

Lake Cities Community Church  
Take the Next Step – Book of Titus  
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Pastor Craig Schill

**God's Code of Conduct Policy**  
*(for Young Men and Women)*  
**Titus 2:4-8**

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Welcome to New Employee Orientation and congratulations on your new position! My name is Craig Schill - I am the Human Resources Director here at the Lake Cities Community College. I want to draw your attention to an important policy that you need to be familiar with. Please take your policy manual. Turn to policy 430.1, page 234 – Code of Conduct. Listen carefully:

“The purpose this policy is to outline those standards of conduct which define proper and ethical performance. All College employees shall strive to maintain the highest standards of business ethics in transactions with the College, county, state, federal and local government and with the public. Employees are expected to perform their duties faithfully and efficiently to avoid giving rise to suspicion of conflict of interest. (Now here is the important part) In accepting a position with the College, each employee accepts responsibility for conduct, both on and off the job, which reflects and will build a good image for the College. Involvement in situations which are contrary to accepted public morals and decency may be cause for dismissal.

This is a real policy that I worked with as a HR Director. The message was: If you choose to align yourself with this organization – your behavior matters to us – because your behavior will do one of two things: it will either build a good image for the organization, or it will tear it down.

Paul has a similar message to the young churches on the Mediterranean Island of Crete:

Your behavior can either do great good or great damage to the cause of Christ. Please turn to Titus chapter 2. Today we will look at verses 4-8. As you turn there, let me remind us that we in the middle of a passage where Paul is instructing Titus to teach the church sound doctrine. Last week we saw the high standards and high place of honor that older men and women occupy in the church. This morning we turn our attention to younger men and women.

### **The Theological Big Picture**

I want to start our study of this passage by looking at the theological big picture. This passage is similar to the one we looked at last week but it has a very important theological point that reminds us of the big picture. See if you can spot what it is – verses 4-5 (Paul addresses younger women):

Titus 2:4 In this way they (older women) will train the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, Titus 2:5 to be self-controlled, pure, fulfilling their duties at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the message of God may not be discredited.

Did you see the big picture? Paul says – do this – do that, etc., but **why? For what purpose? So That** the message of God may not be discredited (lit: blasphemed). That has grabbed my brain this entire week. But Craig – isn't it just an incidental Comment? Look at the commands for young men.

Titus 2:6 Encourage younger men likewise to be self-controlled, Titus 2:7 showing yourself to be an example of good works in every way. In your teaching show integrity, dignity, Titus 2:8 and a sound message that cannot be criticized, so that any opponent will be at a loss, because he has nothing evil to say about us.

Did you see it again? Paul is says – young men – do this, do that... **Why? For What purpose? So that** any opponents will be at a loss and have nothing evil to say about us. So that the message will not be criticized.

The big picture – the theological nugget of gold is this: *“The purpose of godly behavior in the local church, is first and foremost to protect God’s Message from being discredited.*

Paul does not say (first and foremost) – love your husband so you will have a great marriage. Or (first and foremost) love your children to have a great home. Or practice self-control so that you will have successful relationships. The first and foremost reason you are to be concerned with obedience to God is so that you will not shame the name of Christ!

You see, men and women: Your behavior as a Christian can hinder the work of the Gospel. How? If your behavior is inconsistent and hypocritical – if you are just playing games with Christianity - it will reflect negatively not just your character but on the gospel and therefore on God Himself. This gives (1) ammunition to the enemies of Christ and (2) keeps people from putting their faith in Christ.

Do you remember two weeks ago I told you about one of the most bitter critics of Christianity - Mark Twain. Do you recall why he turned away from the faith? He grew up in the church – but the elders of his church preached one thing and lived a different way and that foul smell of hypocrisy caused Twain to say: “The church is always trying to get other people to reform; it might not be a bad idea to reform itself a little, by way of example.” The inconsistent behavior of the elders in Twain’s church, both kept Twain from following Christ and gave him verbal ammunition to discredit the cause of Christ.

The theological big picture is that we must pay attention to our code of conduct – our behavior - so that we build up the image of Christ and do not tear it down.

## Code of Conduct – Young Women

We promote or demur the glory of God through our daily choices. But what was it now, specifically that the young women and men to called to obey in the church? What was their code of conduct? Look back at verses 4-5:

Verse four: “*In this way they (the older women) will train the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children.*” Notice that the teaching of the younger women is, by design, to happen intentionally by the *older women*. It would have been inappropriate for Titus, as a young man, to be the primary person to teach the young women. Note, also, that the commands to the young women all *surround the home* – their husbands, children and household. Look at the first two exhortations:

The young woman is to be trained to (1) *love her husband and* (2) *to love her children*. Does a mother really need to be trained to love her children, or her husband? Shouldn't that come naturally? Well, ladies, let's be honest – Pastor Craig knows... sometime your husband is a hard person to love. Someone once said, “Love is one long sweet dream, and marriage is the alarm clock.” Your spouse is not the prince charming you thought he was. Dr. Gary Barnes who was the director of the Dallas Seminary counseling center shared with us that for most couples – their marital satisfaction begins high – a young man and woman – and that satisfaction steadily declines as preschool children are added, and as those children grow and life is complicated even further with parenting issues and activities. The training older women provide can greatly help the younger women through these challenging times.

Next, verse five, young women are to “*be self-controlled, pure, fulfilling their duties at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands.*” In other words, the young woman is to take

seriously her responsibility to the home. Sensible – is self-control, sober living – wisdom. This is a key word we looked at in some detail last week.

But after this – things get a little sticky. Why does Paul only describe the young woman's role in the home? What about the young women professionals we have here in our church? Should you feel bad? And why does Paul have to mention submission? That's awkward in our culture. It was awkward for presidential candidate Mike Huckabee when it was discovered by his enemies that he had signed his name to this statement: "A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ." When that surfaced, one political analyst said, "He's toast."

Let's have careful thinking here. First, Paul is not saying a woman cannot have other responsibilities outside the home – they just can't displace her responsibility at home. Paul is reminding young women that the home must be a priority for the Christian. Elizabeth Elliott use to say she had no quarrel with women working in any professional capacity as long as they could honestly say they were, before God, also fulfilling their responsibilities of Titus, chapter two.

I worked for years with a Christian woman named Melinda. She was a highly successful administrator. She had two small children, She felt deeply that she was neglecting her responsibilities as a mother and she wanted to re-prioritize her life to make her home and family the priority. But because our culture has so devalued the role of a mother her husband would not let her return to the home (or reduce hours, have a flex schedule), because it took pride in her success and would have been embarrassed to have his wife center her responsibilities at home. Our culture does not value the importance of the home, but Paul says that young women in the church must value it.

Year after year, Melinda was successful professionally, but miserable spiritually and emotionally. Young women – don't let that be you. Don't live with that regret – keep the home a priority. Look now at the young men.

### **Code of Conduct – Young Women**

Verse six – young men are again to have this over-arching characteristic of showing “self-control” That again is the same word we have seen over and over. Verse seven, Paul says, “(Titus) show yourself to be an example (to the young men) of good works in every way.” Paul nails it for young men doesn't he? Engage in good deeds, men! Very often it is men who are prone to suffer from a “lack of good deeds.” We can frankly get lazy – John Steinbeck wrote a short story called Junius Maltby – it explored what would happen if a man just stopped doing the normal activities of life and lived a lazy life. Steinbeck wrote: “Junius had grown to love laziness...He was sorry; he didn't know how it had happened. And that was the truth.” Is that true of you, men? Do you secretly love laziness? Is Dagwood Bumstead your hero who said: “You can't teach people to be lazy - either they have it, or they don't.” At Crete, it might have some of the men drawn to the “idle talking” of the false teachers – always debating, but never doing.

Paul says in other places: work out your salvation with fear and trembling; always abound in the work of the Lord. Do the work of the ministry. Whatever work you do for God in the local church is good work:– whether carrying speakers or carrying for babies. Teaching Sunday School or attending a Community Life group – that is work that brings glory to God!

Next – Titus, as a model for younger men, is to “teach with integrity and dignity – a sound message that cannot be criticized.” Paul is telling Titus to be an example to the younger men in areas of speech – teaching correct doctrine in the church. But Paul is saying men should

Speak in a healthy way in every area of life. This is a key because young men are notorious for speaking first and thinking afterwards. The proverb says ([Prov. 12:18](#)) **There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword.** Words can do damage.

Men we need to be careful in the words we use. And here I am preaching to myself more than anyone else – I had to apologize to Taylor the other day when I said something mean out of frustration, that was wrong and rash – and words do damage like a sword. I wonder if any of you can relate to this? James says – be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger. This is true when teaching doctrine in the church, or teaching our sons or daughters to ride a bike, or how to do long-division. Young men – be careful how you speak – Be self-controlled in all areas of life, especially in the area of the tongue.

### **Application:**

Our lesson this morning boils down to this: Glorify God through godly choices. Glorify God through godly choices – or – If you prefer the negative: Don't discredit God through disobedience.

Women – God calls you to make godly choices this week about how you love your husband and how you love your children. We put all the responsibility on the men to come up with something for Valentine's day. Women – maybe this year you should take the lead – how can you show love to your husband and to your children. How can you communicate your love so that it is understood by your children? Tammy showed love to Trevor and Hudson last week. You know what she did? She sat down and for the first time played X-Box – Star Wars Battlefront. What a kick that was! Show love to your children – get into their worlds – don't always say "no". Do something special. Women, God calls you to submit to your husbands this

week. I know sometimes that is very hard to do, but practice self-control and honor your husbands leadership in the home. Men – God also calls you to also practice self-control, and to engage in good works – get off the couch, turn off the TV and do what you are suppose to do, for your family and for the church. I know you are busy and so am I, but we still waste so much time, don't we? And men – let's remember to watch our tongues this week - think before you speak – speak to encourage and build-up – speak health and life into your family and children.

You see glorifying God with our lives is not a mystical, super-spiritual activity reserved for Mother Teresa and Billy Graham. We glorify God with our daily choices to obey and fulfill out calling as a Christian.

We don't have a policy, per say – but we do have a code of conduct. If you align yourself this movement of faith – as a Christian – we must behave in such a way as to build up the image of Christ, not to tear it down. Day by day – choice by choice to the glory of God. Let's pray.