

Lesson 12 – Titus 2:9-10
Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School
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Review

Paul begins chapter 2 by building a contrast between the false teachers who contradict and Titus who was to speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. The thoughts/ideas that we express should be those which are fitting for sound doctrine. Titus (and we) was to be a person of influence who lives an exemplary life (speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity) which matches his profession. Likewise, we are to have unwavering integrity which commands respect.

Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. Age is no excuse for sin—the years should bring maturity.

Older women are to be reverent in their behavior—the outside matching the inside and exhibiting Christ-like character. They must refuse to listen to, much less propagate, slanderous and demeaning stories about others. They are to not turn to drink to dull the pains and loneliness of old age, but instead to turn to the Lord. They should be treasures in discipling young women in godly living.

Young women are commanded to 1) love their husbands; 2) love their children; 3) be sensible; 4) be pure; 5) be workers at home; 6) be kind; and 7) be subject to their own husbands. The primary reason for obedience to God’s word is that it brings Him glory. By living against Scripture’s commands the gospel message is dishonored (maligned, criticized, or discredited) by non-believers.

Young men are to be sensible, an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified, and sound *in* speech. This leaves no opportunity for God, Jesus, God’s word, nor the Gospel to be rightly accused.

Introduction

In chapter 2, Paul’s focus has turned to “the things which are fitting” and how this fitting doctrine is lived out in groups of people. He started with older men (2:2) then moved onto older women (2:3-4a) then to young women (2:4b-5) then to young men (2:6-8). Today we will look at bondslaves (2:9-10).

NASB	ESV	NIV	Amplified
⁹ Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, ¹⁰ not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.	⁹ Bondservants 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.	⁹ Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, ¹⁰ and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.	⁹ [Tell] bond servants to be submissive to their masters, to be pleasing and give satisfaction in every way. [Warn them] not to talk back or contradict, ¹⁰ Nor to steal by taking things of small value, but to prove themselves truly loyal and entirely reliable and faithful throughout, so that in everything they may be an ornament and do credit to the teaching [which is] from and about God our Savior.

Basic Theology of Work

Q: What does the average person think of work?

Work: activity in which one exerts strength or faculties to do or perform something:

- a: sustained physical or mental effort to overcome obstacles and achieve an objective or result
- b: the labor, task, or duty that is one's accustomed means of livelihood – merriam-webster.com

1. God is a worker.

¹In the beginning God **created** the heavens and the earth. Gen 1:1

²By the seventh day **God completed His work** which He had done, and **He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.** Gen 2:2

¹⁷But He answered them, “**My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.**” John 5:17

¹⁷He is before all things, and **in Him all things hold together.** Col 1:17

2. God’s design for mankind is work.

²⁸God blessed them; and God said to them, “**Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over** the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” Gen 1:28

¹⁵Then the **LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.** Gen 2:15

3. The fall resulted in work being difficult and necessary for survival.

¹⁷Then to Adam He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’; **Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life.** ¹⁸“Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; ¹⁹**By the sweat of your face You will eat bread,** Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.” Gen 3:17-19

²³therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, **to cultivate the ground** from which he was taken. Gen 3:25

4. The primary purpose of our work should be to glorify God.

³¹Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, **do all to the glory of God.** 1 Cor 10:31

5. A secondary purpose of work is to provide for our own needs and to have extra to share with others in need.

¹⁰For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: **if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.** 2 Thess 3:10

⁸But **if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.** 1 Tim 5:9

²⁸He who steals must steal no longer; but rather **he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.** Eph 4:28

¹⁷Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. ¹⁸**Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,** 1 Tim 6:17-18

6. Ultimately, all work is to be done heartily because it is Jesus whom we serve.

²³Whatever you do, **do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,** ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. **It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.** Col 3:23-24

7. Work will never end. In heaven, we will continue to work even though there is no curse.

³**There will no longer be any curse;** and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and **His bond-servants will serve Him;** ⁴they will see His face, and His name *will be* on their foreheads. ⁵And there will no longer be *any* night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever. Rev 22:3-5

Bondslaves

This passage along with passages in Ephesians, Colossians, and 1 Timothy are directed to slaves and slave owners.

⁵**Slaves**, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; ⁶not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. ⁷With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. ⁹And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him. Eph 6:5-9

²²**Slaves**, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who *merely* please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. ²³Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. ²⁵For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality. Col 3:22-25

¹All who are under the yoke as **slaves** are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and *our* doctrine will not be spoken against. ²Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these *principles*. 1 Tim 6:1-2

Here in Titus 2, the Holy Spirit, through Paul, gives five character qualities that should mark every Christian employee. This slave/master relationship is analogous to the employee/employer relationship.

Paul's instructions to masters and slaves continues in the setting of the household. The vast majority of businesses in New Testament times were family operated, and therefore most servants were part of an extended household. In agrarian situations the servants, or slaves, worked in the fields or tended the flocks. If the master had a shop the servants worked as craftsmen or helpers. If he was a merchant they would do whatever chores were required to help in the business. In any case, the head of the household was also head of the business. He was usually the employer and the servants were his employees. MacArthur NT Commentary – Ephesians

1. *Urge* bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything

“Urge” is not in the Greek but was added by the NASB translators to make the flow readable and consistent with the previous exhortation. The text literally reads "Servants -- to their own masters are to be subject".

Bondslave [doulos] means slave; the most servile person in the culture of Paul's day. It refers to someone who is born into slavery in contrast to a person taken in war and sold as a slave. It conveys the idea of the slave's close, binding ties with his master, belonging to him, obligated to do his will and in a permanent relation of servitude to him.

Master [despotes] means lord or one with absolute ownership of and unchallenged power over another. The 5 of 9 uses in the NT refer to the master of the house who had unrestricted authority.

To be subject [hupotasso] means to cause to be in a submissive relationship, to subordinate or bring one under the firm control of another. It was a military term describing soldiers lining up under or rank under their authority. In non-military use, it refers to a voluntary attitude of placing oneself under the authority of another.

The first character quality for the believing employee is to voluntarily place themselves under the authority of their employer in everything. No matter how intolerable. This should be a continual (present tense) action that will permeate the other character qualities listed.

2. to be well-pleasing

Well pleasing [euarestos] means that which causes someone to be pleased. It is something which is well approved, eminently satisfactory, or extra-ordinarily pleasing. It is used 9 times in the NT and is translated in the NASB as: acceptable (3); pleasing (3); and well-pleasing (3). Its predominant usage refers to well-pleasing to God and most often describes the goal of a believer's life.

¹I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, **acceptable** to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and **acceptable** and perfect. Rom 12:1-2

¹⁸For he who in this way serves Christ is **acceptable** to God and approved by men. Rom 14:18

⁹Therefore also we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be **pleasing** to Him. 2 Cor 5:9

¹⁰trying to learn what is **pleasing** to the Lord. Eph 5:10

¹⁸But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, **well-pleasing** to God. Phil 4:18

²⁰Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is **well-pleasing** to the Lord. Col 3:20

⁹Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be **well-pleasing**, not argumentative, Titus 2:9

²¹equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is **pleasing** in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen. Heb 13:21

Employees are to be well-pleasing to their employers since they are serving the Lord.

²³Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. Col 3:23-24

3. not argumentative

Argumentative [antilego] means literally not speaking against. Modern slang might say "not talking back", contradicting, disputing, refusing, disobeying.

Talking back, being contrary, speaking under one's breath about the employer is not God's will for Christian employees.

⁵Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; ⁶not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. ⁷With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, Eph 6:5-7

4. not pilfering,

Pilfering [nosphizo] means stealing in small quantities; implies stealing repeatedly in small amounts.

Q: What are some ways that we may pilfer?

In modern times, many workers have access to company funds and property that is easily converted to personal use. Many others pilfer by such means as submitting inflated time sheets and expense reports, taking office supplies home for personal use, making unauthorized calls on the office phone, and taking unauthorized trips in the company car. When Christians do such things, their actions not only are unethical and damage their employer financially but also are unspiritual and do damage to the Lord's name and to their testimony. MacArthur NT Commentary – Titus

5. but showing all good faith

Show [endeiknumi] means to indicate by word or act. The present tense indicates this should be their habitual practice.

Faith [pistos] best means faithfulness.

The Christian employee is trustworthy, reliable, and utterly dependable. They never give a reason for their loyalty to be doubted. They are continually proving themselves to be faithful servants in everything they are entrusted with.

²In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found **trustworthy**. 1 Cor 4:2

6. so that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

So that [hina] is a conjunction which expresses the purpose, aim, or goal of prior exhortations.

Adorn [kosmeo] means to put in order; decorate; embellish (to make beautiful with ornamentation; to heighten the attractiveness of by adding decorative details). It conveys the idea of arranging something in proper order so as to give it symmetry, comeliness, and beauty.

Doctrine [didaskalia] means teaching or instruction.

Believing employees are to live out the truth before a watching world who is skeptical about the transforming power of the Gospel.

Employees are to live a life that visibly shows that they belong to Jesus "... by their submissiveness, by the excellence of their work, by their respectful attitude, by their honesty, and by their loyal service."
MacArthur NT Commentary – Titus p103

In every respect means no exceptions!

Summary

Employees are to be subject to their employers in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but trustworthy, reliable, and utterly dependable so as to live a life that visibly shows that they belong to Jesus.

So what should be do?

... just work hard. Go to work tomorrow or next month or next year and do your absolute best. Be the best employee, the best manager, the best associate you can be. Be known as the most honest, most humble, most ethical, most competent person in your field. And do all that not to advance your own career, but to advance God's fame. If you desperately want to see all of your co-workers saved, but you have a habit of not showing up to work on time, people will be annoyed and your witness will be compromised and God will not be honored. There are already enough people like that. Don't be one of them. A Theology of Work by Bob Thune