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Titus – Making Things Right

Chapter 2 - (vs.6-8)

If you turn in your Bibles to Titus, we're talking about putting things back in order. As we've talked about some of the background of this particular book, we've realized that things are way out of order on the island of Crete. So, Paul sends Titus to the island of Crete, a place where things seem to be upside down, and he tells him, "You've got to set things right side up." So, this book is about how you do that. How do you do that within a church? How do you do that within a household? Fundamentally, it begins with God, right?

So, he starts off this way in the very beginning of Titus 1:1, "Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God..." Then, he begins to talk about the foundation that God uses to bring order in any home and place. You have to have these ingredients in order for order to come; that is to say, you have to have truth and there has to be godliness. Now, when we're talking about truth, we're talking about truth that is defined by God. If truth is defined by anybody and everybody, you basically have a situation that is in the book of Judges; every man does what is right in his own eyes. So, if everyone defines truth the way they see it then you have no truth. You have no absolute. You have no anchor for your soul. So, you have that which is up for grabs. It's one of the reasons why you have people that are going around almost like Gnostics, saying, "I know what's best." Then, you have the people that are fed up with hearing all these different ideas, and they just say, "There is no truth," and they become agnostics. In other words, once you begin to realize that nobody has truth out there, you begin to react like Pilate did, and he says, "What is truth?" So, you're fundamentally saying, "I don't like the truth options that you've given me." When he came in contact with Truth Himself, he didn't want to change and give up his sphere of truth. So, if you can just make truth ambiguous and something that you can't nail, then maybe you can live with that. So, what we have is a world that really has no sense of truth. It has to be defined, according to the passage, the knowledge of truth comes from Jesus Christ. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." So, you have this foundation of a truth that is literally defined. It's not defined by man. It's defined by God. Therefore, it becomes an anchor for our soul. That's why he uses the phrase in verse 1, "according to godliness".

Now, the word that he uses here is actually a compound word. If you were to dissect it, "*eu*" being the first part and "*sebeia*" the second part; "*eu*" referring to "good" and "*sebeia*" is referring to "worship" or "reverence." So, when it's talking about godliness, it's referring to good worship or a reverence towards God. Reverence towards God is you saying, "God knows what truth is." It's not you defining truth. It's you in reverence saying, "I don't know what truth

is, but He does." You begin to have a foundation. Now, once again, if you don't have a sense of right and wrong that is clearly defined an absolute, then you have everybody defining things the way they want to, and you have chaos.

To give you an example of that, if you look with me in Ephesians 4, Paul talks about the way of the world and their thinking and what it ultimately adds up to. Ephesians 4:17 starts off this way, "So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind." In other words, depraved and lacking any kind of sense. There is no reality to what they're saying.

It goes on and says in verse 18, "being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

(Ephesians 4:19) and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness."

Once you don't know truth or have an anchor, if I could put it that way, you no longer have an anchor for your soul then you have what is called hopelessness. Once you have hopelessness, you just throw up your arms and go, "Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die." So, your only recourse is to find some sort of gratification today because obviously, there's no tomorrow. There's no truth. There's nothing that I can sink my teeth into. There's no sense of security or safety that I can bank on because truth isn't absolute. There are no guarantees.

When you think about John 3:16, "For God so loved the world;" it's a magnificent truth. That's an absolute.

"...that He gave His only begotten Son..."

That's a reality. In other words, He didn't just say He loved you; you saw the reality of His love.

"...that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

Now, that's a guarantee and it's anchored in an absolute that never changes. So, you have what we call hope; a confident expectation for tomorrow.

So, the way this passage ends in verse 20, "But you did not learn Christ in this way." In other words, you learned the absolute truth and you knew that there was a reason for all of this, and it's something that you can anchor your soul in. It was the way of God, and you revered God and said, "His way is better than mine." Then, you begin to live a whole different life, but that life is anchored in truth which means that you begin to put those things into practice, and you begin to see the reality of it. Here again, it's the difference between the philosophy of man; everybody has an idea of what truth is. You know they talk about it and debate about it, however, when it comes right down to it, it doesn't work. Nothing that they say actually works. It would be like man coming up and saying, "I can give you a lot of happiness; you'll be happy forever." Do they ever guarantee that kind of stuff? "You'll have peace that the world can't take away" or "you'll have fullness of joy." Is there really any way that the world can guarantee

those kinds of things? So, you begin to realize that the disappointment comes, and the wonderful thing about the truth of God is everything that He says is real; it's absolute; it plays out true. That's why the Psalmist says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good." Also, God says in Malachi, "Test Me and see if I don't open the windows of heaven if you do what I tell you to do." You go, "Well, ok, let's give this a try" and you begin to see the reality. When you see the reality of it then your soul takes courage because you have a sense of security. This works. This is true. It keeps people from seeking all those other venues.

There's an interesting passage in the book of James, if you turn there with me. Of course, James is written to a bunch of people that are dealing with a lot of disappointment and problems. In some respect, they're running towards that immediate gratification thing too. So, James begins to talk to them about that which is lasting and really true. If you look with me in James 3:13, a lot of people think, "Well, I'm pretty smart. I know what the answer is to all of the problems." So, James goes, "Ok, if you're smart and you have a lot of understanding, let's talk about that."

So, it starts off this way in James 3:13, "Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior..."

I just want to stop there. James is saying that if you have something that works, leave it. Let's get out of the whole philosophy thing and let's see the reality of what you say because just talking about it can't give you any sense of confidence.

He goes on and says, "Let me see by your good behavior and how it's changed your life.

"... in the gentleness of wisdom.

(James 3:14) But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.

(James 3:15) This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.

(James 3:16) For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder..."

Where does disorder come from? Well, when you get 50 people in a room, and everybody wants their way, you'll find disorder. When you get everybody in a room and they want everything God's way, you'll see unity. That's where truth is in accordance with reverence. Going God's way actually brings that foundation of bringing order in the household.

That's the way Paul starts in Titus 1. Then as he begins to go on, you begin to realize that he's emphasizing that truth by its very nature is referring to that which is real. How does Paul define Titus in verse 4? "True child." Not just "child," but a "true child." So, what are we talking about? He goes on and says in verse 5, "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order..." Where does he start? With those that he needs to appoint as elders, and these are the qualifications that they need to have. Now, he's establishing the point that they have to be

living real godliness; it can't just be rhetoric. So, it's not just about people that are memorizing verses and can quote things. If you look at what they have to be doing,

(Titus 1:6) "namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife..."

In other words, there's fidelity in his relationship. His own household is in order. You go, "Wow, you mean I actually need to be living this?" and he goes, "Yeah, that's the way it is." Because anything outside of this wouldn't be truth.

That's why he mentions in verse 2, "in the hope of eternal life." So, what gives us hope? Truth, right? Something that's guaranteed; something that's real; something that we know. How do we know that it's real? Well, Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep." (John 10:11) We go, "Ok, that's nice." He goes, "No, no. Watch Me," and He lays down His life for us. Then you go, "I think He meant it!"

So, the way that it reads is "in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie..."

That's what gives us hope. So, the parallel is these are men that don't lie. You're putting men in office that don't just talk about doing the right; they align themselves with the way that God thinks.

That's why when you go into 1 Timothy 3, it begins to talk about the same thing. An overseer must be above reproach and it goes through the whole list, much like Titus. It then follows in chapter 5 with what it looks like in the households as generations go on. It goes, "So, do you have a grandma in your household that is a widow? You take care of her." The world will say, "I thought we just paid someone to do that." Paul says, "I tell you, if you don't take care of her, you're worse than an unbeliever." Now, those are some pretty intense words if you think about it, but he's talking about the reality of what you say needs to match. If it doesn't, where's the truth in it? So, as he begins to go down the list, we're seeing a list of godliness, excellence, dependability; the people are immutable in the sense of their unchanging because fidelity is a part of it, isn't it?

One of the great verses in Psalms says that a righteous man "swears to his own hurt and does not change." (Psalm 15:4) Don't you love that verse? "I gave you my word. Done." Well, God says, "This is the way I want you to live." So, when you go through this list, you realize these are not liars; this is not meaningless rhetoric. He gives you that which is antithetical within the passage, if you drop on down, as he begins to talk about the Cretans. So, now we're talking about that which is kind of opposite of the way that we should be.

It reads this way in verse 12, "One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, 'Cretans are always...'" What? "Liars." Yeah, the first thing that he puts in there is "liars." You can't trust them. They're not trustworthy. It's ironic that in verse 13 and 14, you begin to deal with the Jewish influx of the law, and you almost have the sense that many of those that are proclaiming the law of God are living like Cretans. You have to ask yourself, "What is the Jewish influence saying?" If you look within the passage, he says in verse 14, "not paying attention to Jewish

myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth." He starts off with the word "myths." Once again, he's talking about those that are coming in and they're bringing in their own laws and opinions. I've oftentimes heard people say, "Well, God said this," and I go, "What chapter, what verse is that?" I don't even know where they got that from. The point is that men will come in with their own influences, imaginations, and ideas and the bottom line is it's not true. As he goes on, he says that because of this, people begin to turn away from the truth. Once again, what's the truth? Well, the truth is that if you're going by the lies that these people are propagating, then look at what's happening; it's chaos. "There is disorder and every evil thing" because everybody is inventing what they want. You've erred from the truth. Somewhere along the line, you said, "I'm going to go my way; not God's." You ceased to reverence God and His ways, and that's what brought the disorder. However, there are men that are living godly. Put those people in office that are reverent towards God; that are aligning their lives with the things that they say. That's why the first verse in the next chapter starts off, "But as for you..." Now, it's in contrast of the Cretans who go around lying and making up stories and myths. They have ideas like "Well, God thinks you should be doing this," or "God thinks you should be doing that." None of its true.

He says,

(Titus 2:1) "But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine."

Once again, he's put it into the realm of truth, and he says, "Begin to teach them." What are they teaching? If you look at the list, it starts off with the older women teaching the younger women. So, they're teaching reality. In other words, what godliness looks like in your life where you live. They're dealing with the nitty gritty. It's not a lot of philosophy within the text; there's no philosophy in the text. It's "teach the young women they need to do this." So, you begin to realize "How does this work out?" and he goes, "Tell them to love their husbands."

My son Jeremiah is going through the book of Judges in his class, and we were talking about the text dealing with Deborah. It's an interesting study in and of itself, Barak acquiescing to Deborah and saying, "I'm not going to war without you." She sits under her tree and begins to bark out the orders. It is interesting that her name, Deborah, actually means "queen bee." So, there's "queen bee," and she turns to Barak and says, "I'll go with you, but I get the credit." So, they go to war, and they win. The interesting thing about the book of Judges is that you'll see God begins to raise up Judges that look like the people. For instance, if you were a hostile person, God would raise up a hostile judge. If you were a deceitful person, God would raise up a deceitful judge. Once again, the theme of the book of Judges is *Every Man Did What Was Right in His Own Eyes*. In this particular setting, we were talking about this, and I said, "So, they win the war. So, it worked." It's sort of like when you get a woman pastor, and souls are saved. So, what's the big deal? Judges will reveal that you may win the battle, but you forfeited things that were far more valuable. So, they'll even win battles with a grown-up child called Samson. You'll watch him being literally, like baby Huey, that goes in and causes a mess, but they win. The result was his eyes were blinded and he pulls down and kills himself in the midst of it, but

the Philistines are killed. "We won!" What did you forfeit? Oftentimes, the thought in our lives is all about pragmatism, "Well, we got the job done." So, the wife goes out and works; the husband goes out and works; children are sent to some daycare. "We supported our kids. They went to school. What's the big problem?" Well, the end isn't the issue. In other words, the fact that they went to school or that you were able to supply their food, that's not the issue. The issues are things like peace, joy, fulfillment. What you begin to see in particular in the book of Judges is that here people are settling for "the end justifies the means." They're basically saying that the means have nothing to do with anything, and God says, "The means have everything to do with it." As we've read and oftentimes thought about in the book of Proverbs that "it is the blessings of God that make rich, and He adds no sorrow to it." Well, you can have worldly blessings, but have a whole lot of sorrow. What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? (Mark 8:36) Why don't you ask Solomon? When you read the book of Ecclesiastes, you read of a man that goes, "I had everything, but I wasn't satisfied." The perception is "I won. I got all the wives that I wanted, and I have all the wealth that I could ever imagine." Let's see, what was his end result? "Vanity of vanities... all is vanity!" (Ecclesiastes 12:8)

The perception is "If I get what I want; if I win this battle..." Yeah, but what did you forfeit? In Deborah's particular case, she forfeited motherhood, nurturing. She has a sidekick that actually puts a stake in a guy's head. In all of this, what are you losing?

There's an interesting passage in 1 Corinthians 15 that talks about God makes one body different than another body. He's explaining resurrection within the passage, but in the midst of that, he talks about heavenly bodies. In heavenly bodies there are different bodies. There's one of the sun and there is one of the moon. Well, what if the moon wanted to be the sun? Let's just be fair about this, the moon can be a sun too. He says, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon..." (1 Corinthians 15:41) Let's talk about that. When you take the moon and make it the sun, what happens? We all will burn up. End of story. When you put the moon where it belongs, we have things like knowing when to plant seeds and the gravitational pull works in and of itself. There are so many wonderful things about the moon, you go, "How wonderful the moon is." And you walk away from that particular day going, "I'm so thankful that the moon is not the sun, and I'm so thankful that the sun is not the moon." They each have their own glory. God in His order, in our reverence, we recognize that. Why can't we all be men or transgender? Well, you wouldn't have any kids; the population would cease. The point is that our perception is, "If we can accomplish what we set out to accomplish then it must be right," and God says, "No. Let Me show you what ends up happening." In every case, things get worse in the book of Judges because man is trying to think what's right in his eyes. So, in every case, it brings forth chaos and turmoil. "Yeah, but we won!" What did you forfeit? You forfeited family; you forfeited relationships. So, it really begins to reveal all those things.

I know I digressed into that particular point, but what's interesting about this passage is it begins to talk about those kinds of things like what is real and what it produces. If you do

what's right, what God tells you, and follow truth as is seen in Jesus Christ; in other words, follow His example, then things will start coming into order. If you'll put people like that, who are following the walk of Christ, into office then things will be coming back to order. So, teach these things.

One of the words that is repeated, whether it's dealing with the women or the young men, is this particular word that I have down here in the Greek. It's probably translated in your Bibles as the word "sensible." If you look with me in Titus 2:2, it reads this way, "Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible..."

Then, if you go on, it talks about "Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips..."

Then in verse 4, it says, "that they may encourage the young women..."

See the word there? Underline that word. It's the same word. In other words, it's a form of the word "sensible." The way it would probably be defined would be something like "that the women would be encouraged to be sensible."

Then, it says in verse 5, in case you didn't get it, "to be sensible, pure, workers at home."

So, then, as we come to verse 6, what's going to be the emphasis to the young men? The same thing. Now, how that plays out is going to be different in the roles, but sensible is going to be that which Paul hits upon stronger than anything else. So, I would say when you see something repeated that many times and emphasized in that way, it probably has some significance to it.

I want us to take a moment and look at this because in understanding this particular word, we're understanding the way our hearts should be; the way we should be thinking. So, this word, if I were to divide it, you actually have two words in this word. The first part is "sózó". "Só" is short for "sózó". The second part is "phrōn". If you've ever been in the new member's class, you've heard the word "soteriology". If you know what soteriology is, it basically comes from the word "sózó" which means salvation; to be saved. It's not simply talking about "to be saved" because I think sometimes that "call upon the Lord, you will be saved (sózó)" according to the passage; and the thought is "I'm saved from hell. Wow, that's pretty cool." He goes, "It's not just that." The emphasis of "sózó" is "to be made whole." It has the connotation of being kept safe; not just being saved but being kept safe and rescued completely from danger. It has this sense of wholeness to it. Within the passage, it's making reference to a mindset and that's where the word "phrōn" comes into play. So, "sózó" is getting our minds on being made whole, complete, feeling secure, safe forever and "phrōn" is dealing with a mindset. "Mind" would probably be one way to define it. Interestingly enough, the word itself actually means "midriff". So, it's not only dealing with the way you think, but the way you feel. Usually, when it's in this region, it's dealing with your feelings; the way you feel about the things that you think about. So, it's talking about your emotions. Now, the connotation is putting reigns on it; you're reigning in your emotions. That's where you get the word "sensible". When you think of horses,

and you go, “Woah,” and you’re reigning them in, you’re not letting them go wild. So, you’re controlling the emotions in the thinking of being made whole, saving or bringing security. In other words, “I want your mind to be set on these things.” So many times, we have our own ideas about what we want and our own desires; our feelings and emotions go crazy over our own pursuits, and God says, “Reign them in; subject them under *sózó*.” Think “*sózó*”; think “saving”; think “rescuing”; think “bringing wholeness, completion.” We oftentimes think immediate gratification, but we’re not thinking complete wholeness, are we?

So, there’s an interesting passage in the book of Proverbs; if I could just align this. Once again, it gives this platform, “Likewise urge the young men...” like the young women, “to be sensible.” Everybody needs to reign in those emotions, and they need to be subject under this. If you look with me in Proverbs 11. There’s so many good proverbs. It’s hard to choose just a few, isn’t it? In Proverbs 11 there’s an interesting verse that sometimes gets lost in all the wisdom that’s there.

(Proverbs 11:30) “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
And he who is wise wins souls.”

Now, what makes it even more interesting is the word used here for “wins souls” clearly is to fetch or rescue; there’s no doubt about that, but it’s the way that one rescues that is really engulfed in this word. The way that one rescues, in this word, is through gentleness. So, the push of the word is “with gentle persuasion” is wise. Do you know how one of the Proverbs says that it’s the wisdom of man to make wisdom palatable? So, there’s a sense of picking the right words; using the right words. Paul will say in Colossians 4:6, “seasoned with salt.” If you look at this whole chapter, once again, I don’t want to make this into a study of just Proverbs 11, but it begins to show how you and I need to reign in our feelings and desires.

For instance, Proverbs 11:2, “When pride comes...” What happens? Dishonor. Dishonor isn’t going to save anybody, and it’s me not reigning in my pride. As it goes on, it says, “But with the humble is wisdom.”

Now, the very next verse, “The integrity of the upright will guide them...”

(Proverbs 11:4) “Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,
But righteousness delivers from death.”

(Proverbs 11:5) “The righteousness of the blameless will smooth his way...”

(Proverbs 11:6) “The righteousness of the upright will deliver them...”

(Proverbs 11:8) “The righteous is delivered from trouble...”

The end of verse 9, “But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.”

(Proverbs 11:11) “By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted...”

I don't know if you've caught the emphasis here, but if you drop on down, here's what it looks like with women. Remember when it said to teach the women to be sensible? Ok, watch this in verse 16,

"A gracious woman attains honor..."

Would that be kind of different than putting a stake in somebody's head? I don't know if you see a contrast there. Can you win a victory by putting a stake through somebody's head? Yeah, but what do you forfeit? Honor. "Honor is necessary?" It's the goal. The goal isn't to win the war; the goal is to obtain honor.

"A gracious woman attains honor,
And ruthless men attain riches."

The word "attain" is in both of the texts. In some cases, it's defined as "snatches" or "grabs for themselves." So, the gracious woman grabs for herself, what? Honor. The violent men grab for themselves riches. Which would you rather have?

(Proverbs 11:17) "The merciful man does himself good,
But the cruel man does himself harm."

Watch verse 25, "The generous man will be prosperous,
And he who waters will himself be watered."

Now, we just saw that you can be violent and get riches. How do you want to get your riches? I was telling Jeremiah that you can go out and steal a car, and you would have a car. However, I can tell you that when you're driving the car, you're going to be looking around every corner. I would hope that there would be some facsimile of guilt, and you'll never really enjoy the car. So, is it the car or will it be you work hard, you save your money, you get character and integrity? What was the real goal? Was it the car?

(Proverbs 11:27) "He who diligently seeks good seeks favor..."

(Proverbs 11:28) "He who trusts in his riches will fall,
But the righteous will flourish like the green leaf."

(Proverbs 11:29) He who troubles his own house will inherit wind..."

"Oh, I can get things accomplished by forcing people to do things at my house." You could, but what will you inherit? The wind.

"...the foolish will be servant to the wisehearted."

(Proverbs 11:30) The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
And he who is wise wins souls." (through gentle persuasion; not force)

(Proverbs 11:31) “If the righteous will be rewarded in the earth, How much more the wicked and the sinner!”

Now, I've often read that and go, “Ok, so they're both rewarded?” No, you didn't read the chapter. The chapter tells you how the righteous are rewarded; it tells you how the wicked are rewarded. Let's go back, verse 2, “When pride comes, then comes dishonor.” So, what do the wicked get? Dishonor. The same thing is true with verse 3, “the crookedness of the treacherous will destroy them.” They get destruction.

(Proverbs 11:5) “... the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.”

(Proverbs 11:7) “When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish...”

All the way through Proverbs 11 it tells you that the righteous will be rewarded on this earth, as well as in heaven; what a wonderful thing that is. However, don't think that the wicked are going to get away with it. “They have all this stuff. That guy got to steal a car.” It's not going to go well. The rewards are coming.

When we're dealing with “young men be sensible,” we're saying that you need to be thinking right. There needs to be a heart of gentle persuasion for the purpose of rescuing people. Your heart needs to be on salvation.

If you look with me in 2 Timothy 2, there's a parallel of this in the passage. Once again, because the word is repeated so many times, I think it's appropriate for us to bring clarification to it. In 2 Timothy 2:14 it says, “Remind them of these things...” Of course, of the truth of Christ in the particular passage.

“...and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless...”

Once again, we're talking about things that don't really matter; things that have no benefit to them. Let me ask you this, when you're talking to impress people and you're worried about what they're thinking, are you thinking, “How can I bring wholeness to this person's life? How can I bring salvation and give this person the security of the Lord?” Is that where your thoughts are? You're going, “Yeah, but what about me?” He goes, “Reign those in. Don't let those feelings control what your goal is.” That can literally be defined as sensible thinking because you're thinking God thoughts and what's important, right? So, when you look at 2 Timothy 2, he begins to talk about these things.

(2 Timothy 2:15) “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”

In other words, it's the word of truth that saves souls, isn't it? So, I should be thinking that way in everything that I do. It will change your speech; it will change the way that you address people. Are there going to be people that just aggravate the stew out of you? Absolutely, but if you begin to talk to them, and the only thought in your mind is “How can I get even with

them?” and you’re not reigning in your own emotions, then nothing productive will happen. It will be like the Gentiles and the futility of their minds; they begin to go all kinds of ways, and he goes, “You’re just thinking wrong.”

So, the way that Paul writes this to Timothy in verse 22 is, “Now flee from youthful lusts...” I’m not saying that we’re not dealing with immorality, but that’s not the emphasis of the passage. The emphasis is that young men tend to be very aggressive about winning arguments. So, if you look in verse 14, “Remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers.” Young men tend to try and impress one another. We know that.

(2 Timothy 2:16) “But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness,”

So, whether you’re trying to impress this person or something else, you’re not thinking the word of God.

When you back up, Paul invites Timothy in verse 9 to suffer hardship with him.

(2 Timothy 2:10) “For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation...”

Where’s his head? In the sensible; what’s important.

If you drop on down, “Now flee from youthful lusts.” What is he talking about? The tendency to argue, debate, and make yourself look better than the other person. So, if you have to cut down the other person to make yourself look good, ok, do that. He goes, “Flee from this.” How do we know that we’re talking about these kinds of things? Well, just keep reading the passage.

(2 Timothy 2:22) “Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.”

(2 Timothy 2:23) But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.”

What is he talking about in the passage? “Foolish and ignorant speculations” that people begin to argue and debate. He’s telling the young person to stop pursuing those kinds of things; don’t pursue being the greatest.

(2 Timothy 2:24) “The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome...”

“... he who is wise wins souls.” (Proverbs 11:30) Do you remember what “wins” means? It’s not just about winning; it’s about the way you win, and it’s through gentle persuasion. That’s where the wisdom comes in.

So, “The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged,”

(2 Timothy 2:25) with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,

(2 Timothy 2:26) and they may come to their senses..."

How do they come to their senses? You don't argue with them. It's in the gentleness of wisdom that you begin to direct them. Now, will everybody think, "Oh, because he's gentle in wisdom, I'm going to do everything that he says." Not necessarily, but you haven't become a stumbling block; you've provided an opportunity and a door for them to come in. I have found that people are so engrossed in saving face that it's hard to get past that shell until you come to them from an angle that's not abrasively accusatory. If you avoid that particular angle, they'll let down their defenses. Then, they'll begin to talk with you. Your hope is that they'll come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, really, if you think about it. "Come to their senses" is dealing with the fact that they return back to sobriety. When you think about what's making them drunk, go back into Isaiah, it's their pride. That's what Isaiah talks about in Isaiah 28; the pride of Ephraim has made him drunk. Besides the fact that you're dealing with people that are literally intoxicated by the allurements of the world. They've promised them all kinds of things and in their head, they've bought it hook, line, and sinker. Their thought is, "If I'm not aggressive or hostile and I don't put you down, then I'm not going to get anywhere." So, all of this arrogance and pride has made them drunk, and he goes, "Come around this way. Use wisdom. Don't get into an argument with them. You're not going to save anybody that way." But our hope is they come to their senses. When it talks about teaching the younger men to be sensible, think "How can we bring salvation to this person?" Don't think "How can I win this argument?" Don't think "How can I look better than him?" Lay all of that aside and think right; think like Christ. It's a different way of thinking, isn't it?

So, if you go back to Titus, we'll finish these few verses,

(Titus 2:6) "Likewise urge the young men to be sensible;"

It uses the word "*sōphron*".

(Titus 2:7) "in all things show yourself to be an example..."

When you're comparing the older women teaching the younger women in Titus 2:3-4, "so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children," don't you think it's interesting in that particular encouragement that it doesn't say, "encourage the young women to be examples," but that it's a responsibility of the young men to be the examples? Now, it's not saying that you shouldn't live in such a way that would reflect the nature of Christ; but it's saying you have the responsibility, young men, to create an image. He actually uses the word "*typos*" where we get "a type" from. So, you need to create an image that will impress somebody about what is right and what is wrong. To make a "*typos*" if I could put it that way, not an error, but to make a type, what you have to do is strike; it gives a picture of somebody striking something and hitting it. Have you ever heard the phrase "make an impression on

somebody"? Well, that's where it comes from. You're actually making an impression on the people around you. He's saying that young men, you have the responsibility to make an impression in such a way that the things that you do are a continual example. In other words, when people walk away, remember how Paul says that you're leaving an aroma? To some, you're an aroma of death; to some, you're an aroma of life, (2 Corinthians 2:16) but they can't walk away from you not being impressed. If in fact you walk in faith and you're dogmatic about the truth and you're real about it, there's some people going, "I think there really is a hell." "Are you going to receive Christ?" "No, but I'll tell you right now, I'm more afraid than I was." Then, another person would say, "I heard life in that, and what a wonderful thing that I was able to receive Jesus Christ." They can't leave ambivalent. I do think it's interesting that when we're dealing with "sensible," the thought oftentimes is, "I just won't say anything and maybe I'll leave an impression." In this respect, it's clear that he's not saying to sit around and do nothing. He's saying to make an impression in the way that you say things and the things that you do. Scripture says that even a child is known for his doings.

(Titus 2:7) "in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds..."

Once again, "good" is dealing with things that are honorable. "*Kalos*" is the word that he uses for "good"; things that are not only honorable, but things that are pleasant to look at. Our job as believers isn't to make everybody's life unpleasant. Our job as believers is to present our gospel in a way that lifts and exalts God and preserves the dignity of it. That's one of the reasons why Peter will say repeatedly in 1 Peter, "Keep your behavior excellent" because in so doing, you give a platform for excellence and people are drawn to excellence. Even the world was drawn to Billy Graham. I mean, you're interviewing people that are ungodly, and they're saying, "Oh, what a great man." Where does that come from? Is it because he compromised on the gospel? No, I think he was very clear about the gospel, but his demeanor and the way that he did things drew people to him.

Sometimes, in ministering to people, we're just so abrasive and so hostile to the people that we're showing the love of God to that it repels them. So, he says that the tendency of young men is going to be being a little abrasive, short, curt. Tell them to be "sound in speech which is beyond reproach..." (Titus 2:8) Let me just say this about "sound in speech", of course we're dealing with verse 7 as well, "with purity in doctrine, dignified" which is really dealing with a character that actually demands respect. It's not that you demand respect, but by nature of your character, you demand respect, and people walk away, and they say, "That's a person that we don't mess with." Where does that come from? It's because the glory of God is resting on you. God is pleased; you acted like His Son today. While being reviled, you didn't revile in return, but you gave a blessing; you kept your behavior excellent. By virtue of that, you became dignified and respectable in their eyes.

"... so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

He wishes that he could do something really horrible to you or say something really bad about you, but the only thing he can think of is “He goes to church!” “Thank you.” “He’s always quoting the Bible!”

We actually would go to the workplace of people that want to become a deacon or an elder. We’re looking for those that have a reputation, as Scripture tells us to, outside of the church as well as inside of the church. So, I would go to the workplaces and ask questions like, “How would you describe the character of so and so?” I remember one guy in particular, he came up to me and said, “He’s honest and he works really hard. I just have this against him, he’s making us look bad. Could you ask him to kind of not work as hard because it’s really messing it up for all of us?” The guy was serious. So, I’m going, “Ok, so, your number one complaint is that he’s working really hard?” He said, “Yeah.” I said, “Well, that’s what we’re looking for.” They don’t have anything to say. That’s the best that they can come up with? Really? You begin to realize that the actions are speaking so loudly that you can’t hear a word that they say because the things that they’re doing trump everything. You realize that’s truth shining. That’s what makes our faith different. If we talk about godliness, we’re actually living it too. It’s like you really believe in it, and that’s why it’s so important for us to teach these things. In other words, don’t just teach a Bible verse, emphasize what it looks like in the world. Then, expect it from the leaders. One of the things that really caused great concern for me is when I would be in churches, and I’m thinking that the people they have in office are just the opposite of the character that this talks about. It’s no wonder that people are disenchanted and not enamored with the church. I would be too.

I remember an individual that was not going to church at the time. We asked him, “Why aren’t you going to church?” and they said, “Do you know this deacon?” and we said, “Yeah, we know that deacon.” He goes, “He’s a cheat on the job.” He’s actually someone that owned several tugboats. He said, “You can ask around. He has a reputation for cheating people.” Yet he’s on staff as a deacon? What’s that about? So, it’s a reality that we’re talking about and that’s what he’s saying. Unless this becomes reality, you’re going to have disorder.

In fact, go back to Titus 1:16, “They profess to know God...” Here again, it’s in the context of those that are ungodly, but they profess to know God. Watch how it ends, “but by their deeds they deny Him.” They know what to say, but the things that they do deny the reality. So, it’s not truth. That’s why he starts off, “God, who cannot lie” and if the Spirit of God is within you, it’s impossible for you to live a lie. It has to be true. It has to be real. It’s a great passage as it begins to encourage us to think right; reign in our emotions and the things that we want to do, our desires. Think about making whole and salvation.

Closing Prayer:

We give You thanks, Father, for this wonderful passage as You begin to reveal to us the calling that You have for us as men, as even young men; that we should resist the whole thought of making ourselves look good and get out of the whole realm of argument and debate, hostility and competition, which young men are prone to do. We should flee this kind of mindset and have this mind which is also in Christ Jesus who took on the form of a bondservant and through the gentleness and desire to rescue and save, displayed the excellence of His heavenly Father. Father, You call us to walk in this truth. If we would, when we do, order comes into our lives. We give You thanks for this in Jesus' name. Amen.