all about **where we are going**. How our eternal destination interprets our present reality. Where I'm going later determines what I'm doing now. If I'm running a marathon at 2pm I'm not eating Fettucini Alfredo for lunch. If I want to buy a house later I gotta save up today. If my first day at my new job is tomorrow I'm getting to bed early tonight. If my last day of work is tomorrow I'm all "turn down for what" tonight. Where I'm going determines what I'm doing. my eternal future sets my present course of action. Big stuff but we can't really review more than that so you can catch up on the podcast.

Today we jump into chapter 2. And Paul is going to devote this entire chapter not to where we are going, but **who we are becoming**. When you believe for the long haul, the evidence will be very visible in your life. You Will Change. Chapter 2 is a direct call, a challenge even, to step up & into the shoes of the man or woman God has created you to be.

So this week is about becoming a man and the next sermon is about becoming a woman. And I know you are excited particularly about my insights there. Don't worry I have a plan. Now this is important: This teaching is on who God is calling you to be and how you are to relate to your world. But you have to see FIRST how he frames it.

Verse 1 - [1] But you are to proclaim things consistent with sound teaching.

The 'you' is Titus. And the word consistent there means teach what a fitting response would be to...sound teaching. What is sound teaching? It's the gospel! That's what chapter 1 was

spent talking about. Remember the whole idea of chapter 1 that we spent 3 weeks on is us marveling at the gospel of Jesus Christ and that beauty and wonder becomes our motivation for living. Long haul belief is looking back at what God saved us from and looking forward to where he is taking us and the person he is making us into.

Who we are becoming, verses 2-10, is a response consistent with that great news. then look at verses 11-14 on the other side of that teaching:

[11] **For** (you can read that *because. Because or in response to*) 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.

He's making the same point on both sides of his instruction. He's saying **EVERYTHING** about how we live is a response to what we experience in the gospel!

Listen this point is MASSIVE. Can't be overstated. Especially because we are going to get into talking about manhood and womanhood. And you might find yourself being challenged in some ways these next two weeks. But, The Christian life is NOT a set of morals to master. If you view it that way life will crush you because you'll never be perfect. From your first day becoming a Christian until God takes you home your life is a **response** to God's grace to you.

Look at verse 11 again. (put up just verse 11) - salvation to all people. Live this way in response to salvation for all people. I've told you I went to UNC & when we beat duke freshman year, we stormed franklin street. Now it wasn't a riot. It was a celebration. I easily hugged 200 people. I remember one guy who I had in a religion class and we disagreed on basically everything...We saw each other, shrugged, & gave each other a huge hug. Because what united us was greater in that moment. And when I look at verse 11 I think about how that's what the church should be. People of all social classes & cultures celebrating together because salvation has come to us! And that salvation verse 12 says...it instructs us into a better way to live. Which is a recap of our passage today. So here' is how that salvation instructs us in our roles.

Ok, he starts with the guys. Ladies don't check out because you need to make sure you date & marry **men**. And if you end up being a mom of boys u need to raise **men**. Not boys with beards. Boys with beards have no place in our world. On top of all that, if you never get married or have your own kids, as a part of the church family you have the chance to help speak life to young boys by calling them UP to their God-given calling.

This is one of a few things I get really fired up about. Because look at me men. If you are over 18...boyhood is over. God has created you to grow into manhood. And God blesses manhood. God's design is for men to bring about the flourishing of the whole human race. When men are at their

best everyone around them flourishes. But I do believe there is a severe manhood crisis in our day.<sup>1</sup>

- Men are confused – Almost no man I meet has a compelling vision for manhood. When I ask them “what is a real man” most have no answer and the ones that do don’t have anything that would inspire you to RISE to the occasion. There is no target to aim for when it comes to what it means to be a man!
- Men are disappointed – They’ve reached adulthood and their ambitions have been replaced by hard hitting real life and they aren’t who they thought they’d be or where they thought they’d be.
- Men are lonely – The older most men get the fewer true friends they have.
- Men are in a faith crisis. **90% of boys raised in church abandon their faith during their teens & twenties. 6 million women worship alone without their husbands every Sunday**
- Men are in pain – They shy away from it. They don’t know how to express it. And that pain leads to lashing out. **91% of domestic violence is caused by men. 90% of all reported crime is caused by men. 1 in 5 women have been sexually abused or assaulted by a man.** The surgeon general said Emergency Room visits resulting from domestic violence of men vs women accounts for more adult woman visits than rape, traffic accidents, and muggings combined.

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<sup>1</sup> Manhood Crisis Statistics comes from Robert Lewis’ Men’s Fraternity Session 1. A FANTASTIC series on manhood I hope to take Mercy Church men through one day soon.

- Psychologist Rollo May: *“The clearest picture of an empty life is the suburban man, who gets up at the same hour every weekday morning, takes the same train to work in the city, performs the same tasks at the office, lunches at the same places, leaves the same tip for the waitress, comes home on the same train each night; spends a two-week vacation at the shore every summer which he does not enjoy. Goes to church but does not really know why he goes, and moves through a routine, mechanical existence year after year until he finally retires at age 65 and very soon thereafter dies of heart failure, possibly brought on by repressed anger. Though I always have the suspicion that he died from boredom.”*
- Society programs us to live this way: a job we’re supposed to have; money we’re supposed to make; wife we’re supposed to marry. We move through that process as along a **conveyor belt** through a standardized manhood process. **We have no higher calling on our lives than ourselves.**

Today we begin to write a new script for manhood. We won’t get all the way there but It’s time you and I set our sights higher. I’m going to show you 2 things: **1) Who a real man is (we’ll just walk through the passage)** and **2) HOW you become a man.**

And Mercy Church will be a place where boys II men is a mission, not just a 90s group. So here we go. Up first:

## Who a real man is

This vision you will find isn't bound to one culture. God is saying that among true men, men who honor God with their lives, there are certain universal characteristics. That's not a personality though right? Nothing about being a lumberjack or a ladies man or a financial titan or a hipster barista. Nothing about being assimilated into one culture. No this vision of manhood crosses all personalities and all cultures in all times.

[2] Older men are to be self-controlled, worthy of respect, sensible, and sound in faith, love, and endurance.

- Older Men - That's age 36 and up. I know that because I'm age 35. Don't be surprised if that age range goes up next year. Look the point is when you become an older man this is what your life is to look like. This is the target to aim for.
- Be self-controlled - **Self-Controlled** – Ok this one seems to be most important to Paul in this whole list. I say that because it seems to be the only one he makes sure to emphasize for older men, older women, younger men, & younger women. And this one isn't new to Paul here. In fact 13 other times in his letters Paul talks about self-control as a defining character trait, as evidence, that someone is following Christ. And listen none of these are hard to figure out, but this one is especially easy to understand. Self-Control.
- It is the discipline to control...your...self. Paul compares it to an athlete in 1 Corinthians 9. [ [25] Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive

a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. [26] So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. [27] But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. 1 Corinthians 9:24–27

He is saying if an athlete has the urge to eat fast food, the urge to skip practice, or even the lack of discipline in form...they will lose their shot at winning the prize. And the prize is better to them than what they are denying themselves. See this is what Paul is saying that's us. The way we run our lives is evidence of what prize we truly want to attain! Is Christ Better than anything else? Then don't sacrifice him for lesser things.

When the bible brings up from time to time the phrase 'desires of the flesh' its talking about how our body that has been affected by sin now desires things that are ultimately destructive to us. Like an runner may crave a milkshake but say no to it during training because he/she thinks the prize is better, so your flesh will have cravings of all kinds and giving into them can steer you away from the Lord. Listen to me: **Either you control your flesh or your flesh controls you.**

And guys you will NEVER be able to grow into the man God is calling you to be if your flesh controls you.

I think the way this uniquely applies to men is actually connected to the very last thing in the list Paul says should characterize older men. He says they should be sound (or healthy in) in endurance.

- **Sound in Endurance**<sup>2</sup> – So let me bring this one up here, a little out of order, because its actually the only one Paul uniquely sets aside for older men. You want to know how you are going to become a man? It’s endurance! A lot of what he says he says to the rest, but not this. Here’s why...
- There is a temptation among older men to start to coast through life. They get weary of living to help other people and to start to live for themselves. Certainly our culture applauds this right? Get the kids grown, out of the house, and you can buy that cherry red convertible and let what’s left of your hair blow in the breeze. Make enough money to Go live on a golf course 3 days a week and at some point name your boat The Sizzler or something.
- And what ends up happening is those guys who chase self-satisfaction in that way usually end up being some of the grumpiest, hardest to get along with people of all. Why? Because that’s not how God designed manhood.
- Instead Paul says ENDURE! Not because God needs you, but because you are not designed to reach an age where you STOP responding to the gospel.
- You know the story of Caleb? – Joshua 14. Caleb at age 85 says “hey, back in the day I walked on that mountain here in the promised land and God said through Moses ONE DAY Caleb that will be your home.” God has kept me alive and as long as I have

breath I’m believing he keeps his promises and I’m following him. So send me up there.

- Men, we today HAVE WAY MORE reason to persevere in the faith than caleb did. We have the hope of the resurrection! We have a kingdom we are building that the Lord says will last forever. So everything you do in his name is building a legacy that will last forever!
- Had a man in his early 80s ask me if he could join our launch team when we started Mercy. I asked if he was sure. He looked at me kindly offended. “I’ve been a part of 2 church plants and I have the energy for at least one more.” Ok sir. Come take the hill.
- Older men: What hill has God kept in front of you? TAKE IT! f

You get what Paul is saying to you older men? Ever heard the phrase its not how you start but how you finish that matters? Originally comes from Henry Ward Beecher who said its not the going out of port, but the coming in, that determines the success of the voyage. True men finish strong.

### **Worthy of Respect**

What’s interesting is that the rest of these traits you can control, but respect is something given back to you when you live your life in a worthy way. Ask any man – true men never ask for respect, they are given it. A man who demands respect may be feared but never truly respected. Worthy of respect is

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<sup>2</sup> This thought on endurance, and the comment later in the sermon to younger men, were inspired by J.D. Greear’s sermon on this passage called “Extraordinary Ordinary” in the Everyday Theology Series from 2015.

worthy of honor. It's saying *that man* is one I admire. How do you live that way?

- I'm going to give you the definition of manhood right here that I've committed to live my life by. This is how I seek to respond to the gospel: **A true man rejects passivity, accepts responsibility, leads courageously, and anticipates God's greater reward.**<sup>3</sup>
- Rejects Passivity – I'm not going to sit and watch. I'm not going to fear commitment to something when commitment is needed. People will be able to depend on me.
- Accepts responsibility – When I'm wrong, I own it. When those under my leadership are wrong, I own that too. When a decision needs to be made, I step up
- Leads courageously – Courage is THE vanishing character trait in the rising generation of men.
  - NOT COURAGE: Man Maker Bear Traps
  - Courage: In relationships. Ask her out. Read her Shakespeare don't text it to her. Lead the conversation on career moves, on family decisions, on in-law controversies. Be bold in your workplace. Not brash, but courageous.
- Anticipate God's greater reward – That's 1 Cor 9 – our present lives are responses to the victory we have in Jesus. We experience that freedom now and we look ahead to the glorious reunion we have with God later.

**Sensible** – Be a man who is not driven by his emotions to making unwise decisions. They don't run to extremes. Instead

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<sup>3</sup> This definition comes from Robert Lewis' *Men's Fraternity*. And it is pure gold.

the gospel has instructed him to see the world as flawed as it really is **and** as beautiful as it could be. So the older man in Christ is always realistically hopeful. He's seen God move before so to be sensible is not to lack faith. It's to have seen God move before and have a real understanding of how God works in the world. And of how the world works.

**Sound in Faith** – We need Calebs. Older men are to be **models of faith**. In light of their salvation, they are to press into the Lord and believe he has great things yet to do.

Because lets me real right now. There is an unspoken belief that big bold leaps of faith are a young man's game. Yes, there are opportunities in younger seasons of life but can I ask: Why should we expect young men & women in their 20s to quit their jobs and to move their lives to the mission field but NOT empty nesters in their 50s!? Seems backwards to me. And I believe it's an absence of endurance in their faith. Don't stand on the sidelines complaining that you "don't understand those young people. Our whole world is going up in flames. If they don't get off them screens their brains will rot..." Listen you are right. Brains are rotting. But God's promises are still true and God LOVES the rising generations. So stop complaining and get in the game.

Yes, you may be in your greatest years of earning potential. Question: Did Paul say let earning potential instruct you? NO! He said let the gospel that has saved you instruct you. I don't know if the mission field, or if its something else. I know men

sound in faith will be the men God uses to train younger men in the faith, to train their children in the faith. To serve as elders who train the church in the faith.

So my question to every man here is: **what is the condition of your faith?** I'll tell you how you find the answer: are the people around you growing closer to Jesus or further from him because of their proximity to your faith?

Listen even as your pastor that one stings. Do I exhibit faith...complete trust in the Lord...that stirs your faith? That stirs my family's faith? My friend's faith?

Last thing here – this is why I love the story of Candlewyck Baptist Church here in town. I watched them take a Titus 2 step. By and large Older men and women confronted with a SCARY step of faith – will we give up control of our church...because it seemed like the way they could honor God & reach people. GOD WILL USE THAT!

**Sound in Love** - Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13 that the greatest single response to the gospel is love. God so loved the world he sent his son to die for us. Self-less love, sacrificial love, is the single mark Jesus says the world will know Christianity by. Men – I'm not necessarily talking about your emotions here ok. Though if you are as cold as ice emotionally that might be a gospel problem. But here's what I'm saying: Has the gospel of love warmed your heart towards others? To be sound in love is to be predictably healthy in loving others. When people think of you do they think...oh how he loves his wife, his family, his friends, etc. God calls you to sacrifice yourself for

others to the point of death if necessary and when you do he calls that LOVE. Is that you?

Now, let me talk real quick about Paul's one aside to younger men:

**[6] In the same way, encourage the young men to be self-controlled [7] in everything.**

Young guys the reason he gives this one admonition is because self control is the Achilles heel of young men. Young men are prone to being ruled by their desires for power, pleasure, & fame. Guys if you got this, God could work mightly through you. On the flip side this one thing will keep you from becoming the man God is calling you to be.

**"A man without self-control is like a city whose walls have been broken through." Proverbs 25.28**

Understand the image? Doesn't matter how smart or wealthy or heroic the citizens in the city are. It's walls are broken and the wild beasts & enemies can just come in at will. Young men your enemy knows you & is looking to destroy you and your lack of self control is the thing he will use.

J.C. Ryle said being ruled by the desires of your body will murder your soul.

One area I see this is with so many young men being destroyed by porn, & sex outside of marriage. And that leads to a lack of control & dignity with how you treat women. You begin to view them as objects instead of people so you disrespect them in how you look at them, how you pressure a woman you aren't married to dishonor God with her body so



you can satisfy your out of control flesh. When men have no self-control they harm themselves and everyone around them. Listen to me: Self-control is a choice. Don't let your lack of it destroy your soul.

That's who a real man is. Verse 2. Now let me take the last couple of minutes and talk about **how you become a real man.**

What a great question huh? There are a few opinions about this and my job here is not to add my opinions. Instead its to point you to God's word. Two things every man needs to do

1. **Discipleship** – Ok let me say this clearly. You need someone here and now modeling what it looks like to follow Jesus. When I asked our staff, asked people on social, asked pastor friends, & others the one universally agreed upon thing men need to become the men God is calling them to be is older men modeling life for them. They don't need classes or books, they need other men. Now listen this only works if the older man is Titus 2.2. If he's just an old BOY, don't spend time with him. And some of you older men may need to submit yourself to discipleship by younger men who are older than you in the faith. Don't let your pride keep you from that.

**Discipleship - One person training another person to follow Jesus**

So if you want to be trained how to be a real man, that's the training you need. I do not have the time here to get fully into that but we will get a lot more into it over our last 2 weeks in

Titus. Here's the deal though. Training is heart level assessment and work followed by changed responses in life.

Here's 3 questions I almost always use in discipleship:

1. **Where are you now?** – Start with the manhood profile from today and walk through it. Talk not just about behavior, but WHY you are where you are. Example: never share your faith...why?
2. **What does the gospel say about where you are?** – Heart work. If you are not strong in faith. For example scared to share faith because of fear: Gospel says you have approval & acceptance of only one that matters. And that greater fear is this person never knowing Christ.
3. **What is your next step?** – The gospel instructs us. So we take steps! They may be scary steps but we take steps nonetheless. Example: share Christ, maybe pray each day.

To older guys – be willing to step out and disciple younger men. To younger men, ask! Seek this out.

2. **Get to know Jesus, the one true man** – Ever heard someone say "He's a man's man." Usually means he can bench press a city bus and smoke 8 cigars at once or something. Listen, those are both impressive physical feats that will likely kill you. The only true man's man was Jesus. He literally was a man FOR all other men. A man's man.

**[17] For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in**



## life through the one man Jesus Christ. Romans 5:17

See our list from verse 2? Want to see a model of it? Look at Jesus.

- Self-Controlled – denied his flesh to stay up on the cross and die for your sin and mine.
- Sound in Endurance – To the very end he never sinned. Even when tempted by Satan 3 times in the wilderness he trusted God’s words more than the enemy’s.
- Worthy of Respect – He respected others, he served others, he died for others, and even when his enemies crucified him a roman soldier looks and says truly this is the son of God. Like all great men he carried himself in humility & grace yet used great power when the moment called for it.
- Sensible – He saw the world in all its brokenness. And yet because of his mission he was bringing hope into that broken world. He taught lessons that confounded the smartest people of his day and was declared a madman by some. Because 1 Corinthians 1 says the message of the cross is foolishness to the world.
- Sound in Faith – Even when the father sends him to the cross he says father not my will but yours be done.
- Sound in Love – Greater love has no one than this..that someone lay down his life for his friends.

Listen that isn’t just a model of manhood for you to follow. It is, but it is more than that. It’s where the power for manhood comes from. YOU can be self-controlled because he set you free from the sinful desires of the flesh. You can live a humble dignified life worthy of respect because the only approval you

need, God’s approval, you have in Christ!, You can live sound in faith BECAUSE his faithfulness to you means he won’t let you go even when you fall. You can love others relentlessly because you are being filled with the never ending always satisfying love of God. And you can endure because the Holy Spirit within you never fades. Plant yourself in the story of verses 11-14 and watch what the Lord does in your life.

## COMMUNION