

## Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 207

### Titus – Part 2

**Note: This is a three-page blog. You may want to print out the PDF version.**

#### Teaching Various Groups

##### Regarding Older Men

***2<sup>2</sup> Tell the older men to be serious, sensible, self-controlled, and sound in their trust, love, and perseverance.***

Older men are to strive toward four characteristics. The fourth characteristic is split into three. They aim for soundness in **trust** (remember that Sterns always translates **Faith** with **Trust**), **love** for others, and **endurance** (or perseverance).

##### Regarding Older Women

***3 Likewise, tell the older women to behave the way people leading a holy life should. They shouldn't be slanderers or slaves to excessive drinking. They should teach what is good,***

The teaching in these verses is practical and focuses on the domestic sphere. **Sha'ul** emphasizes that **older women** can help model what it means to be a wife and mother to young women.

***4 thus, training the younger women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled and pure, to take good care of their homes and submit to their husbands. In this way, God's message will not be brought into disgrace.***

##### Regarding Younger Men

***6 Similarly, urge the young men to be self-controlled, 7 and in everything set them an example yourself by doing what is good. When you are teaching, have integrity and be serious,***

**Young men** are to be **self-controlled**. The **Greek** word is **sophron**, whose lexical meaning is "**prudent, sensible, self-controlled**." The word is found in the instructions for older men (v. 2, "**sensible**"), young women (v. 5, "**self-controlled**"), and young men. Therefore, **young men** were to exhibit **good works, integrity, and dignity**.

***8 let everything you say be so wholesome that an opponent will be put to shame because he will have nothing bad to say about us.***

In these verses (5, 8 & 10), essential statements are made about the desired result of "gospel living." Such living keeps us from providing a basis for the **Gospel** to be slandered and highlights its attractiveness.

##### Regarding Slaves

***9 Tell slaves to submit to their masters in everything, to give satisfaction without talking back 10 or pilfering. On the contrary, they should demonstrate complete faithfulness consistently, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Deliverer more attractive.***

As elsewhere in the letters to **Timothy** and **Titus**, the exact nature of these **debates** and **quarrels** is unclear (e.g., 1:10-14). The point is that these **disputes** were **worthless**.

## Basis For Instruction

***<sup>11</sup> For God's grace, which brings deliverance, has appeared to all people. <sup>12</sup> It teaches us to renounce godlessness and worldly pleasures, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives now, in this age; <sup>13</sup> while continuing to expect the blessed fulfillment of our certain hope, which is the appearing of the Sh'khinah of our great God and the appearing of our Deliverer, Yeshua the Messiah.***

This paragraph provides the theological basis for the lifestyle commended in verses 1–10. **Messianics** should live sanctified lives because the grace of **God** that saves us also instructs us to live in a new way. A person cannot claim to be a recipient of **God's** saving grace if he is not also a trainee in the lifestyle made possible by grace.

***<sup>14</sup> He gave himself up on our behalf to free us from all violation of Torah and purify for himself a people who would be his own, eager to do good. <sup>15</sup> These are the things you should say. Encourage and rebuke with full authority; don't let anyone look down on you.***

This verse is an unmistakable call for authoritative teaching in the **Kehilah**.

## The Christian Life

### Need for Righteous Living

***<sup>3</sup> <sup>1</sup> Remind people to submit to the government and its officials, obey them, be ready to do any honorable kind of work, <sup>2</sup> to slander no one, avoid quarreling, be friendly, and behave gently towards everyone.***

The **Greek** word used here, **blasphēmō**, describes speaking against someone to harm his or her reputation. **Believers** will ruin their own reputation if they seek to ruin the reputation of others.

### Grace Requires Good Deeds

These verses provide the doctrinal basis for the teaching in verses 1-2.

***<sup>3</sup> For at one time, we too were foolish and disobedient, deceived and enslaved by a variety of passions and pleasures. We spent our lives in evil and envy; people hated us, and we hated each other. <sup>4</sup> But when the kindness and love for mankind of God our Deliverer was revealed,***

The words **goodness of God and His love for mankind** starkly contrast to the description of lost humanity in verse 3. The difference is due to the appearance of **God our Savior, Yeshua HaMashiach**.

***<sup>5</sup> he delivered us. It was not on the ground of any righteous deeds we had done, but on the ground of his own mercy. He did it by means of the mikveh of rebirth and the renewal brought about by the Ruach HaKodesh,***

**Salvation** comes **not by works** but through the washing of **regeneration** and **renewal** by the **Ruach HaKodesh**. Some interpreters have understood this as saying that baptism ("the washing") causes salvation, but in the context, human deeds are clearly downplayed, and the emphasis is on divine action and initiative. The washing described here is the spiritual cleansing symbolized outwardly by water baptism.

*<sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us generously through Yeshua the Messiah, our Deliverer. <sup>7</sup> He did it so that by His grace we might come to be considered righteous by God and become heirs, with the certain hope of eternal life. <sup>8</sup> You can trust what I have just said, and I want you to speak with confidence about these things, so that those who have put their trust in God may apply themselves to doing good deeds. These are both good in themselves and valuable to the community. <sup>7</sup> He did it so that by his grace we might come to be considered righteous by God and become heirs, with the certain hope of eternal life. <sup>8</sup> You can trust what I have just said, and I want you to speak with confidence about these things, so that those who have put their trust in God may apply themselves to doing good deeds. These are both good in themselves and valuable to the community.*

## Quarreling Unprofitable

*<sup>9</sup> But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, quarrels, and fights about the Torah; because they are worthless and futile. <sup>10</sup> Warn a divisive person once, then a second time; and after that, have nothing more to do with him. <sup>11</sup> You may be sure that such a person has been perverted and is sinning: he stands self-condemned.*

*Controversies, genealogies, quarrels, and fights about the Torah.* A congregation leader cannot tolerate divisiveness in a group that is charged with "*doing good deeds*" (v. 8) by the power of the **Ruach HaKodesh** (v. 5); the unity for which the **Messiah** prayed (Yochanan 17:21) is essential if the group is serious and dedicated.

## Concluding Thoughts

### Personal Matters

*<sup>12</sup> When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me in Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. <sup>13</sup> Do your best to help Zenas the Torah expert and Apollos with their arrangements for travelling, so that they will lack nothing.*

Apparently, Paul had not decided which of the two men to send to Crete to replace Titus, or when. Before that, Paul was sending Zenas and Apollos through Crete, perhaps with the letter.

*<sup>14</sup> And have our people learn to apply themselves to doing good deeds that meet genuine needs, so that they will not be unproductive.*

Having emphasized the importance of **good works** throughout the letter and having just called for the assistance of fellow laborers (v. 13), Paul paused once more to emphasize the importance of good works. The opportunity to assist Zenas and Apollos was another example of how Titus could be involved in "good works."

## Benediction

*<sup>15</sup> All who are with me send you greetings. Give our greetings to our friends in the faith.*

*Grace be with you all. <sup>1</sup>*

In our next post, we will examine **Sha'ul's Second Letter to Timothy**.

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<sup>1</sup> Titus 2:2-3:15.