


Building a Rooted Community

Titus #5

Building a Rooted Community

Titus 2:9-15



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We are in a series about Titus in the New Testament. Paul wrote this to Titus to help him build a rooted community in Crete: to appoint elders and build a lasting community in a pagan society.



Titus 2:15 15 These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

Despise: do not let anyone dismiss you.

Encourage: Give people encouragement intentionally and even call them out.

Rebuke: bringing things in the darkness into the light.

Authority: Paul gives his authority to Titus and he should represent him.

My job as a pastor is to do these things for YOU! I don't mean to do things that you dismiss: I want you to take these things seriously, both as maybe a rebuke and to anchor you.



Faith

1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ to further the **faith** of God's elect and their **knowledge** of the truth that leads to **godliness**

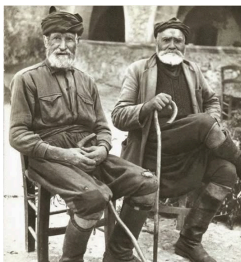
Last week, Mark offered us two pictures of what Faith is:

1. There is a frozen lake and something is stuck in the middle and you believe you need to walk out there in the middle and get the thing. Faith is actually walking out on the lake.
2. Another example was Mark helping a lady cross a stream at Sabino Canyon: he reached out his hand to the lady, offering her something to trust. Faith for her was reaching her hand and crossing the stream.

Titus is teaching us where the rocks are in life so we can trust and step on them.

Elders Titus 1

5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might **put in order** what was left **unfinished** and **appoint elders** in every town, as I directed you.



Paul wants Titus to establish elders. Here is a photo of real Cretan elders!

Elders are appointed older people who have qualifications to defend sound doctrine: healthy living as followers of Jesus. *These are the people who lead us to where we should put our feet on the rocks across the streams.*



Titus 2
Teach

Teach Urge

A Pipeline of Discipleship:
Older to Younger

Titus 2

9 Teach **slaves** to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, 10 and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.



- Slaves
- Aristotle: For the slave is a living tool, and the tool is a lifeless slave.
- Slaves lacked legal personhood. They could not marry legally, own property, or testify freely in court.
- Slaves were morally accountable but not morally autonomous

Older people need to invest in younger people: Age is relative. Someone who is 90 can discipline someone who is 70! Younger people need to ask for help and older people should help.

For example, if today you are eating with someone at lunch, try to eat with someone who is older or younger. Ask questions and begin the process of discipleship.

Here is the text for today:

The word SLAVES holds a lot of negative meaning for our culture. When I was first married, we were idealistic and believed we could change the world by ourselves. First, we decided not to participate with our money in any way where people were being taken advantage of. But we found that virtually every product we used took advantage of someone in some way.

In the first century, “slaves” lacked value, couldn’t own property or testify in court. They could be held accountable for doing wrong things but could not stop from doing wrong things if someone asked them.

There were different levels of slavery. Living in the first century was awful.

But even today, we all live in a power differential:

- Parents and children are examples of this.
- Another example is employer/employee: the employee doesn’t run things.
- Another is a system and an individual seen when you are on the phone with an insurance company
- Teachers/students
- Government rulers/citizens are more examples of this: one has more power than another.

Power differential

- Child and Parent
- Employer and Employee
- A system and an Individual
- Teacher and Student
- Government Rulers and Citizens

In the first century, a slave was the least of all these relationships. Grapple with this so you can understand what Paul is asking.



- Teach
- Train & Educate
- Discipline & Correct
- Shape Character
- Form Habits

In marriage, **subject** means not to take away someone else’s responsibility and take ownership of it. Don’t try to subvert the master: understand he has his role and you have yours.

Titus 2 (coherent rather than chaotic)

9 Teach **slaves** to be **subject** to their **masters in everything**, to **try to please** them, not to **talk back to them**, 10 and **not to steal** from them, but to show that they can be **fully trusted, so** that in **every way** they will make the teaching about God our Savior **attractive**.

Titus 2:11 **For** the grace of God has appeared that offers **salvation** to **all** people. 12 It **teaches** us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we **wait** for the **blessed hope** – the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

Self-controlled and respectful (talking back)

Protection of property (Stealing)

Functioning smoothly (Trustworthy)

This is important because slaves ARE important and can participate in Gospel transformation. Masters had complaints about their slaves

- They were lazy: the Gospel makes self-control respectable people who aren't lazy.
- Next, the Gospel helps people to protect the property of others, not steal.
- Finally, the master complained that slaves didn't get enough done but Paul wants slaves to be trustworthy so things function well. Behavior lines up with beliefs.

Titus 2 does not tell us how to fix broken systems. It tells us how grace forms people inside them so the gospel is not made to look chaotic, cruel, or hollow while we wait for God's kingdom to come.

As you think about your own power structures, listen to Titus: he doesn't tell us how to fix broken systems but tells us how to live out the Gospel in these situations.

Paul tells us how this works to be powerless and still bring the Gospel forward:

The Blueprint

14 who **gave himself for us to redeem us** from all wickedness and to **purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager** to do what is good.



The Gospel is first a story, an identity, and finally a kingdom life where we do the works of God.

1. **Story:** He gave himself for us to redeem us: whatever structure we're in, believers bear the image of God. We are to engage another person as an image bearer: whatever we do, we cannot ever be destructive toward the one who is in power. We cannot dismantle image: the Gospel is for ALL of us. When we refuse to speak against God's image, it transforms human structures.
2. Our **Identity** makes a belonging: when we go to work, I belong to Jesus and his kingdom and he is the ruler in whatever system I'm in. With that is a different value system.

3. **Kingdom:** This ID moves me toward being eager to do what is good.

Examples:

- I. If you are 13 and you don't like your parent's rules, the gospel invites you to NOT talk back or dismantle your parents. You are to act in a trustworthy way, even though you disagree with the rules. You may speak about the rules you don't like, however.
- II. Government dissatisfaction compels us to say NO to destroying the image-bearer. How does this work out? Mark's picture of faith means we NEED each other when we face these situations. This is only if we are willing to be part of the pipeline in our community, not the INTERNET pipeline. This does not negate that the burden is heavy: we still give honor in these spaces. Let us receive the challenge in these situations from Titus 2.

