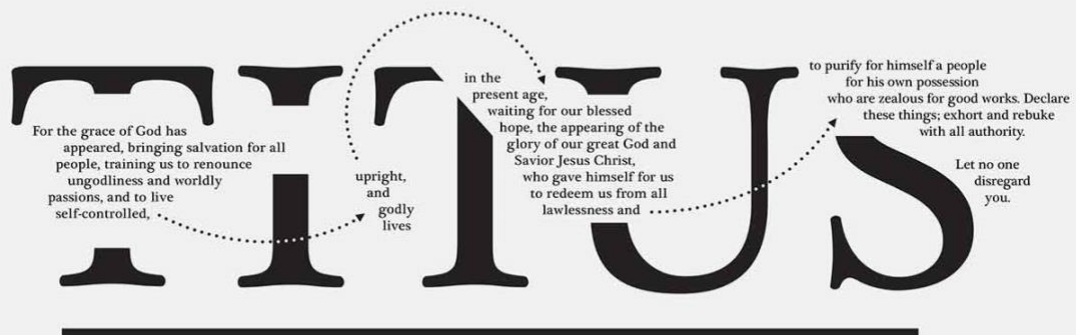




Swartz *FBC* Leader Discussion Guide



SCRIPTURE: Titus 2**SERIES:** Titus**TITLE:** Gospel Wisdom**BIG IDEA:** Paul gives practical, Gospel wisdom to the church for the health of the church and for impact in the community.

SUMMARY

Paul is giving the people in the church at Crete some very pointed and practical wisdom. He mentions self-control several times and couches all the action items in the fact that they are a living example of the Gospel's affect to the community around them. He specifically addresses several groups within the church and empowers them to live godly lives as an example. Paul's charge here is not behavior modification. His charge is Gospel-centered, Christ-honoring, Holy Spirit-empowered living to the Glory of God.

TEXT**Titus 2**

But as for you, teach what accords with sound^[a] doctrine. ² Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. 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 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. ⁶ Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. 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. ⁹ Bondservants^[b] 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.

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

¹⁵ Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

1. WISDOM FOR MATURE MEN

²Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.

The goal for mature men of the faith is to be faithful examples who are steady, loving, self-controlled, and worthy of respect. They are intended to be men who can be looked up to by younger believers. Mature men of the faith desire to be agents of spiritual growth for younger generations. Spiritually mature men disciple and spiritually father younger men of the church.

- Why are these qualities necessary of spiritually mature men?
- How have men like this made an impact on your life?
- What does it mean to be sound in faith?

2. WISDOM FOR MATURE WOMEN

³Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good,

The goal for mature women of the faith is to be an example for faithfulness and holiness for younger believers. They are called to speak what is true, teach what is true, and live an example of a life devoted to what is true. Spiritually mature women disciple and mother younger women of the church.

- Why are these qualities necessary of spiritually mature women?
- Who are mature women encouraged to teach?
- What does it mean to be a spiritual mother?
- How have women like this had an impact on your life?

3. WISDOM FOR MATURING WOMEN

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

The goal for younger women is to be disciplined by spiritual mothers in the church. They get to learn from mature women who have walked in their shoes. Self-control is a goal across the board for all believers. The younger women are encouraged to work in their homes, but we must be careful not to place on this our own bias. Paul was responding to a cultural norm in Crete where women would neglect their families. Paul wasn't telling women to not pursue a career. He was simply saying to the women of the church in Crete not to neglect their families or their husbands. There was a significant problem of infidelity in the church and Paul knew that God's design for the family was a man and a wife mutually submitted to each other out of reverence for Christ and together raising their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

- How should the leading of spiritually mature women affect younger women?
- What is Paul saying for young women to be mindful of in this passage?
- What are some challenges younger women face in relation to the wisdom Paul is sharing?

4. WISDOM FOR MATURING MEN

⁶Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.

Self-control is a key feature across all the instructions Paul gives. This practical wisdom is so very important. This fruit of the Spirit, when manifested in the life of a believer, is life changing. This is a tall order for young men but is a clear indication of the Spirit's work in them.

- Why would self-control be repeated so often in this passage?
- What is the importance of the word "likewise?"
- How should young men pursue self-control practically?

5. WISDOM FOR THOSE WHO TEACH & LEAD

⁷Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity,
⁸and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing
evil to say about us.

The calling of leaders and teachers is to be an example to others. In this they bear in mind that their life is on display. This isn't a call to perfection but to spiritual maturity that manifests godliness. This text doesn't say – be perfect. It's urging believers, especially those who teach and lead, to be an example such that others have no ammunition against us or what we believe.

- Why is integrity, dignity, and sound speech so important for spiritual leaders?
 - o Why is it important for every believer?
- What is the difference in setting a good example and perfectionism?

6. WISDOM FOR WORKERS

⁹Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, ¹⁰not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

Slavery is evil. No human should be the slave of another. This is obvious. Paul, in this text was not condoning slavery. Crete was, at this point in time, under Roman rule. The term “bondservant” referred to several different positions. It was the general term for “employee.” It was also synonymous with a bond-servitude, or anyone with a master/manager. Paul's point in this text is to encourage anyone in any position to respond with grace, love, and self-control in every situation. Why? Because this evidence of the Spirit's work in us will help others to see the excellency of Christ and the beauty of the Gospel. In this context specifically, even those of the lowest status in society.

- How can we set a good example in our workplace?
- How can a person lead by example even if they are not in charge?
- How do these qualities “adorn the doctrine of God?”

7. WISDOM FOR THE CHURCH

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

15 Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

We are all recipients of grace. The church is the recipient of God's special grace reserved for His people. Paul mentions self-control again. This is certainly a theme within this text. He says that grace trains us to reject ungodliness and live self-controlled, godly lives. He doesn't say, live Godly then you will get grace. No. It's the reverse. We receive grace and that grace trains us to become the people God is maturing us to be. Wisdom from God is a result of grace and is itself, a grace from Him.

- How does grace train us?
- What do these verses teach us about God's desire for His people and their impact on their communities?
- What does it mean to be zealous for good works?