

The Three Pastorals: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus

Lesson 5: Living as believers within the family

Principal Bible verse: 1 Timothy 5:1 – 6:2; Titus 2: 1 – 10

“Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.” 1 Timothy 3:14–15

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,” Titus 2: 11 - 12

Bible passages for lesson 7: Ephesians 2: 19 - 22

“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

Lesson objective: Paul’s instructions establish clear guidelines for how God’s people should behave. He distinguishes godly character from unholy conduct.

Introduction: As Paul writes to Timothy and Titus, he paints a picture of the Gentile culture and their fallen character. He gives guidance to these preachers about how to lead these new churches by addressing the problems, starting with the selection of elders. Paul lays out in detail a picture of the men who can fill this role of guiding and teaching these new Christians.

He then explains the role each person should work toward within this community, starting with the elders, then the older men and older women, and finally the younger men and women. Paul speaks to their behavior and their responsibility to each other within the church. In every way, this group of Christians is to be disciplined to do what is good.

Most specifically he addresses what older women need to teach to the younger women, and then goes into detail about the behavior of older widows. Paul realizes that raising the family of God starts in the home. If the family has a shaky foundation, it cannot raise godly children or guide new converts in godly living.

Within these instructions we find *our* role and how *our* work within the church contributes to the whole. The questions we should ask ourselves are: how do we disciple the church and are we falling down on the job?

Main Point 1: Paul gives instructions on leading the church and modeling godly living. He provides guidelines for appropriate behavior. Through the Spirit, Paul tells the older women to train the younger women in running their households, loving and submitting to their husbands, raising their children, as well as developing godly character (Titus 2:3-5).

- How can Paul's counsel apply to the women in the congregation?
- How can we improve our connection with each other? [*I need visuals: 'War Room'*]

Paul then sets standards of behavior for the older and younger men (Titus 2: 2, 6-8).

- In what ways have we applied or not applied his directions to men today?
- How might we improve? [*Visual: 'The Forge'*]

[*Our current class structure has separated the older from the younger generations*]

- How might we shape our Bible classes to facilitate these scriptural instructions?

Main Point 2: Paul gives detailed attention to the widows in the church (1 Tim. 5:3-10). This vulnerable group was in desperate need of the church's help in that culture.

- Today the status of widows has changed. Is it still a critical issue?
- Are there other groups the church should consider for special care today? (The phrase 'widows and orphans' was symbolic of the neediest of society in that time.)

Homeless, disabled, mentally ill, cast out

- How can the church address the care of those in need?

Main Point 3: The righteous requirements of these scriptures apply to *all* the believers – from the elders to the slaves; everyone's effort matters and builds up the whole. Paul calls every member of the body to work for the good of all.

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." Galatians 6:10

- Since God desires that we be 'built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit' (Ephesians 2:19-22), we must ask ourselves: What keeps us from being truly 'joined together'?
- Has the influence of our culture caused us to neglect our responsibility, not hold ourselves accountable to these teachings? If not, what may be conflicting with our obedience?

Call to action: In prayer and study ask yourself/the Spirit if there is any change you need to make in your thought, belief, or action to be fully submitted to the will of God.

Suggestions:

- New Christians need to have people to walk alongside them to learn what being a disciple of Jesus means; they need a flesh and blood visual.
 - Go out for coffee
 - Have them in your home; visit them in theirs
 - Read through the Bible together
 - Share your faith journey; ask them about theirs

You don't need to be a part of a mentoring group. Watch for people when they come into the auditorium and introduce yourself to people you don't recognize or know. Develop a rapport with them and find out if they need to have a relationship with others in the church. Invite them to your class.

- Bible classes that are based on discipling:

Sunday morning: Seekers Class, rm. 16; teacher – Nathan Burrow

Wednesday evening: Jesus Journey Class, rm. 11 – Steve Ridgell

Although these classes may be focused on new Christians or those coming back to their faith, older Christians are welcome and needed to help with fostering relationships and discipling these young Christians.