

Living Out the Beauty of the Gospel Together

A Look at Titus 2:3-5

4 Week Study— with Introduction

Introduction

To begin I wanted to share the heart behind this study. As I have had the pleasure to serve in ministry alongside Patrick over the years, and as I have served at churches and been in church my whole life, there have been some things that I have loved, and some areas that I always wished to see more. As a now mom of 5, and in my 40s, my needs are certainly different in the church than at other times. I grew up going to church and then I knew what I needed was any adult to help share the Gospel. Thankfully I had some people that were pivotal in that, those that taught our kids Sunday school, and those that served as sponsors in the youth program are truly the ones that had the most profound impact on my faith. Those were even more important as my home life at times saw my parents fighting, and as I got older even feeling like me taking my faith “seriously” wasn’t always supported. Having married later in my 20s, I spent many years as the young single in church, then due to infertility I was the married non-mom, and now the married mom with kids of many ages. One thing that I really longed for at each phase of life was connection with women that had been there, and who had a walk with Jesus that had clearly sustained them through life’s ups and downs. A faith that they could and would willingly share with me and find encouragement and strength for the journey. What I was seeking is what we find modeled in the pages of the book of Titus chapter 2.

I know having talked to other women, especially those that didn’t necessarily have a strong Christian female to serve as a mentor in their life that I am not the only one who feels this way. Not only is it prescribed in Scripture, but I feel we are wired to need that connection. To have spiritually mature women to pour into those that are newer on the journey.

The Christian life is not one to be lived in solitude. We are to bear with one another, encourage one another, love one another, pray for one another, and so many more “one another” mentions in the Bible. In fact, the phrase “one

another" occurs 100 times in the New Testament. It is derived from the Greek word *allelon* which means "one another, each other; mutually, reciprocally." Approximately 59 of those occurrences are specific commands teaching us how (and how not) to relate to one another. Obedience to those commands is imperative. It forms the basis for all true Christian community, and has a direct impact on our witness to the world (John 13:35). In addition to *allelon*, the Bible uses other words and phrases to instruct us how to relate to others. (See chart in the appendix)

In an effort to foster this type of relationship we see in Scripture where older women are investing in the younger women, my hope is to start a mentoring-minded women's ministry within our church. Mainly I want younger ladies to see their need to have a lady that is older in the faith to come alongside them, and then the older women who have been walking the Christian road for a long time to see how valuable they are. Their wisdom is not only needed but is essential to the body of Christ!! So whether you are new in your faith, or have walked the path a long time you have something to be doing. You are a valuable part of this local body and the Church universal. Let's all grow together for the glory of God!! That is the ultimate goal, that God would be glorified as we help one another grow in Christ-likeness.

With that in mind, for this 4-Week Study we will take a look at what is we should be helping one another grow in and considering how we can all both grow in these areas ourselves and encourage one another to do the same. I will include some helps in this book in order to aid in beginning some deeper discussion with those around us. Additionally, I hope we can get to know each other more, as that can serve a big part in us all growing in our faith. Sometimes just hearing what others have maybe gone through and how they sought the Lord or maybe even saw how they later could have handled it differently we can all be sharpened and equipped to walk this Christian life.

I look forward to growing in Christ with all of you ladies!

Kari Bottoms

Getting Started

As mentioned in the introduction this is a 4-week study. Each week we will be looking at a different aspect that is listed in Titus 2:3-5 under what “older women” are to teach “younger women”. The older woman is simply one who has walked the path of a Christian longer, and age isn’t necessarily a factor in that. However, often that is the case as in regard to different practical parts of the Christian life there is wisdom and knowledge gained as we age and as we have life experiences. We are going to be searching the Scripture in regard to each aspect that should mark our lives as women. We will also discuss practical ways we as a ministry can aid in living this out and hold one another accountable to living out a faithful Christian walk in a world that is often at odds with the life of a believer in Christ.

Here is the breakdown of each week:

Week 1- Reverent in Behavior— *In Awe of Our God* *Titus 2:3; Additional reading: Luke 10:38-42; Ephesians 4:14*

Week 2- Teaching What is Good (Knowing and Savoring God’s Word)

Week 3- Purpose of What is Good: To Love Our Husbands and Homes (Submission and Ministry)

Week 4- Our Witness In the World (Self-Controlled, Pure, and Kind: Hospitality)

Titus 2 Study - Week 1- Reverent in Behavior (In Awe of Our God)

Titus 2:3 — “Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine”

What is mentioned here in Titus 2 isn't merely “behavior modification”. We see a similar phrasing to Titus 2:3 in 1 Timothy 2:9-10 “Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.” The word translated *modestly* here has two implications: bashfulness toward men and reverence for God.

This depicts a reverence in behavior that is born out of being in awe of our holy God. When was the last time you truly, as Mary did in contrast to Martha, sit at the feet of your savior with a sense of awe? (Luke 10:38-42). Awe that a holy and just God would make Himself known to you. Knowing all your failings and flaws God sent His son to live a perfect life, and die on the cross so that you could experience forgiveness and redemption in Christ. Daily I am humbled as I consider how I fail Him and yet the fact that I believe and have faith in Him is evidence of His work in my life.

In many of his letters, Paul conveyed that the goal is godliness, and that comes from truly knowing Christ. Paul had experienced Christ in such a profound way and knows that one must die to the old self. The Greek word found in Titus 2:3 here is ‘*sophronizō*’ means sober minded, or to voluntarily place limitations on their own freedom. We must learn to be in such awe of Christ, that this world and its ways simply don't hold our affections.

The alternative to being in awe of Christ is to be like the world. As Christ followers it should be clear to all who we belong to. When you consider that next part— not malicious gossips, you see this stark contrast. The word translated “malicious gossips” is the Greek word *diabolos*— *One who falsely accuses and divides people without any reason*. When we seek to be divisive or speak against someone for the intent to stir up others we are behaving more like the devil, and not like a Christian. That should cause us to pause before we

speak. We are told to take every thought captive (2 Cor 10:5), to bridle our tongues (James 1:26), to have speech seasoned with grace so that it gives grace to those who hear it (Ephesians 4:29). However, often we can speak without fully thinking through our words.

In reference to the being “enslaved to much wine”, we get yet another sensing of what Paul often writes on and that is our Christian witness, not wanting to be a stumbling block for others. Also tied to sober-minded, our minds must be fully able to function and be fixed on Christ the author and perfecter of our faith. The key here is not being “enslaved”. We are no longer to be slaves conformed to this world as Paul writes:

[“]^zI appeal to you therefore, brothers, ¹ by the mercies of God, ^ato present your bodies ^bas a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.² ²^cDo not be conformed to this world, ³ but be transformed by ^cthe renewal of your mind, that by testing you may ^ediscern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:1-2

In conclusion, we should be living with the constant, conscious awareness that we are in the presence of an awesome, holy God. That all of our life is lived ‘Coram Deo’— before the face of God. God’s presence isn’t a place of dullness and drabness with no dessert table. People are watching, more importantly God is watching. This awareness should deepen our motivation to always honor and represent Him well.

Questions to Reflect on:

- 1) Read Luke 10:38-42
 - 1) Compare the two ladies
 - 2) Which of the two do you most often seem to be? If more like Martha, how can you make sure you make time to sit at Christ’s feet and listen?
- 2) Read Colossians 3:1-4 — It instructs us to keep our minds set on Christ
 - 1) How does that relate to the reverence we are to have and teach others?
 - 2) How does that help us walk daily?

- 3) **Heart Check:** How are you at guarding your speech? Are you often critical of others? If so, maybe committing these scriptures to memory can help. (Ephesians 4:29; James 1:26; Psalm 34:13—just a few not exhaustive list)
- 4) Is there any attitude or behavior you wouldn't want people to see because you know it wouldn't please the Lord? Something that does not reflect His character. Ask God's Spirit to give you strength to change.

Younger Women

- 1) What part can friendships play in our desire to live a reverent, holy life
—both negatively and positively?
- 2) What friends (younger or older) inspire you to be “reverent in behavior”?

Older Women

- 1) Older women are sometimes tempted to sit back. Why is this not a time to coast spiritually?
- 2) Younger women need friendships with older women who model the fruit of genuine relationship with God. How does your life evidence that you’re spending time with Jesus? What could help you grow in this area?

Titus 2 Study - Week 2- Teaching What is Good (Knowing and Savoring God's Word) Titus 2:3- Teaching what is good . . .

The Titus 2 mandate is sandwiched between a reminder to teach what accords with sound doctrine and a statement on purpose “that the Word of God may not be reviled”. This serves as a reminder that all that we teach and hold to must have its basis in that which is unchanging: God and His Word. Sound doctrine keeps us from being tossed “to and fro from every wave of doctrine. (Ephesians 4:14). To know what is sound we must know God’s Word. We must savor it and meditate on it regularly. With that in mind this week’s lesson is a brief guide to studying God’s Word. For some I know it may be simply a refresher course— or you may have some wisdom to share when we meet!! For others you may feel overwhelmed when you look at the vastness of 66 books in the Bible and not know where to begin, or when you do read you may not understand what it is you are reading fully. Either way, I pray this section will be beneficial!!

What is “sound doctrine”?

Sound doctrine matters— it is the complete body of truth, revealed in Scripture, that explains and defines our faith. It is the foundation for all of Christian living so making sure we understand who God is in the proper context of His Word is essential. That means seeing all of the Bible as one redemptive history. Seeing that the themes of the Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration are in all of the Bible. and that from Jesus to Revelation, there is ONE story of our great salvation!!!

Ultimately this verse talks about teaching what is “good” or honorable. To teach what is right, what is true. God’s Word is the revealed truth for in it we see Christ who is THE Way, THE Truth, and THE Life (John 14:6).

Before We Begin

We can talk a lot about technique, habits, and systems that may practically help you in reading God’s Word, but the real battle that keeps many of us from reading our Bibles is the battle within our hearts. There are many issues of the heart that often derail our Bible reading. Some of the biggest can be sin, suffering, and shame. Unconfessed, unrepented sin can hinder our desire and ability to read the Bible. Hearing from God about ways in which we’ve fallen

short of his glory and having to face our sin through the pages of Scripture can be difficult. When the weight of our sin presses in and drowns out our ability to get into God's Word, we need to remember that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). When sin, suffering, shame, or any other heart struggle keeps us away from the Word, we can take them to the Lord in prayer. Igniting our prayer life can be an effective weapon for winning the Bible-reading battle.

Ways to Read Scripture

- Familiarity- just read it!!
- Study- Dig in deeper
- Meditate on The Word- think about what you have read

The 5 Ps of Sound Study (summary chart further down)

- Study with Purpose
- Study with Perspective
- Study with Patience
- Study with Process
- Study with Prayer

Studying with Purpose

This is the Big Story of the Bible, the purpose for which it was written. Each of its 66 books contributes to telling this Big Story—a story of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration.

- Creation- introduced in Genesis 1-2: God creates all things for his glory in an orderly manner. He creates man in his own image.
- Fall- Genesis 3- Man tries to usurp God's authority, relationship with God is broken, cosmos fractured.
- Redemption- introduced immediately Genesis 3:15 the promise of salvation coming through Eve; takes shape of a people chosen by God; ultimately points toward the perfect redemptive work of Christ on the cross. The NT reinforces and assures that salvation has been accomplished, and urging us to pursue sanctification, and encourage us to hope in a future glorification.
- Restoration- seen in Revelation, God reestablishes perfect order with the creation of a new heaven and new earth.

Our task is to search for these themes as we study.

Study with Perspective

As modern day Christians we have inherited a faith that is built on the foundations of that which has come before. The Bible's historical and cultural context is there for the digging. It is hard work but is essential for right understanding and application of the text.

To gain this perspective we need to properly interpret Scripture. This can be accomplished by considering these questions:

- 1) Who wrote it?
- 2) When was it written?
- 3) To whom was it written?
- 4) In what style was it written? – Historical narrative, parable/storytelling, law, poetry, wisdom literature, prophecy
- 5) Why was it written? – We can identify this by considering its major themes and repeated ideas considering the original audience and historical and cultural context. Guards us from reading it solely for our own purposes.

Don't Panic!! It is okay to seek help to answer these questions!! A reliable study bible can be a valuable tool!! Read any introductory materials; if needed go to a commentary or look at study notes.

Study with Patience

Bible study like most skills of value requires discipline. You must have:

Patience with Yourself

- Remember that learning requires work!!
- Learning the Bible is a quest for knowledge, but it is ultimately a quest for understanding
- Don't give in to impatience it usually leads to one of two reactions:
 - o We give up
 - o We look for a shortcut

It's okay to feel confused or lost—just see it as a challenge and opportunity to learn and grow in understanding!!

Be patient as you practice the discipline of sound study. Allow the seed of the Word to germinate and grow according to God's good timing, trusting that a miraculous harvest will yield in due time.

Study with Process

The process here asks you the student, to carry the burden of not just reading, but owning the text, and then of attempting interpretation and application on your own.

3 Stages of Understanding

- 1) Comprehension asks, “what does it say?”
- 2) Interpretation asks, “What does it mean?”
- 3) Application asks, “How should it change me?”

Stage 1: Comprehension: What does it say?

Proper comprehension is what enables proper interpretation and application to occur

Tools to Build Comprehension

- 1) Make a Printed copy of the text
- 2) Read it several times
- 3) Annotation- begin marking the copy of the text and consider— repeated words, attributes of God, words you don’t understand, any key transitions (if/then, therefore, but)
- 4) If you don’t know a word— look it up in a dictionary!!
- 5) Try another translation— some keep the accuracy and yet are simply more readable— some go for literal translation

Stage 2: Interpretation: “What Does It Mean?”

Each of us individually is called to love God with our minds, meaning we should earnestly attempt to interpret the Word on our own before we read the interpretation of others.

Tools to Help Craft our Own Interpretation

- 1) Cross-References- listed in the margins or bottom of the page in your Bible; this is how we “let scripture interrupt scripture”. Look these up first to see how they add to your understanding.
- 2) Paraphrasing—check the context, any tricky words in the dictionary, cross-references, then put it in your own words. Helps you focus on what is being said. Once you do this, then consult the commentary.

Stage 3: Application— “How Should it Change Me?”

Here the hard work in the learning process translates into ACTION!

A God-centered perspective leads us to ask, “How should the text change me?” and can be answered by three subsequent questions:

- 1) What does the passage teach me about God?

- 2) How does this aspect of God's character change my view of self?
- 3) What should I do in response?

Knowledge of God that is learned through comprehension and interpretation can be applied in a way that challenges the student to be different. It is all part of us growing in sanctification, becoming more like Christ. It is a lifelong process!!

Study with Prayer

Last, but certainly not least, in fact it is the most important!

Prayer- the means by which we ask the Holy Spirit to dwell within our study time; it changes our study of God's word from the pursuit of knowledge to the pursuit of God himself. We should pray **before, during, and after** our Study of the Bible, from a sincere desire not to merely "do things the right way".

Here's an acronym PART that can be used before, during and after our Study:

Praise: glorify God for who he is and what he has done

Admit: confess to God where you have fallen short

Request: ask God to forgive your sin and meet your needs

Thank: give thanks to God for who he is and what he has done.

Summary of the 5 Ps

Study with Purpose	Understand where your text fits into the Big Story of creation-fall-redemption-restoration
Study with Perspective	Understand the archeology of your text (its historical and cultural context)
Study with Patience	Resolve not to hurry; set a realistic expectation for your pace of study, focusing on the long term
Study with Process	Begin methodically reading for comprehension, interpretation, and application
Study with Prayer	Ask the Father to help you before, during, and after your study time

Week 2- Reflection Questions

- 1) How often do you truly study God's Word?
- 2) What challenges do you face as you study God's Word? How can we pray for you in that?
- 3) Make a plan to study His Word this week. Pick a passage and use the study methods above. Let us know how it went!!

Titus 2 Study - Week 3- Purpose of What is Good: To Love Our Husbands and Homes (Submission and Ministry)

Titus 2:4-5

So when you look at the passage, there is a clear shift if we employ the Scripture interpretation methods we just discussed last week. You see a clue to that in the sort of “why” to the first part in verse 3. Older women are to teach this reverent behavior, and good teaching so— they have the ability to encourage the young women to love their husbands, their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, subject to their own husband. All of that to honor the Word of God!!

Of course, first glance at this passage can bring up several questions: What about unmarried young women? Or older women who never married, what would they have to offer/teach? What about those without kids? Does that mean a woman can’t work outside the home? Well we are going to tackle all those things as we continue on in our text in light of Scripture. At least I will attempt to hopefully answer some of those questions!!

This week we will focus on the parts of loving husband, children, and home from these verses, then we will address being pure, sensible, and kind next week. This first part I have chosen to title our ‘submission and ministry’. We see both submission and our ministry as women echoed in the mentioning of the love of husband and home. In this section I will outline various aspects of both of these and how they relate to our lives at various stages of life.

Submission

The word translated submission is seen in the verse that mentions “subject to their own husbands”, but submission is not just for those that are married. Submission is important in Christian marriage, but that is only one part of submission.

Simply put, submission is yielding to the authority of another. For those that are children of God, we are to live our lives fully submitted to the will of God. This a willing and cheerful submission that comes as we know God and trust Him.

As feminism began infiltrating the evangelical church the idea of submission became offensive to Christian women instead of central to their identity as

children of God. This is further supported by the culture around us where men are often portrayed as helpless without us. That isn't exactly what God meant when he designed us as a suitable helper. We will see this fuller later in this study.

The tragic reality of domestic abuse has tainted this word as well, and it can make some women feel weak, worthless, and vulnerable. However, it is clear as we look in Scripture submission is an essential element in the Christian life. Submission is not limited to marriage, a woman's relationship to her husband, or her role in the church, it carries much further implications.

Submission to God's Loving Rule

Godliness is the aim of every believer. As we grow in sanctification, we learn to yield our lives more fully to the Lord (2 Peter 1:3). Submission is not weakness—it is strength under the loving authority of God. The word submission is often misunderstood or abused. However, when you understand the heart of the Gospel, it becomes a beautiful and even freeing word.

Submission was God's design from the beginning. That is because our first and greatest area of submission in this life is to be to God. We are to be surrendered to Him above all else. In fact, getting that right helps direct and rightly align our lives with God's direction and purpose. Bringing our lives under His authority leads to peace, order, and joy. God's ways are not only right—they are beautiful and good. We learn to entrust our lives to His perfect plan each day, loosening our grip on control and resting in His love.

Learning Submission

Submission is learned as we daily choose God's way over our own (Luke 9:23-25).

Even Jesus prayed to obey (Matthew 26:39; Hebrews 5:7), showing that submission requires prayerful dependence. His reverent obedience reveals that the will of God is more valuable than life itself.

Submission begins early. As children learn to obey their parents, they take their first steps in understanding God's order. Teaching obedience and respect for authority prepares them to submit to God later in life.

Our Problem and Christ's Example

Our natural instinct is to please ourselves, but Jesus shows us a better way. He said, “I do nothing on my own...I always do what pleases Him” (John 8:27-30). Following His example requires humility, prayer, and trust.

Submission in Marriage

So while we are first and foremost to be submitted and surrendered to God, if we are married, we must learn what that means in our marriages. This is something that once again has been lost in our culture today. I love the word in Scripture in regard to what a Godly wife is to be—an ezer. It is a beautiful picture of the Gospel, and that is what our marriages should be. A reflection of the unity of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The image of that word used there is of a mighty warrior, praying for our husbands, longing to see the good, and to help them be the man of God they are designed to be. This isn't a lowly position, it is an essential one.

Submission in marriage is often misunderstood, but Scripture gives a clear and life-giving picture of what it truly means. First, **submission is not to men in general**. God's Word instructs wives to submit specifically to their own husbands as an act of obedience to the Lord, not as a statement of inferiority or subservience to all men (Ephesians 5:22–23).

Submission does not mean inferiority. Both men and women are created in the image of God and share equal worth, redemption, and access to His grace. They are co-heirs with Christ, equally loved, gifted, and valued in His kingdom.

Submission is never forced compliance. It is not the result of manipulation or control but a willing, joyful act of obedience to God. True submission flows from trust in the Lord's goodness and the desire to honor Him within marriage.

Submission is not mindless. Godly wives are called to be wise, thoughtful helpers who contribute perspective, discernment, and counsel with humility and love. Their insight is a vital part of the partnership God designed.

Submission is not blind trust. A wife's first allegiance is always to God. She follows her husband's leadership as he follows Christ but is never called to participate in sin or compromise her obedience to God's Word.

Finally, **submission is never an excuse for abuse.** Scripture commands husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the church—with sacrificial care

and honor. Abuse of any kind violates God's design and is never justified by Scripture.

God holds husbands accountable to lead with love and wives accountable to respond with respect. It is with that in mind that a godly wife serves as an *ezer*—a strong helper and warrior—who prays for her husband and supports his spiritual leadership with joy and faithfulness. In this way she displays the love of Christ to her husband that overflows into the life at home and our witness to the world.

Renewing the Mind

To walk in submission is to embrace God's good design for order and peace. We must **reclaim the word “submission”** as something beautiful and biblical, **resist cultural voices** that elevate self-interest over obedience, and **return the Gospel** to the center of our daily lives. As we follow **Christ's example through prayer, trust, and surrender**, we find that submission is not loss—it is the way of Christ, the posture of godliness, and the path to true freedom.

It is in this joyful submission to God that we find our calling and our ministry as women that is the next part we will look at as we continue in our passage in Titus 2 and consider the love of our children, and what it is to be “workers at home”.

Our Ministry-Workers at Home

In this passage we see what is translated “workers at home”. The Greek word here is *oikouros*. It is a combination of the word *oikos*, meaning a house and *ouros*—a keeper; keeper at home. So the ESV has it translated quite literally. This “keeper at home” is to look after domestic affairs with prudence and care (Titus 2:5). The term portrays a woman who actively manages and labors within the household sphere, emphasizing diligence rather than idleness. By including this among the virtues, Paul elevates domestic stewardship to a matter of public testimony: if the home is neglected, “the word of God” risks reproach.

In my study on this passage it was mentioned how early Christian writers reflected Titus 2:5 in their household codes. Writings such as the Didache (c. A.D. 100) encouraged believers to share family responsibilities, affirming the spiritual value of domestic work. Clement of Alexandria likewise praised wives who managed their homes as an expression of *agape*, teaching that well-ordered households strengthen the moral life of the church.

Theology of the Household

The term *oikoupyōç*—translated “working at home”—does not impose restriction but rather establishes priority. Scripture affirms that a woman’s first stewardship is her household, yet it does not prohibit vocational or community engagement beyond it. Instead, it calls believers to discern how every pursuit—whether professional, educational, or ministry-related—affects the health and witness of the family. The household becomes the measure by which external responsibilities are weighed, ensuring that all work flows from, and contributes to, the spiritual welfare of those under one’s care.

Pastors and church leaders, therefore, bear a responsibility to uphold the dignity and value of homemaking as genuine ministry. Faithful care of the home is not a lesser calling but a vital expression of obedience to God and service to others. Churches should offer resources, teaching, and encouragement that equip families to flourish—spiritually, emotionally, and materially. When leaders affirm the sacred nature of daily faithfulness, they elevate the unseen labors that sustain the household of God.

Scripture presents a balanced vision of womanhood that honors both domestic and public contributions. *Proverbs 31* celebrates a woman who tends her household with diligence while exercising creativity, wisdom, and initiative in business and ministry. Her strength lies in the harmony between her inner life, her family care, and her outward endeavors. *Titus 2:5* safeguards this balance by rooting every vocation—whether home-centered or public-facing—in the integrity and testimony of the household.

Ultimately, the calling of “*oikouros*” reflects God’s design for the home as a living center of gospel life. Far from diminishing women’s influence, it magnifies their essential role in shaping faith, cultivating virtue, and preserving the church’s witness. When the household is tended with joyful diligence and devotion to Christ, it becomes a powerful instrument through which the gospel is displayed to the next generation and to the watching world.

This is also where we as women can help one another and once again highlights the importance of Paul’s instructions in *Titus 2*. We see then how *Titus 2* can provide a framework for discipleship that is both relational and practical. The spiritual formation of women in the church flourishes through intentional mentoring relationships where mature believers teach and model godliness to younger women. This pattern encompasses not only theological truth but also the daily habits of managing a home with grace, wisdom, and diligence. By passing on both conviction and competence, older women help the next

generation understand that faithfulness in the ordinary rhythms of life is a vital expression of worship.

Closing Reflection

Renewing the Mind

- Reclaim the word “submission” as beautiful and biblical.
- Resist cultural voices that elevate self-interest over obedience.
- Return the gospel to the center of daily life.
- Remember: submission is not about loss—it’s the path to freedom and joy in Christ.

Discussion/ Study Questions

- How has culture shaped your view of “submission”?
- What does joyful submission to God look like in daily life?
- How can women encourage one another toward this kind of strength
- Where do you sense God calling you to surrender control this week?
- How might your home or relationships become a clearer reflection of the gospel?
- To the married ladies: In what ways can we actively *help* our husbands pursue godliness?

Titus 2 Study - Week 4- Titus 2:5

Our Witness In the World (Self-Controlled/Sensible, Pure, and Kind)

“...train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be **self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive** to their own husbands, **that the word of God may not be reviled.**” (Titus 2:4–5, ESV)

Study Goal

Help women see how the gospel forms a life that is **self-controlled (sensible), pure, and kind**, and practice concrete rhythms that display Christ at home, church, and community.

Big Idea

Sound doctrine produces a beautiful life. The Spirit uses ordinary, everyday obedience—self-control, purity, and kindness—to protect the honor of God’s Word (Titus 2:5).

Key Terms (Quick Word Study)

- **Sensible / Self-controlled — *sōphrōn* (σώφρων):** from *sōs* (“sound/ healthy”) + *phrēn* (“mind”). Describes a sound mind that governs desires with proper restraint; disciplined, balanced, discreet. It stands as the **antithesis of *hubristēs*** (“insolent, overbearing”; cf. Rom. 1:30), whose contempt of others breaks out in wantonness and outrage.
- **Pure — *hagnos* (ἀγνός):** free from moral defilement; chaste in body and motive; single-hearted devotion to God. Related verb *hagnizō* (“to purify”): John 11:55; Acts 21:24, 26; 24:18; James 4:8; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:3. Joseph provides a living picture of consecration in Genesis 39—he reverences the sanctity of marriage and refuses sin against God.
- **Kind / Good — *agathos* (ἀγαθός):** benevolent, profitable, **usefully good**—goodness that benefits others, not merely “admirable” (*kalos*). Related noun *agathōsynē* (Gal. 5:22): an **energized goodness** that acts—serving,

correcting, even admonishing for another's good (cf. Rom. 15:14; Gal. 6:1). This kindness speaks for the wronged (Prov. 31:8–9) and carries holy zeal (see Jesus' temple cleansing, Matt. 21:12–13). It aligns with Romans 12's call to be zealous in doing good (Rom. 12:10–21). For our final week, we'll focus on three virtues that shape gospel-hearted mentoring:

sensible (self-controlled), pure, and kind. To instruct one another and practice loving accountability, we need a fuller grasp of what Scripture means by these words. The Greek terms deepen our understanding and help us honor God's Word as we live at home, in the church, and in our community. Lived together, these virtues become a quiet, compelling witness that sets us apart and invites others to ask about the hope we hold (1 Pet. 3:15). We are Christ's ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20)—and by His grace, our everyday conduct points people to Him.

Sensible/Self-Controlled

The first word to consider is **sensible**—the Greek **sōphrōn** (σώφρων), from *sōs* (“sound, healthy”) and *phrēn* (“mind, inner life”). Think of it as a clear, steady heart-and-mind that helps us respond rather than react. **Sōphrōn** isn't cold willpower; it's grace-shaped good sense—truth calming our thoughts, guiding our desires, and showing up in everyday choices. It's what steadies our words when we're tired, keeps our desires in their proper place, and helps us choose what is loving over what is loud. Scripture holds it up wherever maturity matters (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 2:2, 5–6). And it's the opposite of **hubristēs** (“insolent, overbearing”; Rom 1:30): where hubris pushes self to the front and spills into contempt, **sōphrōn** makes space for humility, discretion, and peace.

This single word sets a high standard—one none of us can meet apart from the gospel of Jesus Christ. The call to a self-controlled life is really an invitation to know, love, and serve Christ day by day. It isn't meant to leave us discouraged or exhausted; God's grace is truly sufficient. Yes, self-control requires effort, but in the light of His grace it becomes hopeful work: the Spirit helps us grow where we are weak. If this word reminds you of places you fell short this week, you're not alone—and there is abundant grace in Christ. We don't “sin so that grace may abound” (Rom 6:1), but we do walk this road with grace for the journey as He makes us more like Himself. There will be stumbles, and we can extend ourselves the same patient grace God gives us, even as we keep learning. Without self-control, we're more vulnerable to the pull of the world, the flesh, and the devil; with it, we become freer and more useful for His kingdom. As

Christian women, then, we make every effort—resting in Christ, relying on the Spirit, and taking small, faithful steps—to grow in this beautiful discipline.

A sophron (*Pronounced so-phrone*) lifestyle starts with having a mind that is set on Christ—the transformed mind, this spills over into every aspect of our lives. Instead of appearing impulsive, irrational, or out-of-control we are to learn to have our minds renewed. This is where we must know God’s Word, it is our source of restraint that we may as Paul reminds us “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good, and acceptable, and perfect.” Romans 12:2. Simply put we must lean on Jesus for the power to put these truths into practice. In our own power and ability we will fail.

Thankfully, God has given us means of grace—prayer, the Word, and the church. As we move through ordinary days, we should examine our actions, words, and reactions and ask honest questions: Are they excessive, compulsive, or unstable? Am I *sōphrōn*—self-controlled and sober-minded (Titus 2:5)? Are there times when I’m more settled than others? What’s different in those moments—sleep, pace, prayer, people, inputs? Bring those patterns to the Lord: “Search me, O God” (Psalm 139:23–24). Surrender the triggers, name them in prayer, and ask for the Spirit’s help, because self-control is fruit He bears in us (Galatians 5:22–23; 2 Timothy 1:7). Let the Word renew your thinking (Romans 12:2), and aim your mind toward what is true and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8). And because we’re called to “stir up one another to love and good works,” seek out sisters who will check in, pray, and encourage steadfastness (Hebrews 10:24–25).

Pure

The word translated “pure” is the Greek *hagnos*—chaste and undefiled, free from moral or ritual stain. Biblically, it means more than avoiding obvious sin; it points to a **single-minded devotion to God** that shapes motives, thoughts, words, and actions. A related verb, *hagnizō* (“to purify”), is used for both ritual and moral cleansing (John 11:55; Acts 21:24, 26; 24:18; James 4:8; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:3). The New Testament also ties purity to wise, steady judgment and focused worship: “whatever is **pure**” (Philippians 4:8) and wisdom that is “first **pure**” (James 3:17).

What *hagnos* looks like in real life

- **Heart:** undivided affection for Christ; not double-minded (cf. James 1:8).
- **Mind:** filters thoughts, media, and inputs through Philippians 4:8.
- **Speech:** truthful, clean, and peaceable (James 3:17–18).
- **Relationships:** honors others' dignity and marriage covenants (Hebrews 13:4).
- **Worship:** sincerity over show—purity before God, not mere appearance (Matthew 5:8).

Joseph offers a clear Old Testament picture of purity in action (Genesis 39): he honors God's design for marriage and refuses sin, not from prudishness but from God-centered loyalty ("How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"). Purity is therefore more than saying "no" to temptation; it is a wholehearted "yes" to God.

The call to purity touches every part of life—what we do and say, how we think, and the attitudes and motives beneath our actions. Paul urges us to "cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit" (2 Corinthians 7:1). No impurity is insignificant: hidden, "respectable" sins of the heart are no less defiling than obvious sins of the body. Christian purity stands in stark contrast to the unbelieving world (Titus 1:15–16), where people are "slaves to various passions and pleasures" (Titus 3:3). But those who belong to Christ have been saved—washed, renewed, and purified (Titus 3:5–7). Now, by the Spirit's power, we get to walk in that newness and pursue a purity He works in us.

Christ calls us to lives that shine (Matthew 5:16). Purity of heart and life—expressed in our speech, integrity, relationships, and modesty—becomes a living witness that the gospel has real power (Philippians 2:15; Titus 2:5,10). In a world darkened by sin, this quiet brightness exposes emptiness and draws people toward Jesus, "the light of the world" (John 8:12). Our holiness is not performance; it is the fruit of grace at work within us (1 Peter 3:1–2; Galatians 5:22–23).

Kindness

In all things, kindness should be evident in the life of a believer. This isn't a passive thing, or to be portrayed as being a weakness. This is a strong kindness, much like the "meekness" mentioned in the beatitudes. This is an active kindness or "active good". Biblical kindness—*agathos* (ἀγαθός)—is

goodness that tangibly benefits others. It's more than what appears admirable (*kalos*); it actively helps, protects, and strengthens. The related term *agathōsynē* in Galatians 5:22 describes a Spirit-energized goodness that moves toward people for their true good, even when that means gentle correction or admonishment (Rom. 15:14; Gal. 6:1). This kind of kindness serves real needs, speaks up for the vulnerable and the wronged (Prov. 31:8–9), and carries holy zeal like Jesus in the temple—love willing to disrupt comfort to guard God's honor and others' good (Matt. 21:12–13). It aligns with Romans 12's call to be zealous in doing good—honoring one another, blessing opponents, and overcoming evil with good (Rom. 12:10–21). In short, *agathos* is love in work boots: truthful, courageous, and practical, seeking another's highest good before God, even when it is costly.

Once again, each of us should face some tough questions: Am I a kind woman—in heart attitudes as well as outward actions? At times, instead of kindness and goodness, what we see reflected back is harshness and criticism—barking and berating, touchiness and irritability. We may try to justify ourselves. But if we truly search our hearts and motives, were we doing all with a kind heart?

Kindness—true goodness—sometimes looks like tireless effort and sleepless nights. The goal of all our kindness is to show others the goodness of Christ. That purpose should shape every interaction and guide all that we do and say. We aren't to demand our own way. In mentoring relationships, older women are to teach younger women the value of kindness. Younger women need to learn that people matter more than completing tasks. Wherever we go, we should leave a trail of goodness and grace. “She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue” (Proverbs 31:26). For me, I often feel I fail at this—especially at home. It's easy, while managing a busy household, to give in to irritability under the nagging demands of routine duties.

Kindness must begin in our homes and in our closest relationships, but it shouldn't stay there. Within the family of God, this kindness should be evident: “As we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10). Many view church as a place to show up once a week and invest an hour into a spiritual “savings account.” But Jesus intended His church to be a family—a household. Not a place, but a people who live out the gospel daily: redeemed men and women who gather regularly for worship, encouragement, instruction, and service. Our relationships in Christ's body should be marked by loyalty and kindness. That goes beyond asking, “How are you?” on Sunday and expecting a quick “fine, thanks.” Most people aren't fine, but they answer that way because they doubt others truly want to hear more. We must be genuinely kind with one another—“Let love be genuine” (Romans 12:9)—asking sincere questions and showing real interest. If

you find yourself slipping into pretense, ask why. Few things hurt more than pouring out your heart and feeling brushed off with mere platitudes like “it is what it is.”

Beyond the church, we must extend this kindness to the poor and needy—and even, radically, to our enemies. Always remember: if Christ had not shown kindness to us, none of us would have a single blessing. We should actively seek the good of those who can’t repay us and even those who may dislike us. Christ’s kindness toward us was not based on our treatment of Him or any worthiness in us. The kindness we share is simply an extension of the kindness He has lavishly given. Kind women—young and old—paint a living picture of the gospel, a kindness through which God can bring true transformation.

Conclusion

All these graces are Spirit-produced (Gal. 5:22–23) and trained in community (Titus 2:3–4). Let us yield to the Holy Spirit’s shaping and guidance, and do so within the life of Christian community—all to the glory of God.

Discussion Questions

1. Where do you most need *sōphrōn* this week—mouth, mood, media, money, or minutes? What one small change could help?
2. Purity begins in motives. Where do your motives get divided (approval, control, comfort)? What would a single-hearted “yes” to God look like there?
3. Think of a time “kindness” required courage (advocacy, correction, costly service). What helped you move toward good rather than avoid discomfort?
4. Home question: When do you tend to become irritable or brusque? What upstream practices (sleep, prayer, planning margin) reduce that?
5. Church family: How can we make our congregation feel like a household, not a weekly crowd? What *kind* practices would change the tone?
6. What “respectable sins” (impatience, sarcasm, cynicism) quietly erode purity and kindness in you? How will you address one this week?

Take-Home (Participant Handout)

This Week's Focus: Sensible • Pure • Kind

Practice & Plan

- **Sensibility Rule of Life:** choose one limit (screen time, spending, bedtime) and one discipline (Scripture intake, prayer block, weekly planning).
- **One Limit:** _____
- **One Discipline:** _____
- **Purity Plan:** identify one thought/voice to reject and one Scripture to replace it. Add one accountability check-in.
 - Thought/Voice to Reject
 - Scripture to Replace it
- **Kindness Map:** list 3 people/places to bless this week (home, church, neighbor/work). Define the *useful good* you'll do.
- **Three People/Places & Acts of Useful Good :**
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

Memory Verse: “She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.” — ***Proverbs 31:26***

Prayer Prompt: “Lord, train my desires. Make me sensible in choices, pure in heart, and kind in action for the honor of your Word.”

The “One Another” Passages

The phrase "one another" is derived from the Greek word *allelon* which means "one another, each other; mutually, reciprocally." It occurs 100 times in the New Testament. Approximately 59 of those occurrences are specific commands teaching us how (and how not) to relate to one another. Obedience to those commands is imperative. It forms the basis for all true Christian community, and has a direct impact on our witness to the world (John 13:35). In addition to *allelon*, the Bible uses other words and phrases to instruct us how to relate to others. With that in mind, the following list is not exhaustive, and primarily focuses on the use of *allelon*.

POSITIVE COMMANDS

Love one another (John 13:34 - *This command occurs at least 16 times*)
Be devoted to one another (Romans 12:10)
Honor one another **above yourselves** (Romans 12:10)
Live in harmony with one another (Romans 12:16)
Build up one another (Romans 14:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:11)
Be likeminded towards one another (Romans 15:5)
Accept one another (Romans 15:7)
Admonish one another (Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16) **Greet** one another (Romans 16:16)
Care for one another (1 Corinthians 12:25)
Serve one another (Galatians 5:13)
Bear one another's **burdens** (Galatians 6:2)
Forgive one another (Ephesians 4:2, 32; Colossians 3:13)
Be patient with one another (Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13)
Speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15, 25)
Be kind and compassionate to one another (Ephesians 4:32)
Speak to one another **with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs** (Ephesians 5:19)
Submit to one another (Ephesians 5:21, 1 Peter 5:5)
Consider others better than yourselves (Philippians 2:3)
Look to the interests of one another (Philippians 2:4)
Bear with one another (Colossians 3:13)
Teach one another (Colossians 3:16)
Comfort one another (1 Thessalonians 4:18)
Encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
Exhort one another (Hebrews 3:13)

Stir up [provoke, stimulate] one another to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24)

Show hospitality to one another (1 Peter 4:9)

Employ the gifts that God has given us for the benefit of one another (1 Peter 4:10)

Clothe yourselves with humility towards one another (1 Peter 5:5)

Pray for one another (James 5:16)

Confess your faults to one another (James 5:16)

NEGATIVE COMMANDS (how *not* to treat one another)

Do not lie to one another (Colossians 3:9) Stop passing judgment on one another (Romans 14:13) If you keep on biting and devouring each other...you'll be destroyed by each other (Galatians 5:15) Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other (Galatians 5:26) Do not slander one another (James 4:11) Don't grumble against each other (James 5:9) We do all this because we are in a real sense "members of one another" (Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:25).

Sharing Your Story

An important part of growing together is getting to know one another's stories. These questions can help aid in that conversation and taking things beyond small talk and prayer requests into something deeper. I would love for each of you to think through these questions and at some point share. God can do amazing things when we open up our lives to one another. As you consider them and share remember as a Christian we are not defined by our past actions, but Christ's redemptive work in our lives.

1. How did you become a Christian? If you're not sure if you're a Christian, what keeps you from believing in Jesus?
2. What ministry, person, or book has God used to deepen your faith?
3. Is there a particular verse, passage, or book of Scripture that you would consider significant in your life? Why?
4. What ways do you enjoy serving in ministry? What would you consider your spiritual gifts? How have you seen God prepare you for the ministry he has called you to do?
5. What was your family like? How does your relationship with your family members impact or influence your relationship with God and others?
6. If you're single, do you live alone or have a roommate? Who are the people you primarily live life with? What are some of the struggles of singleness you've experienced, and what are some of the joys? If you're married, how did you meet your husband? How would you describe your marriage? What struggles have you gone through or do you currently face?
7. What sin patterns do you struggle to overcome? Do you have unconfessed sin in your life that you need to address?
8. What truth about God supports you in times of struggle or trial? What trials have affected your life and how have you received comfort from the Lord in them?
9. How has knowing Jesus made a difference in your life? How would you describe your affection for him at this point in your life—vibrant, warm, lukewarm, cold, indifferent, angry or fearful?
10. How would you like to grow in your faith in the coming year? What particular area would you like to see progress?

Additional Resources

Books

- *Growing Together: Taking Mentoring Beyond Small Talk and Prayer Requests* by Melissa Kruger
- *A Woman After God's Own Heart* by Elizabeth George
- *Disciplines of a Godly Woman* by Barbara Hughes
- *Spiritual Mothering* by Susan Hunt
- *Adorned* by Nancy Wolgemuth
- *Risen Motherhood*
- *Missional Motherhood* by Gloria Furman
- *Women of the Word* by Jen Wilkin (how to study God's Word)
- *Knowing God* by J.I. Packer

Study Helps

- Reformation Study Bible Crossway
- Key Word Study Bible (NRSV)
- ESV Study Bible

Devotionals

Thistlebend Ministries thistlebend.org (Daily Email Devotional/Bible Studies)
Pilgrims Under Pressure