

Young Women  
Titus 2:4-5  
ABC 1/17/21

In our study of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Titus we're seeing what it has to say about a healthy church. Paul tells us here how the church is to conduct itself. He directs his remarks to every segment of the church & gives instruction to each. He says in vs 5 this instruction is **so that the Word of God may not be dishonored**. In vs 8 it's, **so that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us**. & vs 10, **so that we may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect**. We want God's Word honored, we want the world to say nothing bad of us, & we want God our Savior adorned. How we each live is the issue, specifically this morning, **young women**. How young is **young**? What age does **young women** refer to? The word just means younger & in context refers to those still raising children. 1-5

Some say the standards set forth in the Bible were culturally oriented to NT times or were Paul's personal beliefs & they're considered irrelevant for Christians today. Others write them off as sub-Christian leftovers from an unenlightened time. & some distort & misuse them. We don't agree with any of those. If you love Christ, seek to honor God, & want to exalt His Word, you'll be eager to obey these commands given to us by the Holy Spirit through the pen of Paul. One of the duties of the **older women** is to teach the young ladies **what is good** (3). They're to be engaged in a training process to raise a generation of sensible, disciplined, wise women who are committed to doing God's will. That also means the younger women must be humble & desire to develop these characteristics & welcome the help of those who are older. What are the **older women** to teach & encourage the younger women to do?

**1. Love Their Husbands** This is the only time in the Bible where a woman is told to love her husband.<sup>1</sup> But once is enough. Young women are to be husband lovers. A committed, godly wife will strive to be her husband's best friend &, it should go without saying, he should be her best friend as well. This includes the ideas of fondness, friendship, & affection. **Young women** are to be continually, lovingly fond of their husband &, by implication, not fond of or overly friendly with men

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel L. Akin, [Living Doctrine: The Book of Titus](#), ed. Craig G. Bartholomew & David Beldman, Transformative Word, p 32

other than their own husband. The wife is to exhibit a love that isn't based on a husband's worthiness or how lovable he is or how *in love* you might feel. It's based on God's command which is to be lovingly followed by affectionate hearts. This command implies that love isn't automatic. It takes work. You might think it would be unnecessary to train younger women to love their husbands but in that day many marriages were arranged.<sup>2</sup> So a woman who truly loved her husband would stand out as a representative for the gospel in that culture. Chrysostom pointed out that love for husband is mentioned 1<sup>st</sup> & is emphasized as the chief point because the other qualities in this passage flow from it.<sup>3</sup> The wording is a gentle reminder that even more important than love for one's children is love for one's spouse. Because the false teachers in Crete were **upsetting whole families** by their teaching (1:11), these seemingly obvious things may have needed special emphasis.<sup>4</sup> If a wife doesn't love her husband, she must, in obedience to God, train herself to love him. Of course, he needs to work at being lovable as well as loving her (Eph 5:25). Training to love involves doing things for the other person, whether or not you feel like doing them. It involves putting their interests & welfare above your own. It involves sacrificial giving of yourself for their sakes. Jesus asked, **if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same?** (Mt 5:46). & Paul wrote, **Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others** (Phil 2:2-4). That applies to all Christians, but in a special way to Christian husbands & wives. When you sacrificially serve your spouse, it becomes almost impossible not to love them. You might be thinking, *But Nate, you don't understand how hard it is to live with this jerk & love him.* You're probably right. & I know I'm not easy for Muriel to love or live with at times either. & believe it or not, ladies, sometimes it's hard for us guys to love you. But it's not about us. There's something bigger at stake here, the glorifying of God & His Word. Don't love or obey based on your spouse, do it for the Lord's sake, as Paul says, **as unto the Lord** (Eph 5:22). Do it focused on the Savior, not the

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<sup>2</sup> William D Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol 46

<sup>3</sup> Homily 4, *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers*, 13:532

<sup>4</sup> R. Kent Hughes & Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy & Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 330.

sinner you're married to. If I can address the men directly: Don't make it hard for your wife to love you. The fact Paul has to urge wives to love their husbands means we're not that naturally lovable to live with in the 1<sup>st</sup> place. It's hard for them to even like us at times. Next Paul says, **older women** are to teach these **young women** to...

**2. Love Their Children** Both qualities of being a husband-lover & children-lover were found on pagan epitaphs from NT times commending a good wife. One inscription reads, *Julius Bassus to Otacilia Polla, my sweetest wife, who loved her husband & loved her children & lived with me blamelessly for 30 years.*<sup>5</sup> Another reads: *Here lies Valeria, daughter of Marcus, of free-born status from Caesarea.... She was kind, affectionate, dignified, blameless, she loved her husband, loved her children...*<sup>6</sup> Although vss 4-5 address **young women**, the character qualities are ones we all should exemplify. No one can tune out Paul's message here. Young unmarried ladies, this is the type of person you need to be striving to be. Young unmarried men, this is the type of lady you should be looking for. Married men, be encouraging of these things in your wife. If you're raising daughters, this is what you should be raising them to be. **Older women**, this passage is especially for you because God's Word says it's your responsibility to be modeling & mentoring & teaching these things to younger women. Let me add, there are some women that God wants to be single (1 Cor 7). Some people are designed by God to be single for the Kingdom's sake. & there are some who are unable to have children for His purposes. In His providence He has a plan for that individual. But generally speaking, women bear children & love them. As with love for their husbands, love for their children isn't an option. It's not based on the children's loveableness, personalities, or intelligence. This love is extremely demanding as the mother seeks to fulfill her obligation to raise godly children (1 Tim 2:15). It's the responsibility of pouring your life sacrificially into that little life so the child grows up to love Jesus. We all know raising children is hard work & can be frustrating, but Ps 127:3 plainly states that children are a gift & reward. They're to be a blessing, not a curse. Love them with a love that disciplines & comforts. It seeks what is best for them according to God's

<sup>5</sup> Marvin Vincent, *Word Studies in the NT*, 4:341-342

<sup>6</sup> This epitaph is discussed by G.H.R. Horsley in "11. A Woman's Virtue," *New Documents illustrating early Christianity*, Vol. 3, pp 40-43. In the same article, Horsley provides more examples of epitaphs of wives with the words *philandros* & *philoteknos*.

standards. The love of a mother isn't defined by fuzzy feelings & words, but in a firm but gentle hand that guides, corrects, comforts, cares, & nurtures.

It's common for young mothers to hang out with other young mothers, & it's good for them to do so. It can be helpful & encouraging to commiserate & compare & realize you're not alone. But I wonder how many young mothers seek out older, godly women who've already raised their children successfully? How many mothers with kids at home are asking **older women**, *How did you do it? What can you tell me about negotiating the teenage years? Am I being too permissive? Am I being too strict? Is this normal? What do you think?* **Older women**, teach the young moms how to be loving to their children when they think they're going to lose their mind & pull their hair out with impatience & the difficulties of motherhood. Most importantly, teach them how to train & disciple their kids in the ways of God (Dt 6). 3<sup>rd</sup>, **young women** are...

**3. To Be Sensible** This means to have sound judgment, common sense, discretion, right thinking, & right priorities. This is the same quality that should characterize elders (1:8), older men (2:2), young men (6), & all believers (2:12). The **older women** come along & teach the **young women** the common sense stuff of life such as knowing your priorities, thinking right, making sound judgment, & applying biblical wisdom. It's desperately needed that older women come along & teach those younger how to think right. Teach them common sense living & parenting. Then he says, teach them...

**4. To Be Pure** meaning chaste, virtuous, faithful & devoted to her husband alone. 1 Pt 3 says to women,

**Let not your adornment be merely external—braiding the hair, & wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle & quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God (3–5).**

If you want to be a godly woman, be virtuous & holy. In 1 Tim 2:9-10, the same thing is said, women are to **adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly & discreetly, not with braided hair & gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.** If you're going to claim godliness, it starts on the inside, but it will show up on the outside as well. **Modestly** means with a sense of shame, with a healthy blush. Ashamed you

might cause someone to be distracted from worshipping God. & the idea of **discreetly** means controlling all your passions. Women who make a claim to godliness have their passions under control & are pure. Paul then says **young women** are to be ...

**5. Workers at Home** Here's the one that causes dissension depending on how you translate & interpret it. Does this mean women are only to work at home? Not have a job? Is being a homemaker a Neanderthal form of bondage by males, from which all women need to be freed? What does this vs mean? Up front I'll say this doesn't mean every young lady is to always to stay at home. If you choose to be a stay at home mom, that's great. According to salary.com the annual salary for stay-at-home moms in 2019 should be \$178,201 according to their calculations of all a mother does.<sup>7</sup> Good luck collecting that! Interpretations of this phrase cover all spectrums. What I do know is that Paul wasn't thinking of a 1950s housewife like portrayed in *Leave it to Beaver*. The word **workers at home** means fulfilling the duties of home. Because Paul writes this it's inferred that some of the young women of Crete were negligent wives, mothers, household managers, & lacking in elementary virtues. Was it important that the young Christian wives of Crete be busy at home? If the alternative was being lazy & idle, which may have been the case, then, *Yes*, they should be busy at home. Again, I don't believe Paul prohibits women from working outside the home. But it does suggest that the home ought to be a top priority. The nurture & care of relationships in the home aren't to take a back seat to anything else. We need to be careful not to impose modern debates about women's roles on our interpretation of these words. It's unlikely Paul had in mind concern about career women or mothers in the secular workplace. The Greek phrase literally says that the younger women should be taught to be *home workers*. The emphasis isn't on the location of a wife's work but on being productive in the normal occupations of a wife each day. If Paul was saying a woman can't be active outside the home he would be contradicting what the Bible describes as an excellent wife in Prov 31. In addition to her responsibilities at home, she was also involved in real estate investments (16), relief of the poor (20), & had her own manufacturing business (24). Deborah was a judge (Judg 4-5), Huldah was a prophetess (2 Kgs

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<sup>7</sup> [www.salary.com/articles/mother-salary/](http://www.salary.com/articles/mother-salary/)

22), Esther was a queen, Ruth worked in the fields, Lydia was a dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14), Priscilla worked as a tent-maker (Acts 18:2-3). What is clear is neither a husband nor a wife should sacrifice the needs of marriage & family on the altar of a career.<sup>8</sup> The priority is to be the family. The key here is knowing your limit & not going beyond it. When something outside the home starts interfering with that priority, you've gone too far. The home is where a wife can demonstrate her love for her husband by providing him a refuge from the world. The home is where a mom can demonstrate her love for her children by nurturing them, teaching them, & instilling godly character in them. Don't let the home suffer for any other pursuit. But this doesn't mean that a woman must do all the work around the house. A Christian man is to love his wife as Christ loved the church, which means demonstrating an attitude of unselfishness, humility, & sensitivity. Guys, help out at home. You're not the king she must bow to. She's your queen & you want to serve her & make her happy. A woman who wants to be in the will of God will make her home a priority. Even though God allows a great deal of freedom as to how she does this, the important thing is that she does it. Couples must use good judgment in deciding how much time can justifiably & wisely be spent in activities outside the home. When they have a genuine desire to obey & honor God in all things & to seek guidance from His Word & in prayer, they can be assured that He'll provide the necessary wisdom & resolution. In my experience & observation, just because a wife doesn't work outside the home & stays at home, doesn't necessarily mean she's a worker at home. & the flip side is true as well. Just because a wife works outside the home, doesn't automatically mean she's not a worker at home. Many wives who don't work, still don't fulfill their responsibilities at home. Many wives who do work still fulfill their responsibilities at home. This command confronts both laziness & abandonment, whether by work or some other activity. Are you so busy outside the home that you're neglecting the needs of your husband, children, & home? If so, you're not following God's plan for you. Moving on, vs 5 tells us she should be ...

**6. Kind** Kind literally means *good or useful for a purpose*. **Young women** are to be gentle, considerate, & sympathetic, even with those who are undeserving & unkind to them. To be **kind** is

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<sup>8</sup> Daniel L. Akin, [Living Doctrine: The Book of Titus](#), ed. Craig G. Bartholomew & David Beldman, Transformative, p 32

to be godlike, for **God Himself**, Jesus said, **is kind to ungrateful & evil men** (Lk 6:35). Similarly, Paul admonishes all believers to be **kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you** (Eph 4:32; Col 3:12). This is also the type of woman that Paul is calling on to minister in the church by teaching the **young women** in wisdom to also have kindness on their tongue, & that they also would look well to the ways of their household, & that their love for their husband & children would be a top priority. Finally...

**7. Being Subject to Their Own Husbands** The terms *subjection*, *subordination*, & *submission* can stir emotional feelings & responses. They carry some acquired nuances today that seem to suggest forced compliance, obedience, or inferiority. That isn't biblical submission. This is one of 5 NT passages that uses this or similar language to refer to the relationship that a Christian wife should have with her husband. Perhaps because of the numerous other references, Paul abbreviates his explanation of what it means here.<sup>9</sup> The Greek term for **submit** doesn't mean a wife is to suppress her intelligence, talents, & gifts & roll over & play dumb or dead. Rather, she should fully express these gifts in the purpose of supporting her husband in the spiritual leadership of the home.<sup>10</sup> Submission doesn't imply inferiority or becoming a doormat. Submission means to yield one's will to the leadership & direction of another. It's more of an attitude than an action, though one's attitude will always determine one's actions. Contrary to popular misconceptions, there is no inferiority in submissiveness. We see this plainly in the Trinity, where Father, Son, & Holy Spirit are all equally God, & yet for the purpose of redemption the Son submits to the Father. Note also that a wife submits to her **own** husband, not every man.<sup>11</sup> There's a uniquely fitting submission to your **own** husband that isn't fitting in relation to other men. You aren't called to submit to all men the way you do to your husband. & in one way or another, every believer is to subordinate himself to others. So wives aren't singled out as the only ones who need to submit themselves. Eph 5:25 says, **Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church & gave Himself up for her**. This is a call for husbands to subordinate themselves for the well-being of their wives. It's important for

<sup>9</sup> R. Kent Hughes & Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy & Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word, p 331

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*, p 331

<sup>11</sup> Daniel L. Akin, [Living Doctrine: The Book of Titus](#), ed. Craig G. Bartholomew & David Beldman, Transformative Word, pp 34–35

wives to be submissive, supportive, & loyal to their own husbands. It's also important for husbands to be submissive, supportive, & loyal to their own wives (1 Pt 3:7; Eph 5:21). Paul's more lengthy treatment of the husband/wife relationship in Eph 5 makes it clear the Bible doesn't permit a husband to have a, *Me dictator, you doormat*, mentality. I read of a pastor who met with a man who believed that submission meant his wife shouldn't go from one room to another without first asking his permission. That is not it! That kind of distortion makes it easy for the world to blaspheme the Bible. Biblical submission is much different. Everyone in the Christian community are required to submit to proper authorities in their lives (Eph 5:21). This doesn't give anyone the right to be unfair, selfish, or abusive. A husband is to love his wife **just as Christ loved the church & gave himself up for her** (Eph 5:25). This sacrificial love of husbands is complemented by the love of wives who are to **submit to their husbands in everything** (24). It's a humble submission to her husband's leadership. We can't say that Paul is picking on women, because he calls everyone to submit. Marriage is about mutual submission. God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, & as 1 Cor 11 says, the man is the head of the woman. Wives are to subject themselves to their own husband. It's a voluntary response of the wife that flows out of her greater submission to God's plan for the family. This is submission which is done willingly & not mere obedience, which must be done regardless of your will. John Piper gives 6 things submission is not (based on 1 Pt 3:1-6).<sup>12</sup> I encourage you to read his sermon on this.

1. Submission doesn't mean agreeing with everything your husband says or thinks.
2. Submission doesn't mean leaving your brain or your will at the wedding altar.
3. Submission doesn't mean avoiding every effort to change a husband.
4. Submission doesn't mean putting the will of the husband before the will of God.
5. Submission doesn't mean that a wife gets her personal, spiritual strength primarily through her husband.
6. Submission doesn't mean that a wife is to act out of fear. Submission is free, not coerced by fear.

He goes on to say that...

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<sup>12</sup> Adapted from John Piper, [www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-beautiful-faith-of-fearless-submission](http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-beautiful-faith-of-fearless-submission)



*submission is the divine calling of a wife to honor & affirm her husband's leadership & help carry it through according to her gifts. It's the disposition to follow a husband's authority & an inclination to yield to his leadership. It is an attitude that says, "I delight for you to take the initiative in our family. I am glad when you take responsibility for things & lead with love. I don't flourish in the relationship when you are passive & I have to make sure the family works."*

There will be times in a Christian marriage when the most submissive wife, with good reason, will hesitate at a husband's decision. It may look unwise to her. Suppose I'm about to decide something for the family that looks foolish to Muriel. At that moment, she could express her submission like this: *I know you've thought a lot about this, & I love it when you take the initiative to plan for us & take the responsibility like this, but I really don't have peace about this decision & I think we need to talk about it some more. Could we? Maybe tonight sometime?* The reasons that's a kind of biblical submission are:

1. Husbands, unlike Christ, are fallible & ought to admit it.
2. Husbands ought to want their wives to be excited about the family decisions, since Christ wants the church to be excited about following His decisions & not just follow begrudgingly.
3. The way Muriel expressed her misgivings communicated clearly that she endorses my leadership & affirms me in my role as head.
4. She has made it clear to me from the beginning of our marriage that if, when we have done all the talking we should, we still disagree, she will defer to her husband's decision.

God has placed the responsibility of headship upon men. Sin has corrupted mankind so that men too often abdicate this responsibility & women too often seek to usurp it. The godly woman desires to keep God's order. Older women who've learned how to hold their pride in check, encourage their husbands to fulfill their role & then follow them, can help. This is relatively easy to do if the husband is following the Lord & loving to her, but she's still to pursue godliness even if he doesn't. Peter wrote, **In the same way, you wives, be subject to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won over without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your pure & respectful behavior (1 Pt 3:1-2).** Ladies, your 1<sup>st</sup> allegiance is to God. Your 2<sup>nd</sup> allegiance is to your husband, & as long as he doesn't require you to compromise the principles, precepts, & commands of the Bible, you're to follow his lead. No, that won't always be easy, & yes, there will be times you'll need to do this even when you know he's about to do something stupid.

Tragically, many husbands have abused the concept of biblical submission. The word **submit** has been used as a hammer to pound down women. This has brought about a *me master, you slave* mentality. But nowhere in Scripture are husbands told to demand this submission. Nowhere in the Bible is any hint that husbands are to demand submission from their wives. Rather he's to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He's to love & care for her as if she were his own body, nourishing & cherishing her as such (Eph 5:25-31). Headship isn't a dictatorship or being the boss. It's a loving leadership that takes the attitude of a servant. When wives are told to submit, it's something she herself needs to give voluntarily, willingly, & lovingly. & you more mature women must encourage younger women to do this to honor God's Word. The passages also consistently speak of a wife submitting only to her own husband, not to men in general. There's nothing inherently superior about man over woman, but when two choose to covenant as one in a marriage relationship on God's terms, those terms are loving submission & loving headship. God gives women the privilege of submitting to their husbands in the same way that Jesus submitted to His Father. & all of this so that the Word of God may not be dishonored (5b). It isn't so much for you, it's for God's Word, so that it won't be dishonored or blasphemed. The honor of Scripture is at stake. God has said this is how you're to live. When a Christian does evil or fails to do what is right, then God & His Word are dishonored. Non-Christians judge the truth & power of the gospel by the lives of those claiming to believe & follow Christ. We must never forsake the roles God has assigned each of us in life. Wives & mothers, you must understand that you're the most influential people in the world. That's the role God has assigned you in life. & you can do no better than to follow His plan. God designed the relationship between a husband & his wife to represent the relationship between Christ & the church. This is the deepest meaning of marriage. & that's why the roles of headship & submission are so important. If our marriages are going to tell the truth about Christ & His church, we can't be indifferent to the meaning of headship & submission. & the glorifying of God's Word is at stake in the way women, wives, & mothers minister. We may not tend to think of it this way, but this is a God-given ministry. Don't think that only preaching or being a missionary are the only ways God's Word can be exalted & lifted up, because this says otherwise. God has called each of us to give a

living sermon by our lives that testifies of the amazing grace of God through our Savior, Jesus, that's transformed our character. Our life is not about us, but about how God will be honored in & through us. If you aren't in submission to God, then you'll never develop these characteristics & your life will be one of selfishness that will dishonor Christ. If you are in submission to God, then these characteristics will be your desire & you'll bring honor to God's Word. Let's be a church that encourages & uplifts women & wives & moms of toddlers & those struggling with teenage kids & struggling single moms & those striving to be faithful with unsaved husbands. Let's be a church where the godly, older women are those who model & mentor so God's Word won't be dishonored & where God's doctrine will be adorned & His grace be put on display.

If you fit the description of a younger woman, ask yourself these questions: Does your character fit the description here? Are you working to develop these characteristics in your life? Have you developed relationships with older, godly women to learn these character traits & be encouraged in them? If not, then be humble & form a plan of action to do so. Through the behavior of the **young women** in the church, the Word of God gains credibility. The wonderful message here is that what happens in the home as a result of a woman's care & love is a powerful tool for the progress of the gospel.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> R. Kent Hughes & Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy & Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word, p 332