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How do you measure the accuracy of Christian beliefs? For centuries after the apostolic era of the beginning Christian century, the correctness of Christian belief has been measured around the stack poles of *orthodoxy or heresy*. Implicit in this is a measuring standard that defines a set of beliefs one way or the other. In emerging Roman Catholic Christianity starting with the second century this standard was the [Regula Fidei](#), i.e., the Rule of Faith. Christianity had no New Testament scriptures in place until the fourth century, so another standard emerged. As discussed by [Tertullian](#)¹ and [Irenaeus](#),² [church fathers](#) in the late second and early third centuries, the Rule of Faith contained established Christian belief assumed to have been set forth by Jesus and the apostles, whether or not it was contained in the emerging set of authoritative writings from the first century apostles that would eventually form the New Testament. Although the Rule of Faith was basically in oral form at the beginning, it gradually came into written expression and served as the foundation for the [Magisterium](#), the official doctrinal standard for Roman Catholicism today. Thus Catholicism sees three sources for determination of this standard of orthodoxy: the pope, the Bible, and Sacred Tradition.



With the beginning of Protestant Christianity in the 1500s, the Magisterium was rejected as a legitimate measuring standard of orthodoxy or heresy. Instead, priority was given to the Christian Bible as the standard of determination. From the Reformer Martin Luther on, the principle of [sola scriptura](#) has been foundational to most all branches of Protestantism. This asserts that scriptures alone are the exclusive foundation for Christian faith and practice. But the definition of that Bible based content has been determined the adoption of [creeds](#) and [confessions of faith](#). The shape of these creeds and confessions vary, but usually contain declarations about belief in God, Jesus, the trinity, the church, salvation,

¹Cf. [On Prescription Against Heretics](#), 12: see also chapter 13.

²Cf. [Against Heresies](#), Book 1.1.1, or Book 3.2.2

the church, and eschatology.

In [Baptist tradition](#), [confessions of faith](#) have been the basis of defining the content of Bible based belief since [the beginning of Baptists](#) in the 1600s. Although formulated with great effort, these statements of belief have not been binding upon individual churches or church members. Primarily they have served to help explain who Baptists are to non-Baptists. In the past few decades this attitude has changed among the largest group of Baptists, the [Southern Baptist Convention](#). As a by product of the so-called [Southern Baptist Controversy](#)³ of the 1980s and 90s, the current [Baptist Faith and Message](#) statement adopted in 2000 has become the definitive standard for measuring orthodoxy and heresy among many Southern Baptists. It is officially binding upon all employees of the Southern Baptist Convention at the national level, and many state convention organizations have also made it binding upon all their employees. The trend toward lock-step conformity continues, albeit slowly, down to the regional Associations and to some churches.⁴ This represents a historic departure from Baptist history and from the vast majority of other contemporary Baptist groups world wide. Most define this movement as a step toward credalism, something Baptists have shunned vigorously most all of their history. Failure to understand and to implement the measuring standards set forth differently from this in the New Testament have contributed significantly to the mediocrity and downturn of Baptists in the United States in recent years.

Our biblical text in Titus chapter two does not use the orthodoxy / heresy standard for measuring correct Christian teaching and belief. Instead the qualifying participle adjective defining correct teaching is from the Greek verb *ὕγιαίνω*. This verb,⁵ and its companion adjective *ὕγιής, -ές, -η*,⁶ are derived from physical health concerns. Thus correct teaching is that which promotes **spiritual healthiness**. A functional standard is put on the table, rather than the ideological standard above. In the fleshing out of the correct content of such teaching in verses 2-10 and in the supporting rationale for this teaching in verses 11-15, Paul underscores the spiritually healthy product of specific patterns of behavior

³Variouly labeled "Conservative Resurgence" or "Fundamentalist Take-over," depending on the attitude taken, either positive or negative. As one who experienced the destructiveness of this movement while a SBC seminary professor in the 80s and 90s, I pretty much adopt the negative view of it, as lectures given at the German universities in Bonn and Heidelberg in the early 90s reflect: [Fundamentalismus in Amerika: Den Bock zum Gärtner Machen](#).

⁴Resistance to this movement can be found in all levels of Southern Baptist life. At the national level, the [Cooperative Baptist Fellowship](#) is the most influential group to reject this departure from historic Baptist principles. Several state conventions, such as [Virginia Baptists](#) and [Texas Baptists](#), have refused to move this way. Other more regional groups such as [Texas Baptists Committed](#) have taken vigorous stances against the credalism inherent in this trend.

⁵The verb is used 12 times in the NT: 1) for physical health, Lk. 5:31; 7:10; 15:27; 2) for spiritual health, 1 Tim. 1:10; 6:3; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:1, 2; 4:3; Titus 1:9, 13; 2:1, 2. Reflective of the shift at the end of the first century, this verb and adjective do not surface in the discussions of the Church Fathers. Doctrine became ideology rather than behavior, as it was for Paul.

⁶In the 12 uses of this adjective, eleven of them refer to physical health (Matt. 12:13; 15:30; Mk. 5:34; John 5:4, 6, 9, 11, 14, 15; 7:23; Acts 4:10) and one to healthy preaching of the gospel (Titus 2:8).



and relationships. This is what constitutes correct teaching.

This way of measuring correct belief is consistent with the biblical concept of truth and the Gospel as describing the person of Jesus Christ who is a mirror reflection of the Heavenly Father. What Jesus did, how He related to others, who He was deep down inside -- these form the essence of correct belief that must be incorporated into the believer's own character and living. Doctrine leads to ortho-praxy, which stands more important than ortho-doxy.⁷ If what we believe about Jesus does not change who we are and how we live, then we do not possess legitimate belief! No matter how much it lines up with a creed or confession of faith, its legitimacy is measured by the product it creates: Christians walking in the steps of Jesus. This is Paul's message clear and simple. It is what he pleaded with Titus to preach and teach to the believers on Crete. We could learn much from Paul on this matter!

⁷The online [Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary](#) defines 'orthodoxy' as "conforming to established doctrine especially in religion" thus reflecting the polar orthodoxy / heresy way of thinking.

I. Context

Titus stands as one of three letters in the Pauline collection that are traditionally designated as the [Pastoral Epistles](#). The other two are First and Second Timothy. Several factors are at work here. All three letters are addressed to Paul's assistants, Timothy and Titus, who are encouraged to pastor churches effectively either at Ephesus for Timothy or on the island of Crete for Titus. Being written from this slant of helping young ministers do their job better gives them a distinctive place among the letters of the New Testament. Of the twelve letters in the Pauline collection -- Romans through Philemon -- only Philemon is also addressed to an individual, along with these three letters. The other eight are addressed to specific congregations scattered across the north eastern Mediterranean world from Rome to Galatia.



a. Historical

External History. The compositional history of the book of Titus is closely tied to that of First and Second Timothy as a part of the Pastoral Epistles. As such it is a part of the Pauline writers that have been called into question more than any other group of Paul's letters. In the modern era of biblical scholarship since the 1600s, the views on whether Paul had anything directly to do with the writing of these documents has been vigorously debated back and forth. The period of the middle 1800s through the middle 1900s saw the majority of New Testament scholars on both sides of the Atlantic contending that these three documents had no direct historical connection to the apostle Paul. Instead, they arose out of the early second century, some five or six decades after the martyrdom of Paul in the mid 60s. These documents were perceived as attempting to impose a rigid orthodoxy on the Christian communities who feared that the understanding of Paul's teaching on grace opened the door to Christian libertinism and looseness of practice. The beginnings of early Catholicism were seen in these writings by Protestant scholars who reflected strong anti-Catholic bias.

But in the second half of the twentieth century, a growing number of New Testament scholars have

been making strong cases for Pauline authorship of the Pastorals. This trend emerges out of a variety of theological viewpoints, and is far from limited to evangelical scholars who have mostly contended for Pauline authorship through the decades. Thus in contemporary scholarship the question is more open and less settled than it appeared to be half a century ago.

Within the framework of traditional understanding of Pauline authorship, a probable scenario for the writing of Titus emerges as follows.

The book of Acts closes with Paul under house arrest in the imperial capital of Rome awaiting trial before Emperor Nero. This was about the year 61 AD. From inside the pastoral letters as well as from early church father sources, it appears that Paul successfully defended himself before Nero the first time and was released from imprisonment in late 61 or early 62 AD. He resumed ministry in the regions of the Sea of Adria between Italy and Greece along with the Aegean Sea area between Greece and modern Turkey. Whether or not he realized his dream of preaching the gospel in Spain that he mentioned to the Romans in Rom. 15:24 is unclear. Some early church traditions suggest that he did, but it is not



certain. After a couple or so years the apostle faced Roman imprisonment again and this time was caught in Nero's attempt to extricate himself from political charges of having set fire to the city of Rome. He made Christians his primary scapegoat in order to divert attention from himself. Thus in the mid 60s thousands of Christians suffered martyrdom at his hands, including the apostles Peter and Paul. During his time of release and resumed ministry 1 Timothy was written first, followed by Titus -- perhaps at the same time -- and then 2 Timothy was written shortly before execution by Nero in the mid-60s. Some will place the martyrdom of these two apostles shortly before Nero's banishment from Rome by the Roman Senate in 68 AD. But an earlier date in the mid-60s seems more likely.

Such a scenario best accounts for the historical allusions inside the pastoral letters, since they will not fit the Pauline chronology established by Acts and the other letters of Paul. It also gives credence to the general thrust of the early church traditions about this period of the apostle's ministry.

Within the framework of the above scenario, the letter to Titus

comes sometime in 62-63 AD, or 66-67 AD in the later dating of Paul's martyrdom. At the time of writing of the letter Paul is at [Nicomopolis](#) on the western coast of Greece (cf. Titus 3:12). He was writing to Titus who had been left by Paul on the Island of [Crete](#) in order to stabilize the Christian communities on the island (cf. 1:5). Which assistant did the actual writing of the letter is unknown. But as Paul earlier in 1 Thessalonians indicated that his assistants did the actual writing of his letters, one would assumed the pattern held true as Paul advanced in age. Having been born about the same time that Jesus was born, he would have been in his middle 60s at this time.

Internal History. Inside chapter two, time and place markers fade into the background because of the didactic nature of the text. It is not historical narrative, and so these markers play little role in the setting forth of timeless principles of Christian behavior.

Social proprieties of that time regarding proper relationships between older and younger people, between men and women etc. play an important historical role in the text. Particularly important are the



age factors between younger and older men, and between younger and older women. Somewhat strange to modern eyes is the statement encouraging older women to teach the younger women both to love and then how to love their husbands and their children. But in a culture of arranged marriages, love typically played little or no role in bringing a man and woman together in marriage. If love entered the marital relationship at all, it came after the wedding and not before it.

Particularly significant also is the usual pattern of a 30 + year old man having an early teen years wife. Given these two social dynamics, one can better understand Paul's admonitions to Titus on this matter. Added to this was the difficult situation for Titus as a young man in his twenties or thirties having to give council to older men in their 40s and 50s. Social custom of that day reversed the sense of propriety: old men counseled young men, not the reverse, as Titus was having to do.

b. Literary

Genre. At the broad genre letter, chapter two comes as a part of an ancient letter. As the chart on the right indicates, the basic elements of an ancient letter includes the Praescriptio, Proem, Body, and Conclusio. In [Titus](#), this can be charted as follows:

- Praescriptio: 1:1-4
- Proem: none
- Body: 1:5-3:13
- Conclusio: 3:15

Thus Titus bears most all the marks of an ancient letter, with the exception of a Proem.

In so far as small genre is concerned for chapter two, it falls under the didactic label, over against narrative. The teaching material in chapter two moves in the direction of *paraenesis*, or moral admonition. But in the text itself it falls under the self-designated label of 'teaching,' διδασκαλία. The implications of this label for genre understanding are somewhat defined internally by the repeated use of the word. In general it is to be τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ ("health promoting teaching, v. 1). The young men are to have ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀφθορίαν ("integrity in teaching," v. 7). Slaves should τὴν διδασκαλίαν τὴν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ κοσμοῦσιν ἐν πᾶσιν ("adorn the teaching of our Savior God in every way," v. 10). Teaching is an activity as well as a subject matter. It focuses on Jesus Christ and designates communicating His message of salvation integral to His being and

actions on earth. Thus Paul wanted Titus to instill in the living of the various groups the very essence of Christ. This is far more than teaching about Him; it is incorporating Him into our very life and being. Doctrine and ethics are therefore a single, inseparable topic centered on Jesus Christ as Savior and God's Son.

Literary Context. The literary setting of chapter two as an integral part of the body section of the letter, 1:5-3:13, comes after the historical narrative material in 1:5-16. The subsequent material in 3:1-11 is more generalized *paraenesis*. This is followed by the travel plans section in 3:12-14. And then the letter Conclusio comes in 3:15. Chapter two then forms the first and most detailed treatment of moral admonition, under the label of 'teaching.' As such it provides a valuable insight into first century Christian understanding of teaching. It was far more than content about the historical Jesus. It contained the religious truths growing out of the life and work of Jesus. But this was not mere information. These were spiritual realities to be incorporated into the very existence of those who followed Jesus. They were to take on His character and orientation in their daily living. Titus was commissioned to facilitate that happening among the believers on the island of Crete.



Ancient Letter on papyrus

II. Message

Literary Structure. The internal thought flow of this chapter is quite clear. The header admonition in 2:1 lays out the responsibility of Titus to be communicating the things that promote health teaching. Then using the literary pattern of ancient virtue lists Paul specifies the content of this teaching in vv. 2-10 with paraenetical duties to older men (v. 2); older women (vv. 3-5), young men (vv. 6-8), and slaves (vv.

9-10).

In verses 11-14, using a single sentence, Paul provides the rationale for his teaching: the second coming of Christ. The manifestation of God's grace imposes obligations for certain standards of behavior on believers. This grows out of what Christ did on the cross (v. 14). Then verse 15 concludes with a set of admonitions to Titus to be communicating these truths vigorously to the believers on Crete.



a. Christian teaching, vv. 1-10

Greek NT

2.1 Σὺ δὲ λάλει ἃ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ. 2.2 πρεσβύτεας νηφαλίους εἶναι, σεμνοὺς, σώφρονας, ὑγιαίνοντας τῇ πίστει, τῇ ἀγάπῃ, τῇ ὑπομονῇ· 2.3 πρεσβύτειδας ὡσαύτως ἐν καταστάματι ἱεροπρεπεῖς, μὴ διαβόλους μη οἶνω πολλῷ δεδουλωμένους, καλοδιδασκάλους, 2.4 ἵνα σωφρονίζωσιν τὰς νέας φιλόανδρους εἶναι, φιλοτέκνους· 2.5 σώφρονας ἀγνάς οἰκουροὺς ἀγαθὰς, ὑποτασσομένας τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν, ἵνα μὴ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ βλασφημῆται. 2.6 τοὺς νεωτέρους ὡσαύτως παρακάλει σωφρονεῖν 2.7 περὶ πάντα, σεαυτὸν παρεχόμενος τύπον καλῶν ἔργων, ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀφθορίαν, σεμνότητα, 2.8 λόγον ὑγιῆ ἀκατάγνωστον, ἵνα ὁ ἐξ ἐναντίας ἐντραπῆ μὴδὲν ἔχων λέγειν περὶ ἡμῶν φαῦλον. 2.9 δούλους ἰδίοις δεσπότης ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἐν πᾶσιν, εὐαρέστους εἶναι, μὴ ἀντιλέγοντας, 2.10 μὴ νοσφιζομένους, ἀλλὰ πᾶσαν πίστιν ἐνδεικνυμένους ἀγαθὴν, ἵνα τὴν διδασκαλίαν τὴν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ κοσμήσιν ἐν πᾶσιν.

NASB

1 But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. 2 Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. 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 to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored. 6 Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; 7 in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, 8 sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us. 9 Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

NRSV

1 But as for you, teach what is consistent with sound doctrine. 2 Tell the older men to be temperate, serious, prudent, and sound in faith, in love, and in endurance. 3 Likewise, tell the older women to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good, 4 so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, being submissive to their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited. 6 Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. 7 Show yourself in all respects a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, gravity, 8 and sound speech that cannot be censured; then any opponent will be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us. 9 Tell slaves to be submissive to their masters and to give satisfaction in every respect; they are not to talk back, 10 not to pilfer, but to show complete and perfect fidelity, so that in everything they may be an ornament to the doctrine of God our Savior.

NLT

1 But as for you, promote the kind of living that reflects right teaching. 2 Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have strong faith and be filled with love and patience. 3 Similarly, teach the older women to live in a way that is appropriate for someone serving the Lord. They must not go around speaking evil of others and must not be heavy drinkers. Instead, they should teach others what is good. 4 These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children, 5 to live wisely and be pure, to take care of their homes, to do good, and to be submissive to their husbands. Then they will not bring shame on the word of God. 6 In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely in all they do. 7 And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good deeds of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching. 8 Let your teaching be so correct that it can't be criticized. Then those who want to argue will be ashamed because they won't have anything bad to say about us. 9 Slaves must obey their masters and do their best to please them. They must not talk back 10 or steal, but they must show themselves to be entirely trustworthy and good. Then they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive in every way.

Notes:

As the [Block Diagram](#) in the larger internet version of this lesson illustrates, these verses revolve around a ‘header’ admonition in verse one that is then ‘fleshed out’ with specifics in verses 2-10. Four groups of believers are specifically addressed with a fifth group incorporated into the second group: older men; older women (younger women); young men; and slaves. The Greek sentence structure follows that typically found in ancient Greek virtue lists, and so reflects the writer’s skill in drawing upon available devices in his own world as communication vehicles to his audience.

Header: “But as for you, promote the kind of living that reflects right teaching” (Σὺ δὲ λάλει ἃ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ). In this instance the translators of the New Living Translation got it right in their rendering of the Greek, better than those of either the NASB or NRSV. Yet, an even more accurate translation would be, “You, now you be speaking those things that are integral to spiritual health promoting teaching.”

The ‘you’ (Σὺ) is Titus whom Paul is addressing in forceful terms with the present imperative verb form *λάλει*. Titus was one of the several assistants who served with the apostle from the early 50s until the apostle’s death in the mid 60s. In the [pages of the New Testament](#), he shows up in 2 Corinthians, Galatians, 2 Timothy, and Titus. In Galatians 2, he accompanied the apostle to the Jerusalem council meeting described by Luke in Acts 15; this was about 47-48 AD. In 2 Corinthians 12, he was the intermediary seeking the peacefully resolve the tensions between Paul and the church at Corinth in the middle 50s. In the letter to him by his name, he has been left on Crete to help the churches about 62-63 AD. And in 2 Timothy 4:10 he has traveled to Dalmatia for continued ministry by the mid 60s. Most insightful is the Galatians 2 mentioning. His not being circumcised as a Gentile was a sore thumb with the Judaizer element in early Christianity, but Paul adamantly refused to have him circumcised in the controversy over circumcision that exploded in the mid first century. He proved to be a consistently faithful young servant of God in the early decades of the Christian church. When Paul left him at Crete Titus received a tough assignment of sorting out all the problems plaguing the Christian communities on the island as Titus 1:5-16 outlines, especially vv. 10-16. Thus the aged apostle reflected great confidence



in this young preacher of the Gospel.

What Titus is to do is be speaking (*λάλει*), that is, communicating to the various Christian communities on Crete. Paul encourages him to use his speaking skills to get across the needed Christian teaching.

What he is to talk about is defined as “the things consistent with teaching that promotes spiritual health” (ἃ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ). The things mentioned (ἃ) are fleshed out in vv. 2-10 as the antecedent to this Greek relative pronoun. These are what fits / is appropriate to (*πρέπει*) health promoting teaching. For the concept of teaching (*διδασκαλία*) see the above discussion under [Genre](#). Critical to correct understanding of this is the present participle modifier τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ of διδασκαλίᾳ. To translate this with the static English adjective ‘sound’ is misleading and fails to capture the thrust of the Greek. The participle used as an adjective injects verbal action into the concept; otherwise the Greek adjective ὑγιή would have served the purpose. The concept of the health metaphor background with the action orientation of the participle produces an expression stressing the generating of health, not just the static existence of health. Thus Paul want Titus to teach the things that promote spiritual health, not just communicate a healthy teaching. Thus Titus’ task was to use his oral skills in such a way as to instill into the lives of the Cretan believers Christian teachings leading them into spiritually healthy commitments. No small job! And much more than simple ‘preaching’ at them. Paul sees certain values, especially behavioral values, as essential to authentic Christianity. Anything less moves toward heresy, and false teaching.

What were these values? He defines them for various age groups of believers in verses 2-10.

In the social world of the first Christian century age groups and the labels for them carried distinctive implications usually different from modern western culture. The chart here summarizes some of the social and cultural features of adulthood in the ancient world.

<p>Older Men, πρεσβύτεας</p> <p>Given the life expectancy for men in that world reaching only the mid to upper 40s, when a man reached 50 years he had achieved a significant milestone. In Jewish tradition especially, he commanded special respect.</p>	<p>Older Women, πρεσβύτιδας</p> <p>Women in the ancient world tended to live longer than men, and so many more of them would reach the half century mark in age. They also commanded significant respect in the latter years, especially among the Jews.</p>
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**Young Men,
οἱ νεώτεροι**

For Jewish men adulthood began at 30 years, while in the Greco-Roman world it was determined by their father and typically began in the late 20s to middle 30s. From puberty to adulthood was the time of youth, basically alluded to in the above term used by Paul. This period was often a time of wild, unruly behavior in society generally.

**Young Women,
αἱ νέαι**

In both the Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures, female adulthood began at puberty. Unlike the males, the girls had no 'youth.' Adulthood mean marriageability and most were married off by the beginning of their teen years. The above term alludes to the teen and early twenties while these young girls would have been wives and mothers.

Older men.: “Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have strong faith and be filled with love and patience.” (πρεσβύτεας νηφαλίους εἶναι, σεμνούς, σώφρονας, ὑγιαίνοντας τῇ πίστει, τῇ ἀγάπῃ, τῇ ὑπομονῇ). Four qualities need to become foundational to the older men. By older men, one can assume the common ancient implication of πρεσβύτης as being a male above 50 years of age. The four qualities to be incorporated begin with νηφαλίους. The men are to be sober. While alluding to non-drunkenness, it includes a “sober, clear headed thinking” approach to life in general. The older men need their heads ‘screwed on right’ in order to give sound and wise advice to the churches they were a part of.



Next they were to be σεμνούς. That is, they were to be “dignified” (NASB); “serious” (NRSV); “worthy of respect” (NLT). These widely different translations reflect the tremendous difficulty in translating vice and virtue lists out of the ancient world. Character traits are heavily embedded in and defined by specific cultures and the values these cultures adhere to. Thus adjectives like σεμνούς are the “greasy pigs” of Bible translation. Trying to get a firm grip on them with specific English adjectives that adequately communicate the Greek adjective’s meaning in its cultural world is almost impossible. The general concept of σεμνός in its world was to allude to people whose demeanor and character immediately command respect and admiration from others. This is what Paul wanted Titus to incorporate into the lives of these older men in the churches.

Third, they were to be σώφρονας. That is, “sensible” (NASB), “prudent” (NRSV), “to live wisely” (NLT). In today’s lingo, they were to “have their act together.” Rash, impudent actions are off limits. Decisions and behavior must reflect good sense and wisdom.

Fourth, they were to be ὑγιαίνοντας τῇ πίστει, τῇ ἀγάπῃ, τῇ ὑπομονῇ. That is, “sound in faith, in love, in perseverance” (NASB), “sound in faith, in love, and in endurance” (NRSV), “They must have strong faith and be filled with love and patience” (NLT). Again, all three translators miss the action orientation of the participle adjective ὑγιαίνοντας. As with the same word modifying teaching above, here the action orientation stresses health generating dynamics in the three areas of faith, love and endurance. These three nouns are also action oriented Greek words, although their English translation words are mostly static ideas. Growing healthiness in ongoing entrusting oneself to Christ, in demonstrating love toward others, and tenacious consistency of commitment -- this is what Paul wants instilled into the Cretan older men.

In both ancient Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures, men who reached the half century mark were expected to be models for everyone else in society. They were expected to have acquired valuable wisdom through a life time of experience which they would then share with society. Their behavior and deportment were expected to be worthy of imitating by everyone else. Thus early Christianity adopts and “Christianizes” many of the positive values already present in its world. Our American society could learn much here!

Older women: “Likewise, tell the older women to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good” (πρεσβύτιδας ὡσαύτως ἐν καταστάματι ἱεροπρεπεῖς, μὴ διαβόλους μη οἴνω πολλῷ δεδουλωμένας, καλοδιδασκάλους). Just as was the case with the older men, the older women have four virtues that are to be integrated into their lives: reverent, not slanderers, not drunkards, and skilled in teaching.



Older women, πρεσβύτιδας. The only NT use of this word, the admonition targets older women in the Christian community as role models for the younger women in the community of faith. These would have been women above fifty years of age, parallel to the older men mentioned previously.

Also the instructions given here are similar to those given to women in [1 Tim. 3:11](#).

Women⁸ likewise must be serious, not slanderers, but temperate, faithful in all things.

Standards of behavior were important in early Christianity, not just because Judaism had high standards and some segments of Greco-Roman society as well. But such high standards were central to the witness of the Christians to their neighbors, and served as a major evangelism tool in spreading the Gospel.

Likewise, ὡσαύτως. This adverb of comparison asserts that the standards for the older women are comparable to those for the older men. No double standard is acceptable. Both age groups have equally important duties before God. And Titus is to communicate this clearly to these individuals.

In behavior, ἐν καταστάματι. This Greek word, used only here in the NT, underscores the realm of the following duties expressed by the apostle. In their **behavior** the older women were to exhibit the following virtues.

Reverent, ἱεροπρεπεῖς. **First**, they were to conduct themselves as though they were priests functioning in the temple. The etymological background of the adjective is “that which befits the sacred temple.” Some commentators mistakenly assume the older women had an official office in the church from this adjective. The clear sense is, however, that the older women should conduct themselves as those carrying out ministry to God in the most sacred of places, in His very presence. The demeanor and conduct of a priest officiating at the altar of God in the Jerusalem temple set the tone for how the older women were to conduct themselves.

Not slanderers, μὴ διαβόλους. **Second**, the older women were not to bear false witness against others. This Greek adjective, διάβολος, is often translated the Devil when referring to Satan. And it highlights deceit and saying false things about people specifically to hurt and defame them and their reputation. This same prohibition is directed toward women in [1 Tim. 3:11](#). In [2 Tim. 3:3](#), this trait of slandering other people is one of the characteristics of end-time pagan culture. Its association with the Devil immediately highlights is negative nature.

Not drunkards, μὴ οἶνω πολλῷ δεδουλωμένας. **Third**, the older women are “not to be enslaved to much wine,” the literal meaning of the Greek phrase. This quality is virtually identical to the one given to the older men to be sober (νηφαλίους) in verse

⁸Or [Their wives], or [Women deacons]. The context favors either deacons’ wives or women deacons, rather than women in the church generally.

2. It is essentially the same as the qualification of the pastoral leader in 1:7, “not addicted to wine” (μὴ πάροινον).⁹ It is repeated for the pastoral leader in 1 Tim. 3:3, “not a drunkard” (μὴ πάροινον) and for the deacon in 1 Tim. 3:8, “not indulging in much wine” (μὴ οἶνω πολλῷ προσέχοντα)¹⁰ Given the contamination of water supplies generally, people mostly drank alcoholic drinks of various kinds with less danger. But excessive drinking was a widespread problem. Ancient documents suggest that it was an especially prevalent problem on the island of Crete. Paul advocated moderation in the use of wine, as 1 Timothy 5:23¹¹ suggests. In Eph. 5:18, he admonished Christians generally, “Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit.”¹²

Good teachers, καλοδιδασκάλους. **Fourth**, the older women were to be good teachers. This single use in the NT adjective appears to have been coined by the apostle Paul since it never appears in any writing in Greek in the ancient world beyond this one instance here. The definitional clue then should be taken from Paul’s spelling out what they were to teach the young women (cf. v. 4 below). This moves the idea toward translating the adjective as “teaching what is good” with emphasis on content, rather than on teaching methods. The first part of this compound adjective, καλο-, stresses that which is noble and has attractive appearance.

Their mission, ἵνα σωφρονίζωσιν τὰς νέας... In the ἵνα dependent purpose clause, Paul reveals the objective for developing these four qualities among the older women. Their mission is to instill disciplined commitment in the young women to seven significant qualities so that the younger women will honor the Gospel by their high standards of living. The nature and teaching method is defined by the verb σωφρονίζω-



⁹For a bishop, as God’s steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or *addicted to wine* or violent or greedy for gain;

¹⁰2 Now a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, 3 *not a drunkard*, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and not a lover of money.... 8 Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, *not indulging in much wine*, not greedy for money;

¹¹No longer drink only water, but take a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.

¹²μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἶνω, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ἄσωτία, ἀλλὰ πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι.

ωσιν. The rendering of this as “they may encourage” by the NASB and NRSV is weak and fails to capture the heart of the Greek verb. The NLT is better with “must train.” The Greek verb σὺφρονίζω, here used as a present subjunctive verb, the basic meaning is to make someone a σὺφρων. Such a person is sensible, self-controlled, highly disciplined, and behaves as such. What the older women are to do is to instill in the younger women the seven traits listed below so that the young women become mature, sensible and highly self-disciplined women.

Young women.

The treatment of this group is embedded in the instructions to the older women, and thus stands in close connection to it. The instructions are longer, but whether that implies something about the needs is unclear.

Young women, τὰς νέας. The adjective here used as a noun carries the sense of a young woman prior to her 20s. Normally when



used in reference to the age of a person it means pre-20s period of life. Thus the social scenario presented by Paul is that of 50 year old plus women helping young wives and mothers in their early to late teens. In most instances these were grandmothers and great-grandmothers helping the young women. Although such would be highly unusual in contemporary western society, this would not have been out of the ordinary in the ancient world, either in the Jewish or the Greco-Roman aspects.

Also to be noted is the similarity of these instructions to those given to young widows in 1 Tim. 5:13-14.

11 But refuse to put younger widows on the list; for when their sensual desires alienate them from Christ, they want to marry, 12 and so they incur condemnation for having violated their first pledge. 13 Besides that, they learn to be idle, gadding about from house to house; and they are not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not say. 14 So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, and manage their households, so as to give the adversary no occasion to revile us. 15 For some have already turned away to follow Satan. 16 If any believing woman has relatives who are really widows, let her assist them; let the church not be burdened, so

that it can assist those who are real widows.

Love their husbands...submissive to their husbands, φιλάνδρους εἶναι...ὑποτασσομένας τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν. In the list of seven virtues, the **first** and **last** ones deal with the young woman's relationship to her husband. The older women are to instill in these young women a love for their husband, and a respect for him. To modern ears this seems strange, since love and respect are qualities developed between couples during dating prior to marriage. But in the ancient world of arranged marriages where often the bride has never seen her husband prior to their wedding night, love and respect had to be developed after the wedding. Plus both the Jewish and Greco-Roman societies placed little value on love as a part of the marriage relationship. Only with the coming of Christianity and the teachings of the apostle Paul did love become a valued trait of a marriage. The only thing the middle aged husband expected from his teenage wife was submission to his every demand. The relationship was usually based on fear of him more than anything else.

The bracketing of the seven virtues with the single theme of relationship to the husband most likely underscores the urgency of this instruction of the older women. With years of experience behind them, they could be invaluable sources of insight and help on how to relate to one's husband in positive ways.

Love their children, φιλοτέκνους. **Second**, this one seems stranger than the first one to modern readers. Isn't motherly love inherent to being a mother, no matter what the age? [Fourth Maccabees](#)¹³ [14:20-15:9](#)¹⁴ in describing the love of a mother for her children provides insight here:

4.14 But sympathy for her children did not sway the mother of the young men; she was of the same mind as Abraham. 15.1 O reason of the children, tyrant over the emotions! O religion, more desirable to the mother than her children! 2 Two courses were open to this mother, that of religion, and that of preserving her seven sons for a time, as the tyrant had promised. 3 She loved religion more, religion that preserves them for eternal life according to God's promise. 4 In what manner might I express the emotions of parents who love their children? We impress upon the character of a small child a wondrous likeness both of mind and of form. Especially is this true of mothers, who because of their birthpangs have a

¹³4 Maccabees was written in the middle of the first Christian century as a Jewish writing, in the same general time as the writing of Titus.

¹⁴For the Greek text see <http://ocp.acadiau.ca/index.html?4Macc>.

deeper sympathy toward their offspring than do the fathers. 5 Considering that mothers are the weaker sex and give birth to many, they are more devoted to their children. 6 The mother of the seven boys, more than any other mother, loved her children. In seven pregnancies she had implanted in herself tender love toward them, 7 and because of the many pains she suffered with each of them she had sympathy for them; 8 yet because of the fear of God she disdained the temporary safety of her children. 9 Not only so, but also because of the nobility of her sons and their ready obedience to the law she felt a greater tenderness toward them.

In this single use of the term in the NT, the emphasis seems to be on helping the young mothers learn to love their children in a positive nurturing way, rather than in a self-indulgent manner. Such could be the tendency to a young teenage mother with a middle age husband preoccupied with himself more than anything else. Of course, in the harsh world of the first century, the concern may be even more basic. The older women were to help the young mothers learn how to love a child born of an unloving husband - wife relationship. Additionally, special circumstances on the island of Crete may have prompted this admonition as much as anything. Paul doesn't seem to have had a very positive picture of the natives of Crete, based on his quote of the Roman philosopher Epimenides¹⁵ in 1:12:

It was one of them, their very own prophet, who said, "Cretans are always liars, vicious brutes, lazy gluttons."

Self-controlled, σώφρονας. **Third**, keeping one's emotions in check, controlling one's tongue, making sure one's actions are proper -- all these are covered by this adjective, translated as "self-controlled," NRSV; "sensible," NASB; and "to live wisely," NLT. Self-mastery is a large theme in these virtue lists here. And the young women needed it as much as any of the others.

Chaste, ἀγνάς. Fourth, the literal meaning of the adjective is 'holy' or 'pure.' The emphasis is upon marital fidelity. Moral purity was an important witnessing point for Christians who lived in a [moral cesspool](#) in ancient Roman society. With such age differences between husbands and wives, the wife would often find extra temptation toward sexual activity outside her marriage.

Good managers of the household, οἰκουργούς ἀγαθάς. **Fifth**, William Mounce (Word Biblical Commentary, Logos Systems) has some helpful observations here:

οἰκουργός, "working at home," contrasts with the conduct of the younger Ephesian widows who were lazy and ran from house to

house (1 Tim 5:13). It is a rare word (BAGD 561; see *Note d* for variant). It does not require a woman to work only at home (cf. Prov 31), but it does state that she does have duties at home. For issues of present-day relevance, see S. Foh, *Women and the Word of God* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979) 190–91.

ἀγαθάς, "good," could modify οἰκουργούς, "working at home" (Hanson, [1983] 180–81). This would disrupt the pairing of terms, as would the next phrase. ἀγαθάς could also stand on its own, meaning "kindly, benevolent" (Matt 20:15; Mark 10:17–18; 1 Pet 2:18), in this context referring to the young woman's kind treatment of those in her household.

Kind, ἀγαθάς. **Sixth**, If taken separately, then the emphasis is upon the young mother's treatment of others in the household, especially any slaves that were a part of the household. See Mounce's arguments above for treating it separately. This seems to be the preferable understanding.

So that the word of God may not be discredited, ἵνα μὴ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ βλασφημηῖται. Christian morality reflected directly upon the Gospel message they were following and had committed themselves to in conversion. Positive adherence to these high standards reflected positively upon the gospel. Failure to live up to them cast a huge question mark on the gospel itself, and its ability to transform lives. The word translated in the NRSV as "be discredited" literally means "may not be blasphemed" or "be slandered."

The series of purpose statements (cf. vv. 4, 5, 8, 9) underscore the reality that our behavior and actions reflect on other people and on the religious commitment we stand for. Paul emphasizes this greatly. How you behave yourself impacts the gospel, other Christians, and the attitude non-Christian have toward the gospel and Christianity. These young women at Crete needed reminding of this.

Young men. The fourth age group to be addressed are the young men, *τοὺς νεωτέρους*. The age range of these was most likely young men in their twenties, the usual referent for this Greek word. Normally it designated unmarried young men after their teen years. The instructions here are interwoven with Titus himself being the model for these who were evidently in his age group.

Self-controlled, σωφρονεῖν. Once again the theme of self-mastery sur-



¹⁵from *de Oraclis*

faces. This time it is the verb with the more precise active sense, 'to be showing self-restraint.' It is an over-arching duty that is presented as foundational to the virtues that Titus is to model to these young men.

Titus is to exhort, παρακάλει, the young men. The insertion of a regular verb serves in the Greek to elevate the emphasis upon this responsibility. Paul thus stresses even more that Titus is to encourage, exhort and stay after these young men to work on their self-control.

Titus's example: "Show yourself in all respects a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, gravity, and sound speech that cannot be censured" (περὶ πάντα, σεαυτὸν παρεχόμενος τύπον καλῶν ἔργων, ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀφθορίαν, σεμνότητα, 2.8 λόγον ὑγιῆ ἀκατάγνωστον). By turning this long Greek participle phrase into a separate sentence, the NRSV falsely detaches the emphasis from the instruction to exhort the young men. The connection of παρεχόμενος with is παρακάλει is of either a modal or instrumental participle in an adverbial modifying role. Thus, how was Titus to exhort? Primarily it was by presenting himself as an example to them. His example would be far more influential than his words.

Mounce (WBC) also observes:

This need for modeling is found throughout Paul (cf. 1 Tim 4:12; 1 Thess 1:7; 2 Thess 3:9; Phil 3:17) and contrasts with the behavior of the opponents (Titus 1:10–16).

What constituted his example?

Good works, καλῶν ἔργων. Titus was to focus on doing good. The adjective for good, καλῶν, stresses the outward aspect of noble actions that were winsome and appealing.

Integrity in teaching, ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀφθορίαν, σεμνότητα. Again, Mounce (WBC) offers helpful comments:

ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀφθορίαν, σεμνότητα, "pure [and] dignified in your teaching." Continuing the force of παρεχόμενος, "showing," Paul tells Titus that as he teaches, he must maintain purity of motive (contra the opponents [Titus 1:7]) and a dignity in his behavior. Although διδασκαλία, "teaching," can refer to what is taught, here it refers primarily to the action of teaching since the qualities that follow apply more naturally to the action than to the content (cf. 1 Tim 1:10). The content of what is taught is picked up in the next verse in the phrase "healthy instruction." ἀφθορία, "pure," occurs only here in the NT. It means

"soundness, uncorruptness, single-mindedness." σεμνότης, "dignified," is a quality all Christians, and especially elders (1 Tim 3:4), should possess (cf. Comment on 1 Tim 2:2).

Healthy speech, λόγον ὑγιῆ ἀκατάγνωστον. When Titus speaks what he says should produce spiritual health and should do so in ways that can't be challenged. His words should be backed up by his actions in such a manner that no one can rebuke him for being out of step with the gospel.

Note that when Paul returns to Titus directly, he returns to speaking: λάλει, v. 1 and λόγον, v. 8. And the common emphasis on this speaking being health producing is seen: τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ, v. 1 and ὑγιῆ, v. 8. The end product of the gospel is changed lives. Without them, the gospel hasn't had a chance to work.

Goal of Titus' work: "then any opponent will be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us" (ἵνα ὁ ἐξ ἐναντίας ἐντραπῆ μηδὲν ἔχων λέγειν περὶ ἡμῶν φαῦλον). The purpose ἵνα clause underscores the goal of Titus' work. It is to nullify outside opposition to the work of Christians, such as Paul (note, "us"), in spreading the Gospel message. What Titus does will impact what Paul can do.

Slaves. To bring slaves into this discussion may seem unusual, but upon remembering that slaves were an integral part of ancient households with family status, it doesn't seem so unusual to talk about them.

The admonitions here are very similar to those in 1 Tim. 6:1-2.

Titus 2:9-10, NRSV

9 Tell slaves to be submissive to their masters and to give satisfaction in every respect; they are not to talk back, 10 not to pilfer, but to show complete and perfect fidelity, so that in everything they may be an ornament to the doctrine of God our Savior.



1 Tim. 6:1-2, NRSV

1 Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed. 2 Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful to them on the ground that they are members of the church; rather they must serve them all the more, since those who benefit by their service are believers and beloved. Teach and urge these duties.

Mounce (WBC) effectively summarizes these two emphases to slaves:

The final group is slaves. This breaks the pattern of grouping people by age and gender and may signal a problem prevalent in Crete, although what Paul says is consistent with his instructions to Timothy and elsewhere. Titus must urge slaves to be subject to their own masters in all things, to be pleasing, not talking back, not pilfering but showing completely good faithfulness in order that they might adorn the teaching of God their savior in all things.

What connection do these verses have with us today? In any community of faith, each of us has much to learn from others in the community. The generation gap between young and old in American culture often leaves us poorer because young

people can't see the benefit of the wisdom of other folks. Sometimes older folks stand frustrated by their age and either want to mimic young people, or else stand off from them in castigation of the immaturity of youthfulness. Bring in a young preacher into this mix and sometimes it's like throwing a light match onto gasoline.

What Paul envisioned is a Christian community functioning like an idealized Christian family. Everyone can learn and benefit from one another, if we are spiritually wise.

Additionally, and most importantly, Paul understood correct belief in terms of producing proper behavior. If we believe in the real Jesus, then He will transform our living by the pattern of His own earthly life. For Paul, if such doesn't take place, then correct belief isn't present! We could learn much here!

b. Grace and Eschatology, vv. 11-14

Greek NT

2.11 Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις 2.12 παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς, ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι, 2.13 προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστοῦ, 2.14 ὃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἵνα λυτρώσῃται ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας καὶ καθάρσῃ ἑαυτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον, ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων.

NASB

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, 14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

NRSV

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, 12 training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. 14 He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

NLT

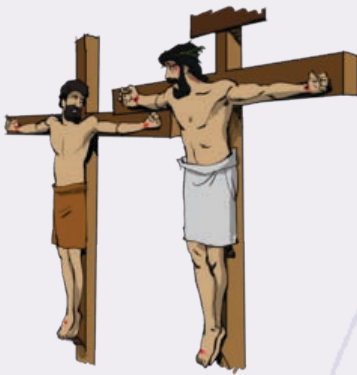
11 For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. 12 And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with self-control, right conduct, and devotion to God, 13 while we look forward to that wonderful event when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed. 14 He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing what is right.

Notes:

The optimal word of this passage is 'for' (γάρ) in verse 11. This causal coordinate conjunction ties vv. 11-14 back to vv. 1-10 by providing the rationale for the teaching that Titus was instructed to do. What does this teaching rest upon as its spiritual foundation?

Nothing less than God's grace which has appeared once in Jesus Christ bringing salvation and

disciplined training in godly behavior. We await its second appearance in the revelation of the Divine Glory with the second coming of Jesus at the close of human history. These two comings mark the boundaries of Christian experience and hope. They also define the nature of the interval between them. God's grace becomes the disciplinarian instilling in believers an unwavering commitment to living



Between these two appearances??

God's grace at work in believers:

Instilling disciplined commitment

God's glory the end expectation



in a godly manner. A part of this instruction is the reminder that the return of Christ will bring accountability before a holy God for how we have lived and served. Central to this grace is the sacrificial giving of Christ for cleansing from sin in order to create a new people of God fervently committed to doing good.

Other Pauline declarations are very similar to this one. Compare Titus 3:4-7¹⁶, 2 Tim. 1:8-10¹⁷ as but two examples.

The Greek text is but a single sentence for verses 11-14.¹⁸ The core expression is Ἐπεφάνη ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ (“the grace of God has been caused to appear”). The divine compassion and mercy took on concrete expression, and in so doing was validated as real and dependable.

Everything else in the sentence is built off this foundation.

First, it was a salvation bring divine grace: σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις. With the manifestation of this divine grace, salvation became possible for all

¹⁶NRSV. “4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. 6 This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

¹⁷NRSV. “8 Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, 9 who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, 10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

¹⁸For a detailed elaboration see the Block Diagram of the Greek text in the larger internet version of this study.

humanity. Not just covenant Jews, but every human being now has the possibility of being delivered from their sins and the horrible fate in eternal damnation.

Second, the divine grace comes instructing believers: παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς. This modal present tense Greek participle stresses instruction. But this is not διδάσκουσα ἡμᾶς, teaching that informs. Instead, this is intensive instruction instilling deep conviction and commitment, παιδεύω kind of teaching. It has content, but it's aim is the producing of life style and specific behavior. Thus Paul here affirms that God's grace is not merely a posture of God toward sinful humanity. Its bringing of salvation means the instilling of profound commitment to Christ to live according to His mandates.

The purpose of this instruction is defined by the dependent ἵνα clause: ἵνα... ζήσωμεν, “that we might live.” The intense instruction coming out of the grace of God is to enable believers to live the way God intends. The clause statement is heavily qualified by a series of modifiers defining the parameters of the intended lifestyle.

The positioning of the modifiers before and following the verb is significant. The negative and positive stances come before the verb, then the contrastive living in this present age but awaiting the second coming are grouped together following the clause verb ζήσωμεν. So two sets of negative followed by positive traits are balanced out on either side of the verb.

Those qualities before the verb:

1) We are to live in denying certain things: “re-nounce impiety and worldly passions” (ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας). The putting off of the old pre-Christian life is integral to living as a Christian. The two items to be renounced are τὴν ἀσέβειαν and τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας. The first stresses behavior and the second emphasizes attitudes and desires. Behavior that is “godless” has no place in the believer's life. Attitudes focused on

this world also have no place.

2) We are to live in affirming certain things: “self-controlled, upright, and godly” (σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς). The positive virtues to be incorporated into our living are now set forth. Self-control or sensibility begins the list. Justice and righteousness (δικαίως) are a part. Finally godliness is important.

Now those following the verb:

1) We live in this present age: “in the present age” (ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶν). Picking up on eschatological Judaism’s diving of human history into two periods,¹⁹ the apostle affirms we are now living in the present age. Earlier to the Galatians, Paul described it this way (Gal. 1:4):

the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

It is an era dominated by evil, and under the control of the Evil One. The patterns of human behavior are alluded to by the negative traits first listed above as

things to be renounced.

2) We await the second coming of Christ: “we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ” (προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστοῦ). In the midst of this present evil age, believers await God’s deliverance from the mess. Just as the grace of God was a manifestation (Ἐπεφάνη) in concrete fashion at the first coming, the glory of God will be revealed (ἐπιφάνειαν) in concrete fashion at the second coming. Until then, that day continues as a certain expectation (τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα). The heart of the disclosure on that day is the revelation of the glory of God, the divine presence of God. This divine presence is embodied in the person Jesus Christ. The apostle John affirmed that believers experienced this divine presence in Jesus as the Logos (John 1:14-15). Paul affirms that Jesus’ return will disclose this same divine presence in dramatic fashion at the end of human history.



In the relative clause modifying Jesus Christ (ὁς...), Paul affirms this same Jesus previously had given himself in sacrifice on the cross with the purpose of purging out of this evil world a new “a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds” (λαὸν περιούσιον, ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων). Thus both appearances of God’s grace and then of His glory are targeting the between era as defining a new people passionately living in obedience to God through Christ. The language of OT covenant Israel is now applied to believers as new covenant people drawn from all humanity, rather than just

¹⁹The present age, and the age to come marked by the coming of the Messiah.

from ethnic Israel.

c. Teach, v. 15

Greek NT

Ταῦτα λάλει καὶ παρακάλει καὶ ἔλεγχε μετὰ πάσης ἐπιταγῆς· μηδεὶς σου περιφρονεῖτω.

NASB

These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

NRSV

Declare these things; exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one look down on you.

NLT

You must teach these things and encourage your people to do them, correcting them when necessary. You have the authority to do this, so don’t let anyone ignore you or disregard what you say.

Notes:

This final segment of the passage is summary in nature and intensely admonishment in character. The “these things” refers back not just to the content in vv. 11-14, but goes all the way back to verse one. All of this διδασκαλία Titus is to include. In a threefold admonition incorporating two previously mentioned verbs, λάλει and παρακάλει, Paul adds a third one, ἔλεγχε, thus intensifying the admonitions to get these ideas across to the Cretan believers. They needed them. And we do too! Were we to seriously adopt Paul’s standards here, Christianity in our day would be revolutionized. A powerful renewal would occur!

Greek NT

2.1 Σὺ δὲ λάλει ἃ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ. 2.2 πρεσβύτας νηφαλίους εἶναι, σεμνοὺς, σώφρονας, ὑγιαίνοντας τῇ πίστει, τῇ ἀγάπῃ, τῇ ὑπομονῇ· 2.3 πρεσβύτιδας ὡσαύτως ἐν καταστάματι ἱεροπρεπεῖς, μὴ διαβόλους μη οἶνω πολλῷ δεδουλωμένους, καλοδιδασκάλους, 2.4 ἵνα σωφρονίζωσιν τὰς νέας φιλόανδρους εἶναι, φιλοτέκνους. 2.5 σώφρονας ἀγνάς οἰκουρούς ἀγαθὰς, ὑποτασσομένας τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν, ἵνα μὴ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ βλασημῆται. 2.6 τοὺς νεωτέρους ὡσαύτως παρακάλει σωφρονεῖν 2.7 περὶ πάντα, σεαυτὸν παρεχόμενος τύπον καλῶν ἔργων, ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀφθορίαν, σεμνότητα, 2.8 λόγον ὑγιῆ ἀκατάγνωστον, ἵνα ὁ ἐξ ἐναντίας ἐντραπῆ μηδὲν ἔχων λέγειν περὶ ἡμῶν φαῦλον. 2.9 δούλους ἰδίοις δεσπόταις ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἐν πᾶσιν, εὐαρέστους εἶναι, μὴ ἀντιλέγοντας, 2.10 μὴ νοσφιζομένους, ἀλλὰ πᾶσαν πίστιν ἐνδεικνυμένους ἀγαθῆν, ἵνα τὴν διδασκαλίαν τὴν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ κοσμῶσιν ἐν πᾶσιν.

2.11 Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις 2.12 παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς, ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν

NASB

1 But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. 2 Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. 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 to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored. 6 Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; 7 in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, 8 sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us. 9 Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to

NRSV

1 But as for you, teach what is consistent with sound doctrine. 2 Tell the older men to be temperate, serious, prudent, and sound in faith, in love, and in endurance. 3 Likewise, tell the older women to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good, 4 so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, being submissive to their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited. 6 Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. 7 Show yourself in all respects a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, gravity, 8 and sound speech that cannot be censured; then any opponent will be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us. 9 Tell slaves to be submissive to their masters and to give satisfaction in every respect; they are not to talk back, 10 not to pilfer, but to show complete and perfect fidelity, so that in everything they may be an ornament to the doctrine of God our Savior.

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to

NLT

1 But as for you, promote the kind of living that reflects right teaching. 2 Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have strong faith and be filled with love and patience. 3 Similarly, teach the older women to live in a way that is appropriate for someone serving the Lord. They must not go around speaking evil of others and must not be heavy drinkers. Instead, they should teach others what is good. 4 These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children, 5 to live wisely and be pure, to take care of their homes, to do good, and to be submissive to their husbands. Then they will not bring shame on the word of God. 6 In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely in all they do. 7 And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good deeds of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching. 8 Let your teaching be so correct that it can't be criticized. Then those who want to argue will be ashamed because they won't have anything bad to say about us. 9 Slaves must obey their masters and do their best to

ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι, 2.13 προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστοῦ, 2.14 ὃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἵνα λυτρώσῃται ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας καὶ καθάρῃ ἑαυτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον, ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων. 2.15 Ταῦτα λάλει καὶ παρακάλει καὶ ἔλεγε μετὰ πάσης ἐπιταγῆς· μηδεὶς σου περιφρονεῖτω.

live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, 14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. 15 These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

all, 12 training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. 14 He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds. 15 Declare these things; exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one look down on you.

please them. They must not talk back or steal, but they must show themselves to be entirely trustworthy and good. Then they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive in every way.

11 For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. 12 And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with self-control, right conduct, and devotion to God, 13 while we look forward to that wonderful event when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed. 14 He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing what is right. 15 You must teach these things and encourage your people to do them, correcting them when necessary. You have the authority to do this, so don't let anyone ignore you or disregard what you say.

Greek NT Diagram



2.11 γὰρ
2 Ἐπεφάνη ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ
σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις
2.12 παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς,
ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν
καὶ
τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας
σωφρόνως
καὶ
δικαίως
καὶ
εὐσεβῶς
ἵνα...ζήσωμεν
2.13 ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι,
προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα
καὶ
ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης
τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ
καὶ
σωτῆρος ἡμῶν
Ἰησοῦς Χριστοῦ,
2.14 ὃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν
/-----|
ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν
ἵνα λυτρώσῃται ἡμᾶς
ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας
καὶ
--- καθάρσιν ἑαυτῶ λαὸν
περιούσιον,
ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων.

3 2.15 Ταῦτα λάλει
καὶ
4 ---- παρακάλει
καὶ
5 ---- ἔλεγχε
μετὰ πάσης ἐπιταγῆς·
6 μηδεὶς σου περιφρονεῖτω.

Summary of Rhetorical Structure

The thought structure here is very obvious. The foundational admonition at the beginning (#1) serves as a defining topic sentence. The ἃ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ are defined by four header infinitival phrases / dependent clauses specifying the content of these appropriate matters. The first three are age based: older men, older women (teaching young women), and young men. The fourth is social based and deals with slaves. Verses 1-10 form a virtue list in the pattern of ancient vice / virtue lists of paraenetical materials.

The second core declaration provides a rationale for the preceding admonitions via the conjunction γὰρ. The eschatological coming of Christ stands as the reason for these admonitions. Thus eschatology is vitally linked to Christian living in anticipation of the second coming.

The final set of admonitions, v, 15; #s 3-6, is a rapid fire set of exhortations to Titus to diligently carry out Paul's teaching instructions as outlined in the preceding verses. The antecedent of the demonstrative pronoun Ταῦτα is the above admonitions and rationale (vv. 1-14).