

## The Essential Ministry of Older Men and Older Women (Titus 2:1-3)

Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on July 20, 2008

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I want to begin with a series of questions:

1. Do we believe in the role of women in ministry?
2. Does God call women to be ministers?
3. Does God want women in the church to be teaching?

The answer to each of these 3 questions is *absolutely yes!* Now that I've got your attention, before you cheer or jeery -- stay with me and please turn to Titus 2 where I'll seek to show you what I mean, and what God's Word means when it speaks on this important matter.

As you're turning to Titus 2, let me remind you that the Greek word translated "ministry" (*diakonia*) is not a technical term for "clergy." In fact, its first occurrence in the NT speaks of **Martha** in ministry to Jesus, serving him practical things (Luke 10:40). It's the same exact word translated "service" in many places and is used of what all the saints do, male/female, young/old, including the serving of widows in Acts 6 that we looked at last month.

The noun form sometimes translated "minister" is the same exact word that is translated "servant" (*diakonos*) referring to faithful believers, including women like **Phoebe** in Romans 16:1. The early church had women "ministers" (*diakonos*) who helped minister mercy to other women and the poor and needy in the body, and who counseled, mentored, and *taught younger women and children*. If you think of "minister" as a clerical-ized, professionalized title and a synonym for pastor and only for pastor - that's actually a modern invention that is unhelpful and unbiblical

We may have some people new to our church, who this is new to, and I would encourage you to go to our church website, click on "Read Sermons" and read the message dated 3/9/2008 on how "[Glorifying God by Every Member in Ministry](#)."

But for today, let's look at the ministry that God lays down in Titus 2 for men and women, young and old, in the body of Christ. We're not talking about exercising authority over men or being an elder (which Titus 1 limits to a few godly men). We're not talking about pastoral or preaching ministry, but this is a ministry (*diakonia*).

There is an essential practical ministry for older men and older women in the church of Jesus Christ. Here's how it looks:

<sup>1</sup> But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.

<sup>2</sup> **Older men** are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance.

<sup>3</sup> **Older women** likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, **teaching what is good**, <sup>4</sup> **so that they may encourage the young women** to love their husbands, to love their children, <sup>5</sup> *to be* sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, **so that the word of God will not be dishonored.**

<sup>6</sup> Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; <sup>7</sup> in **all things show yourself to be an example** of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified, <sup>8</sup> sound *in* speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

The title of our message today is “The Essential Ministry of Older Men and Older Women in the Church” and if I were to sum up what that essential ministry would be in 2 words, they would be:

**#1 MODELING** (v. 2)

**#2 MENTORING** (v. 3)

**#1 - Modeling** is summarized in verse 7 where Paul writes “in all things show yourself an example” and through verse 8 he talks about the character traits and lifestyle example of a mature believer. Vss. 2-3 also speak of godly traits that are to be modeled by the older to the younger, so this whole passage is bracketed like bookends by this idea as its main theme. It’s not enough for the elders to speak things in accordance with sound doctrine as verse 1 says, and which *chapter* 1 has a lot to say about. There is an essential ministry for YOU, young and old, male and female.

This passage begins discussing older believers, but those of you who are younger can’t tune out – the whole point is that this model is for YOU and you must follow! And keep in mind that younger believers also have a responsibility to model these things as well.

1 Timothy 4:12 (NASB95)

<sup>12</sup> Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith *and* purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

So all Christians are to be examples and are to model godliness in growing measure in what we say and how we live, our actions and even our attitudes are to be a living sermon. Verse 15 says we are to take pains with and be absorbed with the things Paul discusses in this chapter “so that your progress will be evident to all.”

Christians of course, are not perfect, but there should be observable *progress* in our life. It should be evident to all around us that the Holy Spirit is progressing us, sanctifying us. Others should be able to discern evidences of grace in us, and evidences of growth in the fruit of the Spirit, and we should seek to encourage others where see such evidence, and praise God for what He is doing in others. That’s where the Blessed Assurance comes from that we sung of. I pray you know this assurance because of your faith in Christ. If not, I pray you will come to Christ today to repent.

Now back in Titus 2:1 Paul begins with a contrast “But as for you” – if you have the NIV, unfortunately it doesn’t at all bring out the contrast which is emphatic and one scholar considers this the hinge of the whole epistle. Unlike the character of the ungodly church-goers in 1:10-16 who profess knowledge of God but don’t possess it, whose lifestyles prove what they really believe, who need to be rebuked to be sound in the faith (as v. 13 says), Paul writes in 2:1 “But as for **you [emphatic in Greek]**, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine” (sound = healthy, wholesome)

There's plenty of unhealthy thinking patterns and false doctrine and bad theology and bad living out there, BUT YOU need to speak things consistent with sound doctrine (v. 1) *and live a life consistent with sound doctrine* (v. 2 through rest of chapter).

The word translated “speak” is not the usual word for “teach” or “preach” or “proclaim” that Paul elsewhere commands pastors to do, this is a word for everyday speaking, including informal settings. Paul is now moving from the essential public ministry of elders to the essential practical ministry of all the others. Elder leadership does not at all contradict congregational involvement and ministry – both are essential or a church is weak and withering

Don't think for a moment that because we are an elder-led church (most regular monthly affairs and decisions of the church are handled by elders and whatever they delegate to the deacons), that there's not a place for you to serve. Titus 2 won't let you get away!

In verse 2, the first group of people Paul addresses is “older men.” This is a term of respect in the Bible, not derogatory or negative. Both the Old and New Testaments teach that older men and women, whether believers or not, are to be treated with special respect and consideration by those who are younger. Many cultures outside America to this day *do still honor the older generation*, and we as believers need to do all we can to honor the older among us.

God's Law commands: “You shall rise up before the gray-headed, and honor the aged” (Lev. 19:32; cf. Prov. 16:31). And here, God's Word in Titus 2 calls on the older ones to live in *an honorable way*

### **The natural question that comes up is: who are the older men?**

This Greek word *presbutes* can be translated as elderly or senior, and its root word is related to the word for elder in chapter 1 which had connotations of maturity rather than a magic number (the word for “elder” – *presbuteros* – was used by some religious Jews in this era for leaders age 30 or older, so it didn't necessarily mean someone at the end of life). Philo, a Jewish writer who lived close to NT times, used this Greek word translated “older man” in Titus 2:2 to refer to men aged 49 to 56, and he quotes Hippocrates the famous physician from the classical Greek era who used the word for a similar age range, which some translated as “middle age.”<sup>1</sup> Irenaeus the church father said one was young until the age of 40,<sup>2</sup> but since scripture doesn't give us a number, I think it's better to just stick with the words “older” and “younger,” bearing in mind that Paul may also have *spiritual maturity* in view, rather than just chronological years or a precise age range.

Few of you like to admit that you're “older,” but most all of you are “older” than others (physically and/or spiritually) and all of you in this room have people who are older than you or more mature in the Lord, and this term “older” can be used relatively. So perhaps some of you could be an “older man” to someone in this church who you can help disciple, and at the same time you have someone older than you in the faith who can help disciple you. You are not so spiritually mature that you can't have a mature believer disciple you, and if you're *unwilling* to humble yourself to seek and do that, you *especially* need someone to disciple and challenge you!

Physical age and spiritual maturity should go together as Titus 2:2 spells out, but Paul had to write this verse because it doesn't always. It *should be* that all older men are also automatically mature, but unfortunately that's not always the case. We have a world filling with people who have never truly grown up and TV sitcoms may make it look funny, but it's actually sad. And spiritually we also have people that have been around the church many years but are very spiritually immature. Paul had to rebuke the Corinthians for being like that – may he not rebuke us!

Others go *downhill* as they age - “grumpy old men” or “grumpier old men” (or women for that matter). You're to be *godly old men* and women and all can be *godlier old men* and women.

<sup>2</sup>Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. <sup>3</sup>Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine,

One writer has said well that our advancing “years ought to bring, not an increasing **intolerance**, but an increasing tolerance and sympathy for the views and with the mistakes of others.”<sup>3</sup>

The wise and godly man Job said it this way: “Wisdom is with aged men, [and] with long life is understanding” (Job 12:12).

But as another writer has pointed out, other factors can kick in:

‘Increased age typically brings decreased energy, diminished vision and hearing, more aches and pains, and often more depression, hopelessness, and cynicism. In the last chapter of Ecclesiastes [a wise old man said this], “Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, ‘I have no delight in them’; before the sun, the light, the moon, and the stars are darkened, and clouds return after the rain; in the day that the watchmen of the house tremble, and mighty men stoop” ...

As [you] grow older, change can become harder to accept. Life can become less fulfilling, less satisfying, and more disillusioning. It is easy to become a creature of habit, and the longer a habit is practiced, the more deeply entrenched and formidable it becomes. Besetting sins can become such an integral part of daily living that they cease to be recognized as sins at all.

For a Christian, however, old age should bring greater love for God, for the people of God, and for the sacred things of God. Those who have walked with Christ for many years should rejoice in that privilege and in the prospect of one day seeing Him face to face. A church should value and honor those who have spent many years in fellowship with the Lord, in the study of His Word, and in service to and through His church.<sup>4</sup>

As a side note, I personally have a strong antipathy against the trend in many churches for having a “young people” worship service and an “older person” service with radically different styles when it separates the older generation from the younger. My concern is not primarily over which worship-style preference is better, my concern and my conviction is precisely for this non-negotiable truth in Titus 2 that calls for integration between young and old, not separation or segregation. We don't want to segregate churches by race, why would we do it by age? Let's never elevate our preferences above preaching or this principle!

While both generations need to be flexible, my generation needs to honor and learn from the older *more*. My dream and prayer is having *one service* someday in our new sanctuary and that the Lord will provide the hundreds of thousands of \$\$ needed somehow to make that possible in the years ahead. The more interaction between younger and older, the better, according to God in Titus 2.

One pastor articulated it this way:

‘The older have wisdom and experience to impart to the younger. The younger have idealism, energy, and enthusiasm that can encourage the older. Yes, having the older and younger together, whether in the church or at home, can create tension. But God’s design is that we learn to live harmoniously and learn from one another ...

The younger people need to learn some of the hymns and the older people need to learn some of the newer songs. While it is fine to have a class for young couples or a separate social event for the seniors, we need to work at getting to know one another across age distinctions.

[He wrote:] three years into the pastorate, I had several families in the church that were new in the faith. Many had gone through divorces before they were saved, so they needed to know how to live as Christian families. I began a Sunday morning series on the Christian home. But a few weeks into the series, all of the older people in the church stopped coming. They complained that the series did not relate to their needs.

The elders pressured me to cut the series short so that the older people would come back. But I refused to cater to what I viewed as selfishness.

I said, “They should be having the younger families over after church, developing relationships and reinforcing the things that I am teaching. If they can’t get their focus off of themselves and onto the needs of these young families, let them go.” Most of them never came back. Our text clearly shows that the older believers should be imparting principles of practical Christian living to younger believers. There should be interaction, not separation, between the various ages.’<sup>5</sup>

The book of Psalms calls for one generation to declare to the next the wonderful works of God. My generation needs to hear seasoned saints pray words like Psalm 71:17, “O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth; and I still declare Thy wondrous deeds”

Moses was 80 years old when God called him to lead Israel out of bondage in Egypt and to the land of promise. But, like his poor speaking ability ... advanced age did not excuse him from the Lord’s work.

... Godly older saints who bring strength, stability, and wisdom to a church should be cherished ... The godly are assured that they “will still yield fruit in old age” (Ps. 92:14) ... In itself, however, old age does not make a believer more godly, more faithful, more satisfied, or more effective in service to God. As Paul’s injunctions in this verse indicate, even **older men** sometimes need to be admonished to exemplify certain basic virtues.<sup>6</sup>

So what are the virtues older believers are told to model?

*Read v. 2-3a again. Women likewise are to have the same reverent behavior – and not just them, all of us are to follow this model, it's just the older men esp. are to lead the way. There are four virtues here in v. 2 that all begin with "s" to help us remember this model*

1. Sober-minded
2. Serious in spiritual things
3. Sensible / self-controlled
4. Sound in faith, love, and perseverance

**Sober-minded:** This word refers to sober or clear thinking in contrast with someone whose thinking has been affected by influence of the world, or intoxication by wine or other substances, or indulgence in unwise or unbiblical activities. This man is clear-headed because he avoids whatever might impair his judgment.

The temperate older man is able to discern more clearly which things are of the greatest importance and value. He uses his time, his money, and his energy more carefully and selectively than when he was younger and less mature. His priorities are in the right order, and he is satisfied with fewer and simpler things.<sup>7</sup>

**Serious in spiritual things:** This dignity is the opposite of a clown or goofball – a youthful levity is not to mark mature saints, but instead there is a sobriety or propriety in the things of God.

‘It does not describe the demeanor of a person who is a gloomy killjoy, but the conduct of the man who knows that he lives in the light of eternity, and that before very long he will leave the fallen race of men for the glorious presence of God. The dignified person is never frivolous, trivial, or superficial. He does not laugh at immorality, vulgarity, or anything else that is sinful and ungodly. Nor does he laugh at that which is tragic or at the expense of others. These older men have learned the value of time and opportunity. They are better than younger men at accepting and comprehending their own mortality, the imperfections of this present world, and the inability of material things to bring true joy and lasting, deep satisfaction.’<sup>8</sup>

**Sensible / self-controlled:** ‘This word is translated as “temperate” in the New King James Version. It is probably the key idea in this section of Titus. Some form of the word appears to each of the 4 key groups of the church that Paul addresses: verse 2 to the older men; verse 4 as the verb “teach” (NIV) to the older women; verse 5 as the word “sensible” (NIV) to the younger woman; and verse 6 as the word “self-controlled” or “sober-minded” (NKJV) to the younger men. This person has his passions under control and is self-disciplined. He is not careless or foolish with his words or in his behavior ... [the ones who are sensible / self-controlled have] the discernment, discretion, and judgment that comes from walking with God for many years. They control their physical passions and they reject worldly standards and resist worldly attractions ... They refuse to be conformed to this world but are transformed daily by a renewed mind bathed in Scripture (Rom 12:2).’<sup>9</sup>

**Sound in faith, love, and perseverance:** The word “sound” means healthy and probably modifies all 3 words which you’re familiar with and probably don’t need these words explained. To sum up verse 2, the older saints ‘are to exhibit a certain *gravitas*, which is both appropriate to their seniority and expressive of their inner self-control. Secondly, one naturally expects older men to be *sound* or mature in every aspect of their character, not least in the three cardinal Christian virtues, namely *in faith* (trusting God), *in love* (serving others) and *in endurance* (waiting patiently for the fulfilment of their Christian hope).’<sup>10</sup>

*So verse 2 speaks of the MODELING ministry of older believers*

**Verse 3 goes on to speak of their MENTORING ministry**

3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, 4 so that they may encourage the young women ...

We’ve already seen 4 types of positive virtues to follow, and it says the women are likewise to have the same reverent behavior, which shows they belong to God. Now verse 3 lists for the women 2 types of negative vices to avoid. Let’s look at those negatives first before looking at the positive mentoring responsibility of those older in the faith. These you’re NOT to be also start with “s”

**Not Slanderers** (or gossips) - women who were older or in the stage of life not dominated by the busyness of raising young children and who had a lot of idle time on their hands were especially susceptible to this temptation. They might have been TV or Internet in those days to spread gossip, but the sinful human heart has always loved to follow gossip and spread it. 1 Timothy 5:13 speaks of the danger of those who “*learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention*”

By the way, if someone starts a sentence to you “You know, I probably shouldn’t mention this but ...” – it’s usually a good idea to not let them mention it. Receiving gossip is also wrong. Beware of “Have you heard ...” “Can you believe ...” “Did you see?” etc.

Here’s a good grid or guide for all of us to guard our lips:

Ephesians 4:29 (NASB95) <sup>29</sup> Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such *a word* as is good for edification according to the need *of the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

Women who have time on their hands should not be idle and following celebrity news and gossip and sharing too much (even if it’s couched as a prayer request). Paul’s exhortation to you if you have more time at this stage of life is don’t use this season of life to *slander* others, use this season of life to *serve* others! As you grow older, don’t grow more *critical*, grow more *compassionate*.

In Titus 2:3 the word for “slander” comes from the root Greek word *diabolos* (this is one of the few times in NT it’s not translated as “devil” or “Satan”). This is not a little sin in God’s eyes, nothing is more satanic or devilish than backbiting or slanderous gossip.

So ladies, try this next time a lady begins to tell you gossip: Cover your ears and yell out loudly “Stop, devil woman!” Maybe that will help curb gossip :) And do the same with men as well.

‘Those persons who cannot control their tongues in speaking lies, false accusations, and spreading malicious gossip (whether true or untrue) do the work of Satan himself. They cannot be slanderers and serve God. This exhortation to self-mastery of the tongue is especially directed toward women (cf. 1 Tim 3:11); however, self-control in this area applies to all Christian believers (cf. James 3)’<sup>11</sup>

### **Not Slaves to wine**

Verse 3 also mentions that to be a godly model or mentor, we cannot be affected by much wine. And I think the principle would be anything else in our day that enslaves us, addictions or substance abuse, or such vices that impair our thinking and hurt our testimony and might cause a younger believer to stumble. Paul spoke elsewhere of not wanting anything to enslave or master him.

This phrase of course is also important for me, as we already saw in our study of chapter 1, so I won’t spend more time on this point today. In the time remaining I want to move from these negatives to the positive, because there’s a very important one at the end of verse 3 that relates to the rest of the duties for women in verse 4-5: “teaching what is good.” The women, not Titus, are to do this with the other women as described in the next 2 verses. As I study Titus 2:3-5, it is very clear to me that the teaching of women (beyond my publicly teaching God’s Word), the ongoing one-on-one training, counseling with and ministering to women, is not mainly my job. I need to be careful not to violate this text and others like 1 Timothy 5:1-2. Timothy was a pastor in Ephesus probably my age or younger, and Paul writes to him there that he is to interact with older men as fathers (honor and respect for their age), with “younger men as brothers, the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity.”

Purity is especially important with younger women who the pastor must interact with all purity, as God’s Word says. And one way I apply that is I don’t meet in person for ongoing one-on-one counseling with women – if someone comes by for prayer or counsel, I may meet with them briefly while someone else is in the office (door open) or schedule a time w/ Jan or Pastor Jerry to sit in

And of course we counsel couples and are here to serve the body, but the ongoing relational ministry to wives and women needs to come from women for many reasons. And my prayer and earnest desire is that God would raise you up and equip you ladies for this vital ministry to and through other ladies and give us wisdom as to how to do that more effectively.

Pastor Jerry and I are going to a Men Discipling Men Conference next weekend at the Master's College and hopefully we can get some CD or other resources to share with men from that to help us apply Titus 2 further. As I stand up here, both our wives are down at Grace Community Church there as part of the Women Discipling Women Conference that they and a couple other ladies from church went to, and we look forward to seeing how God might use the teaching there that is very timely with Titus 2.

A couple resources to suggest to help:

- *Becoming a Titus 2 Woman* by Martha Peace (all of these on GCBC website if you click on "Recommended Reading")
- I have also reviewed a book there called *Women Helping Women* that would be great for all you ladies to own with many helps
- Your bulletin note sheet also lists books "Disciplines of a Godly Man" by Kent Hughes and "Disciplines of a Godly Woman" by his wife Barbara Hughes – great books to study with a partner

Pray and look for someone in the church who you could meet with and read through a study together (study guide questions included).

I loaned that men's book to a younger brother who I'm helping disciple this summer and I've been in numerous groups in the past where we would meet for breakfast every other week or one-on-one with another guy, where we would talk through the issues in the chapter and it would help stimulate what Proverbs says "as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."

Jaime has gotten together with ladies from former Bible studies to purposefully pursue this using the women's disciplines book and this summer she's blessed to be going through it again with a small group of ladies here that just spontaneously sort of happened.

You don't need me to tell you what to do, you don't have to have a program listed in the bulletin, just seek to do what the Bible says!

This is an essential ministry for women to teach and mentor younger women. Not preaching or pastoral ministry, but a practical ministry. Why are women *not* called to be pastors or elders?

The question shouldn't be controversial if God's Word is our authority:

- Titus 1:6 uses the word man. It uses the masculine pronoun
- The word "elders" in v. 5 is masculine, which is different than the Greek word we see translated in Titus 2:3 as "elder women" or "older women" (*presbutedas*)
- Titus 1:6 describes the elder as a husband and father, which is pretty hard to pull off if you're not a man (no matter what type of law the CA courts try and pass)
- The word for "children" in the Greek is neutral, referring to male or female children, but references to the elder in this passage are consistently masculine in the grammar
- Every part of speech in the original language – adjectives describing the elder, the nouns, pronouns, definite articles, and participles are all masculine singular (23x total in Grk)
- Also, the role of teaching and leading men is limited to men and those actions are a big part of the role of elder

1 Timothy 2:11-13 (NASB95)

11 A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness.

12 But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.

13 For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve.

That may not sound politically correct, but it's biblically correct.

My parents and I were at a Thanksgiving meal in Northern CA a number of years ago with a whole slew of unsaved family members around a big table all talking, and my aunt asked my dad "Now in the Baptist religion, are there women pastors?" And my dad calmly and quietly explained that only men are pastors, and said it's because of that verse we just read, which he quoted to her.

Somehow, all the other conversations at the table came to a dead halt and you could almost hear a pin drop as everyone must have overheard what my dad said. After a moment of silence, the table erupted with "Oh, that's going to have to change! Wow, that'll never last!" And the guy whose house we were at launched a tirade about how horrible discrimination in religion was and proceeded to persecute us as basically outmoded Neanderthal fundamentalist Bible-thumpers. It was us against the whole room! I tried to recover the situation, by explaining that setting requirements is not discrimination, and God has other roles for women that they're better suited for, etc., but I may have made things worse, not better

This teaching from the Bible may not make modern feminists happy, but if we deny God's Word, that makes *God unhappy*, which I'm more concerned about. Better to have the whole table against you, than to compromise and be against God.

\*Notice Paul's argument is not based on the *culture* of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, verse 13 says it's based on *creation* and God's design for men to be leaders, not just in home, but in the church.

1 Timothy 3:1-2 (NASB95)

1 It is a trustworthy statement: if any **man** aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work **he** desires to do.

2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the **husband** of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, **able to teach**,

Someone might ask "What about a missionary lady? Can't she be the preacher or teacher of men if there's not a lot of godly men yet in that culture? Or other situations where men don't rise up?"

That's not just hypothetical, that's common, not only in South America but in North America. But is God honored when we dishonor or disobey His Word? I've heard true stories, such as one missionary lady who labored among a tribal group. As an American trained in Bible school, she was the only one among the new converts who knew the Bible, but she believed God knew best. So to honor this principle in His Word, what she did was prepare Bible lessons which she would give privately to one of the men who was a godly believer, and then she would have the man stand up before the assembly and teach the lesson. She believed God's Word doesn't change from culture to culture, and in seeking to honor His Word, God honored her efforts among those natives.

God's Word limits who can teach or exercise authority *over men* in the church. There are many wonderful ministries and virtually unlimited opportunities for women to serve elsewhere in the church and use their gifts, and we'll learn more about the Titus 2 women's ministry next week. But the position of elder has specific requirements, and it's not a role given to women, and let me hasten to say it's also not given to *the vast majority of men*. This was also the case with priesthood in the Old Testament. 11 of the 12 tribes were excluded from candidates to be priests. You don't see the others protesting discrimination, they recognized divine design. In fact, James set let not many of you become teachers, because as such you will incur a stricter judgment. The highest responsibility of church leadership is a limited and weighty accountability, a stricter judgment and calling limited to a few godly men.

It was not discrimination that God only allowed those born as Levites to be priests, and it doesn't mean they were superior to other humans, that's just the role God had for them. Jesus loved the many faithful women who were around Him and gave them great privileges (ex: first to see His resurrection), but He chose 12 *men* to be His apostles and to lead His coming church. This was not because the women were inferior or unfaithful (they were more faithful sometimes) but because that's God's design and God's prerogative. God also wants men to lead in the home, not because we're superior or smarter (my wife is smarter than me in more areas than I care to name) but because God said so and designed it so and wants marriages to be a picture of the church as a loving bride that yields to Christ as the loving-leader husband and head.

And the end of Titus 2:5 makes clear that this is really a submission issue with God's Word – we submit to what God says, and when women don't, I don't assume their problem is ultimately with men. I think this text makes clear that submitting to God's Word is the real problem for un-submissive people, whether it's people to church leadership, or a wife and husband, or a child to his parents, or a worker to his boss, or a citizen to his government.

In Titus 2 the teaching or admonishing women are to do is not so much 'an official teaching position in the church (1 Tim 2:11-12) but rather to informal, one-on-one encouragement ... It pictures the older women, those who were experienced in life, marriage, and child rearing, taking the younger women in the congregation under their care and helping them to adjust to their responsibilities. It is a blessed and needed ministry that cannot be accomplished by men (cf. 1 Tim 5:2b). This quality leads into the next section on young women as vv 4-5 spell out what the older women are to teach the younger ones.<sup>12</sup>

Titus 2:3-5 (NASB95)<sup>3</sup> Older women likewise are to be ... teaching what is good,<sup>4</sup> so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,<sup>5</sup> *to be* sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

Again Paul doesn't give a specific age here that makes you an "older woman" (perhaps wisely so, and I would be wise not to do so either :) But the context of verse 4-5 suggests these are women who no longer have young children at home as their priority, and so they have more time to minister in v. 4 by encouraging and helping the younger women in their priorities of loving their children and husbands and being a worker at home as v. 5 says. This is an essential ministry of all women who are "older" in the faith and farther along in life, at a different stage of life than the younger moms and wives and single gals, to disciple or mentor.

By extension of this principle, moms who still have kids at home might be able to mentor a teenage or young single gal without neglecting their priorities.

Older men whose kids are grown should mentor and meet with married guys with families who should in turn mentor young unmarried guys who in turn might mentor junior high age boys or younger. I still remember when I was in grade school, a guy named Phil McIntosh was the first grown man to mentor me (he was my AWANA counselor but he met with me numerous times outside of AWANA night) and those few months he took interest in me in such a way I've never forgotten and never will.

There's certainly opportunities for you to do the same if you serve with our young people on Thursday nights in small-group council times, or interact with older believers before or after studies.

Don't think so much in terms of a *program* or something we have to do for you, think in terms of a *purposeful interaction* that is **your responsibility** to pursue, spending time with people who are not simply peers or in the same stage of life as you (our tendency). You need to plan to fellowship with both older and younger, and seek to build relationships outside of Sunday where the godly traits in Titus 2 can be modeled close-up and mentored even closer.

I don't think it's an overstatement to say that in my life and in my wife Jaime's life, the principles in this chapter have changed our life (recount examples from our GCC experience). The sound doctrine being preached by our faithful pastor was a part of it, as Titus 2:1 says, but we grew by leaps and bounds in our faith because verse 2-5 were also taking place as well. It was through men sharpening and helping me that started a domino effect that the Lord is now using me to do till this day, and it all started because older believers were kind enough to help out this young married couple named Phil and Jaime who were kind of clueless!

We have a good number of mature believers in this church – God's call to you is to engage yourself purposefully in seeking to help mature yourself further and mature others in the process. The ministry of older believers is one of the most desperately needed and a church is not sound as v. 1 says until verse 2 and following are taking place.

*May all who come behind us find us faithful.  
 May the fire of our devotion light their way.  
 May the footprints that we leave lead them to believe,  
 And the lives we live inspire them to obey.  
 Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful.  
 --Steve Green*

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- <sup>1</sup> Philo, o. A., & Yonge, C. D. (1993). *The works of Philo : Complete and unabridged* (15). Peabody: Hendrickson.
- <sup>2</sup> I. Howard Marshall. *The Pastoral Epistles* (International Critical Commentary, T&T Clark, New York, 2004), p. 239.
- <sup>3</sup> Barclay, p. 283
- <sup>4</sup> MacArthur, J. (1996). *Titus* (71). Chicago: Moody Press.
- <sup>5</sup> <http://www.fcfonline.org/content/1/sermons/041507M.pdf>
- <sup>6</sup> MacArthur, 71.
- <sup>7</sup> [www.preceptaustin.org](http://www.preceptaustin.org)
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>9</sup> “The Role of Men and Women in the Church: A Sermon on Titus 2:1–8” by Daniel L. Akin, *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 9:1 (Spring 2004) p. 86.
- <sup>10</sup> John Stott, (1996). *Guard the truth : The message of 1 Timothy & Titus*. The Bible speaks today (187). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.
- <sup>11</sup> Lea, T. D., & Griffin, H. P. (1992). *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*. The New American Commentary, Vol. 34, p. 298. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.
- <sup>12</sup> William Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 46, Thomas Nelson, 2000), p. 410.