

Lives That Beautify the Gospel

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[0 : 0 0] Well, let's turn now to our Bibles and we're going to read together in God's Word in Paul's letter to Titus. Paul's letter to Titus in chapter 2, you'll find it, I think, if you have a church visitor's Bible on page 998.

Otherwise, it's after 1st and 2nd Timothy before Hebrews. A little letter in length, but a substantial letter in content.

And we've looked for the last two Sunday evenings at the first chapter where Paul was talking all about the great importance of right teaching. And we're going to read chapter 2 tonight and you'll notice that it's all about right living for all different groups of people.

Older men, younger men, older women, younger women. But notice that the chapter begins and ends again with this great focus on the need to teach, to declare, to exhort the church in the sound doctrine that leads to lives that do adorn the gospel of God.

So hear then the Word of God. But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love and in steadfastness.

[1 : 2 6] Older women, likewise, are to be reverent in behavior. Not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They're to teach what is good. And so train the young women to love their husbands and children.

To be self-controlled, pure, working at home. Kind, submissive to their own husbands. That the Word of God may not be reviled. Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.

Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works. And in your teaching, show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned.

So that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. Slaves are to be submissive to their own masters in everything.

They're to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith. So that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people.

[2 : 3 1] Training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions. And to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age. Waiting for the blessed hope.

The appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. 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. Declare these things. Exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. Amen.

And may God bless to us this his word. Well, please do turn back to Titus, chapter 2 there, page 998.

As we spend a few moments thinking together about this chapter. Now, don't you just long for your friends, your family, your neighbors, this city, to be transformed.

- [3 : 42] And not transformed in a vague sense of things just getting better. But in a specific sense. Don't you long for lives that are transformed by the gospel.
- People that are once dead in sin. Now alive in Christ. Living for him. And with the hope of eternal life. Don't you long for that?
- For your friends, your family. But how is that ever possible? We're tempted to think that people we know are just beyond the reach of the gospel.
- That's how I think much of the time. But the hope for your friends for this city is found in a perhaps surprising place.
- It's found in the sort of churches that Titus was to establish on Crete. Churches like that will transform lives. Churches that appoint good teachers.
- [4 : 41] Teachers that will hold firm to the truth. Proclaim the truth. And refute error. Churches that unashamedly proclaim the truth that leads to godliness. Churches like that are the only hope.
- Churches like that. Because only they proclaim the life-changing gospel. Only they demonstrate the life-changing gospel in the lives of real people.
- Ordinary people. People who live out the godly life. Titus is a letter all about the good life. The godly life.
- And the godly life in a surprising place. But central to this good living. To this right living. And central to this letter is teaching.
- The importance of the preaching of the apostolic gospel. Chapter 1. As we've seen over the last two weeks. Is jam-packed full of teaching.
- [5 : 42] Good teaching. Bad teaching. But it doesn't stop at chapter 1. Chapter 2. Which we're tackling today. Is all about teaching. It's all about the sort of teaching. That will produce godliness.
- Three points this evening. The what. The how. And the why. The what Titus is to teach. The how. How is Titus to teach.
- And why. Why is he to teach it. Well firstly. What is Titus to teach. He is to teach. What accords with sound doctrine.
- Just look down again. At the start. And the end of our passage. Willie drew our attention earlier. Like two bookends. Verses 1 and 15. Give us the key idea. Titus. Here is your task. Says Paul.
- Verse 1. Titus. Teach. What accords with sound doctrine. And verse 15. Titus. Declare these things. Exhort. Rebuke.
- [6 : 41] With all authority. And in the middle of these two bookends. Like a sandwich. Paul outlines. What it is that Titus.
- Is to proclaim. To preach. To teach. In the Cretan church. And what he is to teach. And assist upon. Is godly living. He is to teach.
- That which accords with. Sound doctrine. In other words. Here is the sort of living. That the gospel produces. And you Titus. Are to insist.
- Upon that sort of good living. Good. And worthy behavior. Can be the fruit. Only. Of sound doctrine.
- Says the apostle Paul. So your task. Titus. Is to teach. Teach sound doctrine. Teach. Truth. Teach right doctrine.
- [7 : 35] Because only that. Will lead to right living. Now this is a bit surprising. Isn't it? At a first read through. My assumption was.

Chapter one. That's all about teaching. That's obvious. And chapter two. Is all about. How to live the gospel. And yes. There is a lot about. How to live here. But fundamentally.

Paul writes chapter two. So that Titus. Will teach. What it contains. It is through. The teaching of the gospel. And the pressing home.

Of its implications. Is that lives. Are transformed. Paul urges. Titus. To insist on. To teach. The sort of living. That the gospel produces.

The sort of living. That adorns. The gospel. Living that beautifies. The good news. And beautifies. Our savior. God. The good news. The good news. The good news. The good news. And he sets out. What that means.

[8 : 29] On the ground. In real living. For five groups of people. Within the household setting. Within the household church. Older men. Older women.

Younger women. Younger men. And slaves. Younger men. Now Paul assumes. That different ages. And stages. Face different challenges. And temptations. As they seek to live out.

The good and godly life. I'm going to be brief here. I'll read. The verse. Give a short summary. And put a question.

To each group. That Paul mentions here. The exception is the first one. I'll spend a bit longer on the first one. But that's one. We don't have time. To spend a lot of time.

Looking at each one individually. So we'll try and give a brief. Sense of what Paul is saying here. So firstly. Older men. And that's really about those. Who are probably age 40.

[9 : 26] So I'm safe. He says. You are to be sober minded. Dignified. Self-controlled. Sound in faith.

In love. And in steadfastness. Be the sort of man. That younger men look up to. And hope to be like one day.

Sober minded. Self-controlled. Sound in the faith. Are you as an older man. Are you committed. And devoted to the work of the church.

Or is retirement. A time to take your foot off the pedal. And leave the work to younger generations. Now happily. I've seen evidence of a whole lot of men. And women.

Who are retired. And have thrown themselves in. To work for the gospel. Particularly down at Kelvin Grove. In the last three or four months. And that is a great example to me. As a young man.

[10 : 25] To see that. In older men. And we need to see that. We younger generation. Need to see. Men who are committed. Let me give a short example here.

I came across an article this week. It was on the front page. Of one of the major nationals. Talking about generation Y. The millennials. That's people like me. Born between 1980.

And the mid 90s. And aside from the happy observation. That we are more likely to be worse off. Than our parents generation. There was this comment. Some call them.

Generation maybe. A group. Who are well educated. Highly connected. Multilingual. Global minded. With myriad opportunities.

But who are so overwhelmed. By the possibilities available to them. That they commit to nothing. Now that's something I've observed.

[11 : 21] In myself. And in my peers. That committing to nothing. Or just. Committing to the next best thing. That comes along. Until something better. Offers itself.

And that sort of thinking. And behavior. Manifests itself. In the church. Particularly. In that post uni phase. It can be an unsettling time.

I've been there. But the key. Is to get plugged into church. Into serving. And keeping at it. Not until a better offer. Comes along. And older men.

You have a responsibility here. Perhaps. You know someone. Of that generation. Who struggles. To commit to anything. Well encourage them. To get stuck in.

Set them an example. Remind them. That the grass. Is rarely. Much greener elsewhere. Encourage them. To worry about the grass. Right in front of them. That's older men.

[12 : 21] Are you the sort of man. That younger men. Will look up to. Now more briefly. Older women. I've not seen any here. This evening. So if they're only. Watching online.

Likewise. Older women. Are to be reverent. In behavior. Not slanderous. Or slaves. To much wine. They are to teach.

What is good. And so train. The younger women. Paul instructs. Titus. To teach. The older women.

To be careful. With their wine. And their words. Rather than gossip. Under the guise. Of prayer news. Use your words.

To teach. And build up. Younger women. If you're an older woman. Here. Do you take this. Responsibility. For teaching. In private.

[13 : 17] By example. Do you take that. Responsibility. To teach. Younger women. Seriously. What are younger women. To be taught.

What are they. To aspire to. Train the younger women. To love their husbands. And children. And to be. Self-controlled. Pure. Working at home.

Kind. And submissive. To their own husbands. Now the assumption. Here is that. Loving husbands. And children. Does not come. Naturally. It's something.

To be trained in. And speaking. As a husband. Myself. I know. There's lots. Not to love. About me. My children. Can be lovely. At times. But jolly.

Hard work. Most of the time. My wife's. Given up. A career. In medicine. To run a home. For difficult children. What. A young woman. With a young.

[14 : 12] Family needs. Is older women. To come alongside. To help her. To do that. Which is most difficult. To love her husband.

And children. Think of a younger women. In your church family. Maybe one in particular. Just think about her now. How can you train her? How can you help her?

Get alongside her. Encourage her this week. A phone call. A card of encouragement. An offer of help. Younger men.

Be. Self-controlled. Self-control is the great struggle. Isn't it? For men. In their teens. Twenties. Thirties. Self-control. When it comes to getting out of bed.

Money. Sex. What you look at on your phone. What time you get out of bed. How much you eat and drink. Self-control. It's the key struggle. If you're a young man here.

[15 : 13] This evening. Are you an example. In self-control. To your peers. Slaves. They are to be submissive. To their own masters.

In everything. They are to be well-pleasing. And not argumentative. Not pilfering. But showing all good faith. Now the modern day equivalents.

Would be employees. Rather than just do the minimum amount. Of work required. Rather than just tick the boxes. Paul urges you. If you're at work.

To seek to please your masters. Are you merely doing the minimum required. Or do you take initiative. To bless your employers. Your company.

How are you. At work. Well there's something of a whistle-stop tour. Through Paul's teaching for different groups. Within the church.

[16 : 06] Titus. In the church. Titus' teaching ministry. On Crete. Was to insist. On practical godliness. In all these sorts of areas. I wonder.

Are you living out. The implications. Of the gospel. As set out here. In the first half. Of chapter two. Perhaps. You've experienced. You've experienced.

A rising panic. As I've mentioned a few things. As we've read these verses. I fall so short. How could I possibly live that way?

How can I live the good life? And this is our second point. How does a bad egg like me. Start to live the good life. The sort of life that adorns the gospel.

The default position of the human heart. The default answer of all human history. Is religion. We heard. Something about this morning.

[17 : 02] Didn't we? Be good. And you'll be rewarded. Don't do X or Y. Because you'll be punished. Good living. Gets you into the club.

Says religion. But Paul shows us here. How we can live the good life. And it's nothing. To do with what we do. It's all to do with what Christ has done.

As we heard this morning. Good living. Is the fruit. Of true kingdom membership. That's the way it works. Doing good is the fruit.

Not the root. Of real repentance. Of real relationship. With Jesus Christ. And so we see in this. Section of the letter. The right way around.

It's because of what Christ has done. That we live a certain way. And we see in verses 11 to 14. The gospel. That changes lives. Notice the key.

[18 : 00] Little word. Verse 11. For. Here is the reason. You are to live. Lives like. Verses 1 to 10. For. The grace of God.

The grace of God. Has appeared. Paul points. To past events. The appearing. Of the grace of God. And draws out the implications. For every Christian. And the implications. Are so huge.

And all encompassing. That living the sort of life. That he's just detailed. Seems like the only way to live. If all this is true. In verses 11 to 14.

Then verses 2 to 10. Just follow on. It is only on the ground. Of what God has done. For us in Christ.

That all the ethical instructions. He's talked about. In verses 1 to 10. Become meaningful. Or even possible. It's only on the ground. Of what God has done. For us. And God's grace.

[18 : 58] Has appeared. It's brought salvation. For all. Jesus Christ. The second person. Of the Trinity. Was born. Into our world. Of darkness. Our world.

Of sin. He lived. A perfect. Sinless life. He was crucified. Rose from the grave. His death. His resurrection. Has paid the price.

For sin. And bought salvation. For all. Who would turn. To him. In repentance. It is that. Wonderful. Astonishing.

Gospel of grace. That Paul points us to. And not only. Do we look back. To what God has done. In Christ. But we look forward. Verse 13.

To the appearing. Of the glory. Of our great God. And Savior. Jesus Christ. Who gave himself. For us. To redeem us. From all lawlessness. And to purify.

[19 : 53] For himself. A people. For his own possession. Who are zealous. For good works. For good works. You. If you're here tonight. If you're a Christian.

You do not belong. To yourself. You have been bought. With the blood of Christ. Bought. From a life of lawlessness. Bought.

To belong. To Christ. Bought. To be zealous. For good works. Here is what Christ. Has done for you. Here is who you are.

Consider what it cost him. You have been bought. By his very own blood. That is a gospel. That changes lives. Let me read some words.

From. John Calvin. He says. We are not our own. Let not reason. Nor our will. Therefore sway our plans. And deeds. We are not our own.

[20 : 53] Let us therefore not set it as our goal. To seek. What is expedient for us. According to the flesh. We are not our own. In so far as we can. Let us therefore forget ourselves.

And all that is ours. Conversely. We are God's. Let us therefore live for him. And die for him. We are God's.

Let it is wisdom. And will therefore rule. All our actions. We are God's. Let all the parts of our life.

Accordingly strive towards him. As our only lawful goal. This. Is the gospel. That changes lives.

The gospel. Is the engine that produces godliness. The only thing that can produce a good life. Out of very unpromising raw material.

[21 : 50] Is the gospel news of all that Christ has done for you. It's a message that floors. Any notion that we can do it ourselves. That we can make anything of lasting impact on our own.

It is all Christ. And his work. Lives of gratitude flow. From that knowledge. That relationship. Not only that.

But the sort of lives. The gospel produces. Proclaim. Profound truths. To all those around us. Here's our final point.

The why. Why. Teach this. Why live lives. That are good. And godly. Well we see here.

The lives that beautify the gospel. For the watching worlds. Here is why. This sort of ministry. This sort of teaching ministry. That Titus was to be engaged with.

[22 : 51] Brings. Hope for the city. Hope for the church. Transformed lives. Lives that have been transformed by the gospel. Of the living God. Demonstrate.

To the watching world. The beauty. Of the gospel. Notice. Three little statements. In the first half of our passage. Verses five.

Eight and ten. Each of these speak about our behavior. Showing the attractiveness of the gospel. Verse five. Older women are to train younger. So that.

The word of God may not be reviled. Else. Verse eight. Titus. Is to show integrity. In this teaching. So that.

An opponent. May be put to shame. Having nothing evil. To say about us. And verse ten. Slaves are to be submissive. So that.

[23 : 45] In everything. They may adorn. The doctrine. Of God. Our savior. Godly lives.

Are a witness. To those around us. To the watching worlds. Those. We live next to. Work alongside. Share life with.

They will see a person. Whose life. Has been transformed. By the gospel. The sort of lives. True. Gospel.

Teaching. Ministries. Are to insist upon. Will make the gospel. Beautiful. To those. Who look on. People will notice. If you live like this.

Our lives. In addition to our lips. Are a witness. To the gospel. As one preacher put it. Evangelism. Is. By what we are.

[24 : 41] In the home. In family relationships. As well as. By what we say. What is the hope. For a place like Glasgow.

For your friends. Yes. It's the truth. But it's also the truth. As evidence. By your life. It's the truth. As adorned.

By the way you interact. With others. In the church family. You and I. Are to live. Godly lives. Lives. That show the beauty.

Of the gospel. Of grace. Now that doesn't mean. Easy lives. It doesn't mean. Popular lives. Or lives. Free from hardship.

Good. And godly living. Often puts us. In the firing line. But still. We are to show. Something. Of the beauty. Of the gospel. In our day to day. The way folk.

[25 : 41] Cook. A week's worth. Of meals. For a family. With a newborn. People will notice. That. The way. A young couple. Goes out of their way. To pick up.

A more senior. Member of the church. And bring them to church. People will notice. That. The way. Dozens of people. Give up. Hours and hours. Of their free time.

To lead an SU group. At school. People will notice. That. The way. You go out. Of your way. For a struggling. Neighbor. People will notice. That. The way.

You give up. A week. Of annual leave. To. Lead a summer camp. People will notice. That. The way. A married couple. Sticks. At their marriage.

When the world. Advises. They cut. And run. People will notice. That. The way. Energetic. Retirees. Give their. Energies.

[26 : 36] To serving. In the church. Rather than. Jet around the globe. For eight months. A year. People will notice. That. It is. Good. To do.

Good. Don't. Hesitate. To live. The good. Life. The godly. Life. If you see a way. You can do good. To someone else.

Just do it. The hope. For Glasgow. Is churches. That follow. The pattern. Of Titus. Chapter two. The hope. For your friends. Is a church. Where the gospel.

And the insistence. Upon the sort of living. That accompanies. The gospel. Is taught. And lived out. In your life. It's declaration. Of the truth. Absolutely.

But it's also. Demonstration. In your lives. Declaration. And demonstration. A beautiful message. And beautiful lives. Christianity.

[27 : 34] Is a beautiful. And attractive thing. Isn't it? It is stunning. When we see what Christ has done. What God has been doing.

Through all of history. That is a beautiful thing. It's a wonderful message. And you can. In the ways. In which you speak. To people. The ways.

In which you treat people. You can show off. The beauty of Christ. It's just astonishing. Isn't it? That God. Works. Through us.

And that we can. In our ordinary. Day-to-day lives. Adorn the gospel. This week. Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing. If a colleague.

Or friend. Was to think. Or perhaps even say. Of you. I don't quite get. This Christianity thing. But the way. That she lives. There is something.

[28 : 30] About her. Something. Deeply beautiful. Attractive. And it's because. She's a Christian. It might. It might.

Just worth. Be looking into. Don't. Underestimate. The impact. Your life. Has on the people. Around you. Let us together.

Live lives. That. Adorn the gospel. That show. The beauty. Of the gospel. For the watching world. That was Titus' task.

He was to insist. On. Good. Right. Living. Living that was made possible. Only because of the gospel of grace. And we're to do so.

Because. That living. Proclaims something. To the watching world. Lives. That adorn the gospel. So let us encourage each other.

[29 : 28] Shall we? To adorn the gospel. Let me pray. For the grace of God has appeared.

Bringing salvation for all people. Training us. To renounce ungodliness and worldly passions. To live self-controlled. To live self-controlled upright.

And godly lives. In the present age. Father we thank you for your. Gospel of grace. For.

The Lord Jesus Christ. Who in his life. His death. His resurrection. Brought salvation for all people. And so.

As we. Think on. The gospel. As we understand that we are. His. We are bought. We do not belong to ourselves.

[30 : 36] We are bought to be. A people. Zealous for good works. Would you help us. In the day to day. In. Ordinary day to day living. That we might.

Seek to adorn the gospel. As we rub shoulders with one another. Please help us Lord. By your spirit. To adorn the gospel.

And we ask it for your glory. Amen.