

Titus 2:1-8; 11-18

The martyr Stephen addressed the unbelieving Jews with “You stiff-necked, uncircumcised in hearts and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. Do you know what stiff-necked means? It means bull-headed, stubborn, unwilling to learn. We are all born stiff-necked. By nature we are born hostile to God and His Word and not willing to learn. Had God not mercifully broken through our resistance, we would have died in our sins. But He had mercy on us and by His powerful Word worked repentance in us and gave us saving faith in our Savior. In doing so our Lord also gave us a new attitude toward His Word so that we say with the psalmist, “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” and “Your statutes are wonderful therefore I obey them.” When He brought us to faith our Lord also made us teachable. The thought I would like you to remember today is this, *Christians are teachable*. Old Christians are teachable and young people are teachable and pastors are teachable and finally I’ll talk about why we are willing to learn.

The Apostle Paul was instructing Pastor Titus on how he should conduct his ministry on the Island of Crete. The most important piece of instruction Paul gave was, “You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.”. Doctrine is teaching. Sound teaching is healthy teaching. Sick teaching would make its hearers spiritually sick. Teaching that was not in agreement with the pure Word of God would destroy faith and harm people.

Who was Titus to teach? He was to teach old people- mature men and women. Old people can become proud. They have experience. They have seen it all. They have read a book or two. They have their opinions. Some even become insulted if anyone tries to correct or teach them. The Lord leads mature Christians to humble themselves before the Word of God. They are teachable.

What was Titus to teach mature men? They were to be temperate. This means mentally sober. Keeping one’s wits about him. Mature men were to behave themselves so that they would be worthy of respect. Older men were to be self controlled. You’ll see that expression occur several times in this text. A self controlled person is not rash in word or action. He does not fly off the handle.

Older men should be sound in faith, that is, keeping a healthy faith. A healthy faith comes from a diet of God’s Word. They are to be sound in love, patterning their love after Christ’s love for them. Christian men are to be taught to be sound in endurance. That means they should learn to bear up under adversity and trust that God will cause all things to work out for good.

How blessed a congregation is with self-controlled, patient, sound minded men who love their fellow Christians.

Titus was also to instruct older women. Mature women were to be taught to conduct themselves in reverence. That means they were to remember that they were always in the presence of God. Mature women were not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine. As a woman has more time on her hands, she might be tempted to be a gossip or to become addicted to alcohol,

I have met women who have felt that after their children were grown or if they never had any children that they had no calling in the church. That is wrong. Mature women are called to be teachers of the next generation of young women.

There is a natural tendency that young people, men and women, want nothing to do with older people and older people are tempted to avoid the younger. The sinful nature

of a young person is full of pride. They have to struggle to be teachable. They are tempted to resist the teaching of their elders. They feel themselves more intelligent and better educated. They know it all.

From our text we see it is the Lord's will that older Christian women be eager to teach the younger and the younger be eager to learn from them.

Titus was to tell older women to train younger women. No, this was not interfering. This is an older woman's calling. It is more than just giving orders it is educating-training. Older women by word and example are to teach the younger to love their husbands and to love their children. Well, doesn't that come naturally? The kind of love that is spoken of here is not just emotion but it is an act of the will. It is a self-sacrificing love. It means loving husband and children even when they are unlovable. It is doing whatever she can for their good. A godly woman is to be chaste. Unfaithfulness on the part of a woman or a man- cheating destroys a home.

Self-control is something an older woman can teach. A Christian woman is to be calm, controlling her emotions and actions. She is to learn to be a housekeeper. It is in the home that she can make the greatest contribution to her family. Naturally this teaching would cause some in our sinful world to be offended. Some teach that a woman's first duty is to herself, that she cannot find fulfillment in her home. Some would say true happiness is only found in making money and having a career. Surely it isn't sinful for a woman to work outside the home but the first priority of a young Christian woman is to take care of her home. You older women have heard the propaganda that is aimed at these girls. You are to help them to lead lives that are pleasing to the Lord.

Older women are to train the younger to be kind. And to be subject to their own husbands. When a woman follows these directives she serves God and her family in a very special way. Though the world is quick to forgive wickedness on the part of its own, I'm thinking of the David Letterman scandal. It loves to scoff if a Christian woman commits a public sin. Unbelievers love to poke fun at the Word of God she represents.

Young men also are to be taught to show self control. Young men have a lot of passion. They are quick to fight, quick to argue and quick to get into trouble. As all their fellow believers, young men are to keep their passions under control.

Pastors are also to be teachable. Earlier we heard St. Paul tell Titus to be sure his teaching conformed to the Word of God. Here he is told to set an example for young men by doing what is good. A person who says, "Do as I say and not as I do" will not be respected by young people. Young men should be able to look up to their pastor and say, "I want to be like him."

In his teaching Titus was to show integrity- not be a fake. He was to be serious when teaching God's Word. His words were to be sound and beneficial to his hearers. Titus was to live and teach so that no one could say a bad thing against him or his parishioners. He was to live so that anything said against him would be exposed as a lie and bring shame on his detractors.

Now what is the motive for taking these words to heart? St. Paul wrote, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. Christian men and women, young and old have seen the grace of God. It became visible when Jesus was born into this world to save sinners. It was evident in His life, His suffering and His death and resurrection. When they were lost in sin and damned to hell God loved them and revealed His love by saving them through the death of His Son. Lest one become timid and feel

left out, Scripture states that this grace of God is intended for all people. All are invited to believe and be saved.

The grace of God has an effect upon those who believe in it. It makes them teachable. It teaches them to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled and godly lives in this present age.

In spite of the fact that Christians young and old live in this sinful world, yet, they are not to conform to this present evil world but they are to live according to the teachings of their God.

That is because they have something the unbeliever doesn't. They have a blessed hope. They look forward to the appearing again of their God and Savior Jesus Christ. As Jesus freed them from the guilt of sin by His first appearing even so He will free them from the effects of sin and they will live with Him in His glory.

Jesus as a purpose for His people. He gave Himself that He might redeem them from all wickedness. Wickedness, sin, only brings sorrow. It brings shame upon the name of God and His church. It destroys families, it ruins society, and causes disappointment and finally it destroys faith and leads to death and hell. Jesus gave Himself, He sacrificed Himself to pay the price to free people and purify them so that they might be His very own free from the love of sin and eager to do good.

These are things Titus was to teach. He was to encourage and he was to point out sin. He shouldn't be afraid to speak up for his authority came from the fact that he was speaking the Word of God. No one was to ignore what he taught.

Today we welcome and encourage students from Rocky Mountain Lutheran High School and their principal Mr. Lohmiller. We support this school not because it is a safe place for our students or because it provides a good secular education but because it teaches those virtues that are spoken of in this text

As we recall what we have heard today we see that we are all students of our Lord. Whether we are young or old or pastor we are to be teachable, Hearing the Word and putting it into practice. Eventually we are all called to be teachers of a younger generation. We will be instructors by example and Word. Let our prayer be, “Lord, give me a teachable heart. and let me live and speak according to Your holy Word.”