

Titus 2:3-4a  
Sound teaching for ... (group # 2) older women

**Introduction:** In a godless culture that either mocked or ignored older women, God teaches us through Paul's letter to Titus the value of godly older women in a congregation.

- 1) **There are specific gender and age groups Titus is to address—2:3a**
  - a) <sup>3</sup> *the older women likewise are to be* (similar to a command) ...
    - i) An “older woman” would be parallel in age to the older men in the previous verses (probably 50-60's). This would be women who generally no longer had child-rearing responsibilities.
    - ii) Paul states that women as well as men are to be taught. The **content** of the teaching may be different, but the **fact** of teaching is the same.
  - b) Older women were often objects of ridicule in comedies, being mocked especially for gossip and foolish talk.
  
- 2) **There are four specific traits that must characterize God's older women in a godless culture—2:3b**
  - a) One general trait
    - i) Mindset—*reverent* [*i`eropreph,j*] *in demeanor* [*kata,sthma*]—like a priestess; living all of life as though every act, thought, and word is an act of worship; dignified and respectable because she recognizes **all** of life is sacred; external evidence rooted in inward spiritual commitments. She doesn't compartmentalize her life into part sacred and part secular.
    - ii) People should know that this woman is dedicated to the service of the Lord by the way in which she carries on day by day in observable ways. (Adams)
  - b) Three specific traits
    - i) Two negative
      - (1) Speech—*not slanderers* [*dia,boloj*]—she does not speak evil or bring malicious or false accusations against others
        - (a) Old age can bring with it a less tolerant, overly-critical attitude demonstrated in unguarded speech.
        - (b) A genuine concern for others can subtly degenerate into this sin.
        - (c) When Christians speak evil of their spiritual brothers and sisters, they participate in Satan's work (Rev. 12:9-10).
        - (d) This is also a requirement for deaconesses (1 Tim. 3:11).
      - (2) Appetites—*not enslaved* [*doulo,w*] *to much wine*—she controls her appetites rather than being controlled by them
        - (a) Due to her constant access to alcohol and food in the kitchen, she must be on guard that she not be captured and controlled by them.
        - (b) The unregenerate culture on Crete apparently carved epitaphs on the tombstones that highlighted heavy drinking as a virtue.

- (c) Failure in this trait will often lead to a violation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> trait as well.
  - (3) The restricted movement often resulting from advanced age makes older people particularly susceptible to fill their days with pastimes such as gossiping or drinking (or both). (Kostenberger)
  - ii) One positive
    - (1) Values—*teaching what is good* [kalodida,skaloj]*—through advice and encouragement*
    - (2) Older women are always to have others in mind, seeking to pass on what is virtuous, right and good to a younger generation of women. (Kitchen)
- 3) There are practical reasons why they are to possess and demonstrate these character traits—2:4**
- a) <sup>4</sup> *that they may bring the young women to their senses* [swfroni,zw] ... about the good things listed in 2:4-5
    - i) Older women must remember the temptations and struggles of youth and help young women maintain the proper focus. Their faithful consistency to their Godward attitude and tasks gives them the credibility to teach the younger women.
    - ii) The men in the congregation cannot accomplish this spiritual task of providing the younger women with a “wake-up call”. God would have the older women do so.
- 4) Things we need to remember:**
- a) Spiritual leaders in the congregation must remind the older women of their God-given responsibilities and equip them accordingly.
  - b) These women must demonstrate to others **inside** the congregation that God has successfully released them from the typical Cretan lifestyle.
    - i) Blessed is the church that has among its members such older women who can serve as models of Godward reverence, speech, self-control, and teaching what is good.
  - c) These women must demonstrate to others **outside** the congregation that God has successfully released them from the typical Cretan lifestyle.
  - d) For a fine example of this, see Martha Peace’s *Becoming a Titus 2 Woman*.