

Good Things Part 1

Titus 2:3

Our last session took us back to the beginning, where God established the order for men and women. Men are to lead, and women are to come alongside and help them. This is not a lowly or demeaning position for women but rather one of honor. God, Himself, is our help. Today, we will dissect verse 3 of Titus 2 – the virtues of *older women*.

1. Read Titus 2:2-3. The word *likewise* in verse 3 tells us that the women are to have the same virtues as the men. Using verses 2 and 3, list the virtues of older women.

These verses call us to disciple younger women. A disciple is *a disciplined learner of another. It is to be a follower of Jesus*. To disciple another is to come alongside them and teach them how to follow Jesus. To be disciples, we must exercise the attributes listed above. It is an honorable calling, one we all should answer. Every believer in Jesus Christ should desire to mature in their walk with Jesus. The pursuit of godliness should be the goal for all of us. These virtues should not intimidate us but inspire us to step up, grow, and walk worthy.

Do not think these verses are not for you. Most of us are older than someone. There will always be an opportunity to be a *teacher of good things* to someone younger than you. Therefore, making these virtues a part of your godly character is necessary.

The older men are exhorted to be reverent, and the older women are more specifically exhorted to be reverent in behavior. In the original King James version, reverent is *as becometh holiness*. According to Vines Expository Dictionary, **reverent** can mean *actions or things consecrated (set apart) to God*.

Ladies, we are to be holy and set apart. We are not to be like the world or those who do not know God. We are to be godly women.

2. Read 1 Peter 1:14-19.

a. What are we called to be? (v. 15) _____

b. Why? (v. 15) _____

c. What is required of us to do so? (v. 14) _____

d. What is our motivation? _____

Holy – cleansing self from all defilement, forsaking sin. Pure, morally blameless

Jesus redeemed us with His precious blood and guaranteed us eternal life. This should serve as our incentive to heed the command to live in holiness.

Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

- Exodus 15:11

God is holy! We are to worship Him in His holiness. His holiness should be the foundation for our pursuit of holiness.

3. Read the following verses and record the details of God's holiness, offering Him praise in your answer.

1 Samuel 2:2

1 Chronicles 29:11

Isaiah 55:8-9

4. The Bible gives instructions on how-to live-in holiness. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8.

a. Is the call to holiness only for older women? _____

b. What is God's will for us? _____

5. Read Galatians 5:19-21 and list the acts of uncleanness.

6. Pursuing a life of holiness can seem daunting, almost impossible. Read the following verses. How can we become holy and reverent in behavior?

Psalm 119:9

Romans 12:1

Ephesians 4:20-24

7. Read through Isaiah 6:1-8. Describe what Isaiah saw and his response.

8. We are called to be holy, set apart from those who don't know God. We are to be holy because God is holy. When we do this, we bring God glory. How is Isaiah an example for you in your quest for holiness? What are you doing, or can you be doing to be more holy?

Next, the men are exhorted to be sober and the women, not given to much wine.

Sober – temperate; abstaining from wine either entirely or at least from its immoderate use

Just as God's order for men and women is not popular in our culture, sadly, neither is living soberly. While alcohol is not a sin, it can lead to sin. It is a liberty we must exercise with caution and restraint in order to keep ourselves pure and to avoid stumbling others.

9. What do the following verses teach about alcohol?

Proverbs 20:1

Ephesians 5:18

10. To be sober also means to exercise self-control. Read the following verses. For what reasons should we remain sober?

1 Peter 1:3-5, 13

1 Peter 4:7

2 Timothy 1:7-8

11. Consider Titus 2:3 and the verses you just read. How can *not given to much wine* benefit an older woman who desires to teach a younger woman *good things*?

12. What has God shown you through these verses about being sober?

Remember, the word *likewise* means the older women are to have the same qualities as the older men, plus the additional virtues mentioned. In verse 2, we learn that older men are called to be temperate. Temperance is an attitude of the mind that leads to a self-controlled life. It is a quality needed for sober and holy living.

They are also called to be *sound in faith, love, and patience*. To do so, one must be secure in what they believe and, therefore, love and know God's Word well. This results in a lifestyle of love and patience—necessary virtues for teaching the younger women.

13. In our pursuit of holiness, the above virtues are vital. Do you need to improve in any of these areas? If so, write out a plan for growth. (Do some research and find verses to help you.)

14. How can being sound in faith, love, and patience contribute to being a teacher of good things to younger women?

The older women were also instructed not to be slanderers. To slander is to accuse someone falsely. Dictionary.com defines slander as *accusations that are based on hearsay, rumor, or intentional slander and remain undocumented and unproved*.

A woman who slanders is a false witness and a gossip. She is loose with her tongue with no regard for others.

15. Read Psalm 101:5. How does God deal with those who slander?

16. What does Proverbs 10:18 reveal about a slanderous person?

17. Read Ephesians 4:31-32. What are we to do with slander (and other destructive behaviors)? What are we to do instead?

18. Read Proverbs 16:28b. What happens when we gossip?

Dictionary.com defines gossip *as idle talk or rumor, especially about the personal or private affairs of others.*

Slander and gossip are destructive; they are not the qualities of a temperate and holy woman.

It is wrong to speak unkindly or unfairly about anyone. Spreading information that is either false or not yours to share is also wrong. These actions do not represent a holy God but rather immaturity on behalf of the slanderer.

19. Gossip is a weak area for many women. Take some personal inventory. Do you struggle with gossip or slander? Be specific. Ask the Lord to reveal to you even the most minor details of gossip, and then write a prayer of forgiveness.

The Bible is not short on verses about the tongue. Learning and memorizing these verses are an excellent antidote to the temptation to gossip.

Do not be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; therefore ***let your words be few.***

- Ecclesiastes 5:2

20. Read James 3:1-12 about the destructive nature of the tongue.

a. How is one who can control the tongue described? (v. 2) _____

b. To what is the tongue compared to? What does this teach us about the power of the tongue? (vs. 3-6) _____

c. What is the truth being taught in verses 9-12? _____

A holy life is one that bridles the tongue. We know we will not achieve perfection this side of heaven; however, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can work toward maturity. Using our speech to build up one another is the mark of a mature woman.

21. Read the following verses. What does each verse teach you about how we should speak to others?

Proverbs 15:1-2

Proverbs 21:23

Ephesians 4:29

Slander and gossip are not characteristics of a godly, mature, and holy woman. Instead, our words should be used to bring glory to God and edify the hearer.

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.

- Proverbs 25:11

Today, commit to asking the Holy Spirit to give you His strength to guard your mouth and for your words to be beautifully spoken.

Finally, the older women are instructed to be teachers of good things. It is important to note that all the virtues are necessary to be such a teacher. The call to discipleship is a high calling we all should desire to do. As we grow in our faith and increase in holiness, we should then want to share what we have learned.

22. According to 2 Timothy 3:16, what is profitable for teaching? Therefore, what should be your foundation in teaching others?

God's Word instructs us in all we need to attain the virtues to teach good things. It must be our only resource for knowing good things.

Titus 2:4 says that older women are to *admonish* the young women. This word means *to restore one to his senses, to moderate, control, curb, disciple, to hold one to his duty, to admonish, to exhort earnestly*.

Next week, we will study the *good things* that are to be taught: to love our husbands and children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, and yielding to our husbands.

23. Today, consider all the attributes we have studied. In what areas do you need to grow?

Begin praying for a woman younger than you—one whom you can come alongside and teach good things to. If you have someone in mind, write her name here. Pray about reaching out to her this week.

If you are a young woman, you need to be willing to learn from a woman older and more mature than you. Pray for someone to come alongside you. If you have someone in mind, write her name here.

We are all called to the older/younger woman relationship. When we are obedient to God, a beautiful friendship will form, allowing both women to flourish.

As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.

- Proverbs 27:17 NLT

A Character Study: Naomi, an Older Woman and Ruth

24. Read Ruth 1:1-5. Briefly summarize what took place in these five verses.

After receiving word that the Lord had visited His people and given them bread, Naomi made plans to return to Judah while encouraging each of her daughters-in-law to return to their own families in the hopes of finding new husbands and new lives.

25. How did they react to the suggestion to leave and return home? (v. 9-10, 14)

26. **THINK:** Why do you think they reacted this way? What can this emotional response tell you about their relationship with Naomi and how they felt about her?

27. If you were in this same position, what would make you want to follow your mother-in-law and leave your family behind?

28. In the end, Orpah returned to her family, but Ruth went with Naomi. Record the main points of Ruth's commitment to Naomi. (v. 16-17)

Ruth left everything she knew to follow Naomi. While we are not given the details of their relationship in Moab, it is obvious by the love and commitment Ruth made to Naomi that she had made a huge impact on Ruth's life. The text goes on to point out that Naomi was not in a great place at this particular time; she admittedly felt that the Lord had dealt very bitterly with her. But even in this melancholy place, Ruth longed to be with Naomi.

In chapter 2, Ruth gleans barley in a field owned by Boaz, one of Naomi's relatives. Boaz takes note of Ruth and shows her favor, inviting her back to glean from his fields exclusively. Naomi recognizes the favor and an opportunity for Ruth in Boaz and begins to guide and teach her in the customs of her people.

29. Read Ruth 3:1-4. Record what Naomi instructed Ruth to do.

Naomi saw the opportunity for Ruth to have a blessed life with a godly man. As her relative, he would be required to act as Ruth's kinsman-redeemer—one who was responsible for safeguarding family and property. By laying at his feet, Ruth would be engaging in an act of submission.

30. Naomi had the right to claim Boaz as Ruth's kinsman-redeemer; it was a God-given duty. Instead, she had Ruth wash herself, take heed of her appearance, and lay at Boaz's feet. What do you think Naomi sought to teach Ruth in the way she instructed her to approach Boaz?

31. Boaz was more than willing to serve Ruth and Naomi in this capacity, but there was a relative who was closer. What did Naomi seek to teach Ruth? (Ruth 3:18)

Naomi and Ruth came from two different worlds, but the Lord used their relationship to save Ruth from the idolatry of Moab and to heal the broken heart of His daughter, Naomi. Naomi was experiencing unspeakable grief, having lost her husband and two sons while living in a foreign land. But God provided her with a younger woman who would give her life meaning and purpose when she returned to the land He had given to her and her family.

32. Read Ruth 4:13-17 and summarize how God blessed Naomi and Ruth through their mentor relationship.
