TEACH WHAT IS APPROPRIATE TO SOUND DOCTRINE

Titus 2:1 You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine.

Paul is telling Titus that he, in contrast to the circumcision group, must teach people how to live in a way that lines up with “sound doctrine.” The circumcision group focused on outward observances and rules; the true follower of Jesus must develop godly character.

The ability to encourage others by “sound doctrine” is one of the qualifications for being an elder. The word translated “sound” essentially means healthy. The prodigal’s father celebrated because the prodigal came home “safe and sound” (Luke 15:27). “Doctrine” simply means teaching.

The things that are appropriate to sound doctrine must be taught “so that no one will malign the word of God” (Titus 2:5), and “so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us” (Titus 2:8) and “so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive” (Titus 2:10).

Teach the Older Men

Titus 2:2 Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance.

“Older men” probably refers to men over 60. Note on Luke 1:7&18 describing Zechariah (and Elizabeth) in “The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah” by Edersheim.

“Temperate” is *“nephalios”* which basically means free from the use of intoxicants. Paul told Timothy in I Timothy 5:23 to “use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses,” probably because the water contained things harmful to his health. Drinking something with alcoholic content is not a sin. Drinking enough to impair your judgment is a sin.

“Worthy of respect” is *“semnos.”* It means dignified, serious. An elder must “see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect” I Timothy 3:4 The noun is translated “seriousness” in Titus 2:7. “in your teaching show…seriousness.” It is important that Christians take being a Christian seriously, without taking themselves too seriously.

“Self-controlled” is “of sound mind…self-controlled…soberminded.” (Vines)

“Sound in faith.” Sound is the same word used in verse one. It essentially means healthy. The Greek has the definite article before the word for faith – sound in the faith.

Jude 3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God’s holy people.

“Sound in love.” Love is *“agape”* as in “For God so loved the world.” It means deliberately choosing to do what is best for someone else even if it costs you personally.

“Sound in endurance.” Endurance is *“hupomeno,”* literally, abiding under. Hebrews 12:2, Jesus “endured the cross.” Hebrews 12:3, “Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” Hebrews 12:7a, “Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children.”

Teach the Older Women

Titus 2:3 Likewise, teach the older woman to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.

“Older women” refers to women over 60, just as older men refers to men over 60.

“Reverent in the way they live” means to live in a way that is consistent with saying you are devoted to God.

“Not to be slanderers” is literally not to be *“diabolos,”* an accuser, a slanderer. The word is usually translated “devil.” The NASB translates the phrase, “not to be malicious gossips.” The older we get, the easier it is to spend our time talking about what others are doing, rather than doing things ourselves.

“Addicted to much wine.” The restriction on drinking is slightly different for the older women than the older men. The older women are to be taught not to become slaves to much wine.

“To teach what is good” is just one word in Greek, the word for teach combined with a word meaning good. Titus was to set an example “by doing what is good” (Titus 2:7). We are to be “a people...eager to do what is good” (Titus 2:14). “So that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good” (Titus 3:8). “Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good” (Titus 3:14).

Paul is writing to Titus about what to teach a group of people that one of their own described as “always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons.”

What Older Women Are to Urge Younger Women to Be and Do

Titus 2:4&5 Then they can urge 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.

“Then they can urge the younger women” is literally “then they can cause the younger women to be of sound mind.” A different form of the same verb occurs in Titus 2:6 where the Amplified Version captures almost all of the ways the word is usually translated, “In a similar way, urge the young men to be sensible and self-controlled and to behave wisely (taking life seriously.)”

“To love their husbands” is *“philandros,”* formed by combining the word for love, *“phileo,”* with the word for man/husband, *“andros.”* Men are commanded to love, *“agapao,”* their wives, women are to love, *“phileo,”* their husbands. *“Agapao”* is self-sacrificial love, *“phileo”* “more nearly represents tender affection.” (Vine’s)

“To love their children” is *“philoteknos,”* formed by combining the words for love and children.

“To be self-controlled” is the same word found in Titus 2:2, in a verb form in Titus 2:4 and in a noun form in Titus 2:6 where the Amplified Bible translates it “to be sensible and self-controlled and to behave wisely (taking life seriously).”

“Pure” is probably a reference to sexual purity.

“To be busy at home” is literally home-workers. For most women in that culture taking care of the home and the children would be a full-time job.

“Kind” is *“agathos,”* almost always translated “good.” It “describes that which, being good in its character, is beneficial in its effect” (Vine’s). Its meaning is similar to the word translated good in Titus 2:7, 14; 3:8 & 14 and to the compound word meaning to teach what is good in Titus 2:3, but the meaning is slightly different.

“To be subject to their husbands” means exactly what it says. Although Paul doesn’t mention it here, in Ephesians 5 when he talks about submission, he also tells the husband to “love his wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” and the word submit in Ephesians 5:22 is supplied from 5:21.

“So that no one will malign the word of God.” If people claim to have a relationship will God but do not demonstrate godly conduct, it gives people a great opportunity to speak evil of Christians.

Things to Remember

Because the circumcision group taught Old Testament rules and regulations, they were “unfit for doing anything good” (Titus 1:16).

Titus was to teach what was “appropriate to healthy teaching,” to teach how Christians were to live in terms of character, not rules and regulations.

When genuine life change follows conversion it makes Christianity attractive and makes it hard for unbelievers to malign us.