

One Missionary's Admonition to Another

by James Jennings

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being a model of good works, integrity, dignity, and sound speech in teaching, drawing from the advice given by an older missionary to a younger missionary. The focus is on living a life consistent with the doctrine preached, showcasing humility, compassion, and Christ-like character to impact others. The goal is to shut the mouths of opponents through a life that reflects the truth of the Gospel and to be a living example of the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

Scripture: Titus 2:7, 1 Timothy 4:16, Matthew 7:21, Hebrews 13:7, 1 Peter 2:21, 1 Thessalonians 4:12

Topics: "Modeling Good Works", "Living Out the Gospel"

Description

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Transcript

I want to look right now at advice from an older missionary to a younger missionary. That's what I want to deal with, but before I have you figure out my text for me, I want to make a statement. And before I read this quote, there's a quote I ran into yesterday, and I thought this is pretty weighty and pretty encouraging for the local church, and so I wanted to share it with you all, especially in view of the fact that I know at times in our own church, in the history of our church, there are some of you who feel that you kind of fall into the wrong condemnation that you're a second-class Christian if you don't go to the mission field.

And I can't count how many times I've heard that over the last 15 years. And I've always wanted to be very sympathetic towards anyone who feels that, because is that a burden from the Lord or I as one of the shepherds? Have I had anything to do with putting some wrong pressure on a member in the church? The reality is by God's design, the majority of people in the local church are not designed by God to go forth globally to the mission field. And if you're not secure in that reality that God's designed you to be a part of the home base, if that's what God has designed you to be, you've got to get to the point, be able to trust God with that, and it's okay.

Because that's how God has made you. That is a vital point. If you don't get to that point, you're basically accusing God of being a bad designer.

And your real problem is ultimately with the Lord. And so I immensely appreciate Addernam Judson. Who knows who Addernam Judson is? Yeah, well used of God missionary.

Right? And I saw this just the other day and I thought, wow, this is just so encouraging. He's making a point near the end of his life to affirm something is true for those who end up staying. Right? Who don't end up actually going.

And this is in his last public appearance in America in 1846. He was at a mission prayer gathering. And I guess they didn't have speaker systems, so he prepared a statement for another guy to read it because his voice couldn't do that.

And listen to what he says. Some would say, how can I, unqualified and encumbered as I am, arise and go forth to all the world and proclaim the Gospel? So that's kind of people would ask that. Obviously they feel like I want to go.

Judson says, please keep in mind that all great public undertakings are accomplished by a combination of various agencies. In commerce and in war, for instance, some individuals and groups are necessarily employed at home and some abroad. Some at the headquarters and some on distant expeditions.

But however differently employed and in whatever places, they are all interested and all share the glory and the gain. So in the missionary enterprise, the work to be accomplished is the universal preaching of the Gospel and the conversion of the whole world to the Christian faith. And in order to this, some must go and some must send and sustain them that go.

How can they hear without a preacher and how can they preach unless they be sent? Now listen to this. Those who remain at home and labor to send and sustain those that go are as really employed in the work and do as really obey the Savior's command as those who go in their own persons. You hear that? Judson recognized that.

I want you all to recognize that. You are as much involved and employed in the command of going unto the nations if you're designed by your Father in Heaven to be here part of the home base and you need to be trusting the Lord in that reality. You can truly obey the Savior's command of the Great Commission even here.

And to use this illustration, it'd be a shame if at a time in a war, if everyone felt the pressure that they all had to be on the front lines. What would happen in a battle if everyone thought they had to be on the front lines? We would have lost every war because you have to have the supply chain back at home. And many of you heard of the financial needs a month ago, right? I think we were 13,000 short or something in that month.

Well, praise God this past month, we were a few thousand over what our commitments are and the Lord provided. And that's a big deal. And you know what? That's you all playing a part in the supply chain of sending forth the gospel.

And as I was thinking about this, I've been thinking about missions a lot lately. A lot of it's just because of the books I'm reading and the biographies and different conversations with Clayton and others who have missions much on their mind. But how many missionaries did the church at Philippi ever send? How many is it recorded that the church ever actually sent? If you read the whole letter and you read everything you got, you don't come away with a sense that that church really sent many missionaries.

But what did that church do that was absolutely them playing part in this great commission? Say again? Yeah, they were the supply chain, right? Philippians 4.15, Paul said, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving except you only. Even in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs once and again. And so like Judson, Adonai Judson, the Apostle Paul too, he saw this church as really employed in the work of the gospel, although their main part was the supply chain.

And if that's God's design for you, is to be part of the supply chain, don't think that's in any way less spiritual than those who go. And my wife shared after the end of the women's time yesterday, how Don even expressed that to all of the women, just so thankful for you all support that they can go forth and tell of the good news of Jesus Christ. So be thankful to God that we have the privileges of a church to both send and support laborers abroad.

What a miraculous reality. All right. Well, now I want to just state that because I read that quote and I felt like it was impactful and I want to encourage you brethren here in whatever way I can as one of your shepherds.

Now, stating all of this matters to me because the topic I want to look at could almost make you feel like this isn't for you if I'm dealing with an older missionary giving advice to a younger missionary. But I want to trust you'll see by the end of this that this is for all of us. So let me pray.

Father, Lord, we thank you for your immense goodness. Lord, we thank you for all that you've allowed us to do as a church to be, Lord, a part of this sustaining supply chain, Lord, both in sending personnel to the front lines and Lord, at the same time, different ones laboring in the factory back here to send out equipment to those who are on the front lines and maybe in a greater place of suffering. But Lord, we're all suffering together, entering in this great commission.

Lord, help us, help us to send qualified people out there to the field. Lord, be with Clayton and Don and their family and Evan. Lord, these are those that are next up, that are going forth, Lord willing, to foreign soil.

And Lord, help us do our part to sustain them and to be a support to them in every way that we can. And so, Lord, I just ask that you would bless this time right now as we look at your Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.

All right, well, I want you all to find my passage for me. Where in the New Testament does an older missionary write to a fellow missionary and exhorts him specifically on advice pertaining to his mission post? Okay, why do you say Titus? Okay, no, that's the right answer. Now, go to Titus 2. Look, I had the book of Titus memorized as a young Christian and I didn't even know, I didn't even look at a pronoun in the right way and I missed this.

I missed this for years from the book of Titus. Maybe you haven't, but I had it memorized and I still, I mean, it shows you can memorize something and not even get it. And if you don't know, in the whole book of Titus, verse 5 of chapter 1, Paul is speaking to Titus.

He left him at Crete to put what remained into order and Titus is one of Paul's assistants, an apostolic representative on the mission team. Titus is not a pastor. He is laboring with Paul.

You read in multiple places, Paul sends him these different places, even Paul near the end of his life. He says Titus has gone to Dalmatia, right? And so that's how Titus is operating. This is not, he's not a pastor

at Crete.

He's a missionary representative there on behalf of the apostle Paul to see elders raised up into this church. So that's who he's speaking to in this letter. And we got to remember that, right? Who is he talking to? Because when you get to chapter 2, he's talking about all the sound doctrine to teach those at Crete, right? He says in chapter 2, verse 1, as for you, teach with the cords of sound doctrine.

And he goes through this list, right? Older men, older women. And at some point in here, it doesn't say in your Bible into the missionaries, but that's exactly what he does. Which verse is that? Look at verse 6. Likewise urge the younger men, that's the younger men to be self-controlled.

But notice verse 7. This is what I did not see for years. Show yourself. If you look at the Greek, that is a singular term.

It's talking about one person specifically. And obviously, who is that talking about right there in verse 7? Who's he aiming this at? Titus. He's targeting Titus.

Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works in your teaching. Show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned. And then he gives the result.

Why is Paul emphasizing this to Titus? Why are these characteristics something very vital that Clayton and Evan should really be thinking about over there in Nepal? Why is this important? So that an opponent may be put to shame. And then notice this, having nothing evil to say about us. Now that NKJV, the literal, they put you.

But that is a plural statement there. And I like how the ESV says about us. Well, who's the us? Who's the us? Titus.

And who else? Paul. And who else? The other representatives of Paul's missionary team. You find the same thing in 2 Corinthians.

In chapter 10, he talks about how they labored. And he's referring to himself, Titus, to others. And so right here embedded in Titus chapter 2, right after he deals with the young men, he goes and addresses Titus specifically in verse 7 and in verse 8. And Paul, being a missionary, is addressing his younger apostolic representative who's laboring at the post.

So that's why I'm calling this message, An Older Missionary's Advice to a Younger Missionary. And to me, that's important. What would Paul emphasize to someone who's under him who's on the field? And you have it right here.

In these two verses, you have something that is so important to Paul that he interjects this right to Titus in the middle of the letter. And so we want to pay close attention to this. In 2 Corinthians 8, he says, Titus is my partner.

He's my fellow worker for your benefit. And I use the term missionary team because we're used to that language. It's kind of like the word pastor.

You only really have it one time in the Bible. But we tend to use the term pastors, not elders. Culturally, same thing with missionaries.

What would be the word that greater represents a missionary in the Bible? Not missionary, but what? What do we find in the Scriptures? Apostles, right? That's the term. But that doesn't appear in most Bible versions. It's derived from the Latin, ascent one.

But in the New Testament, the word apostle really is closer to that. Now, we tend to not use the word apostles. And I think some of you would understand we don't want to promote an idea that men with the authority of the 12 apostles are still functioning in the church today.

And if you tend to say we still believe there's apostles, you could make an argument that that's true. But you realize all this possible misunderstanding could happen. You have to give like 20 qualifying statements, which is fine if you've got to give 20 qualifying statements.

But apostles are still functioning in the church. You read in Ephesians that He gives apostles. He gives sent ones.

We use the term missionary. But the Apostle Paul here is laboring as a sent one, and so is Titus. And they're in this together as a team.

And he has left Titus there at Crete. All right. So you guys see where I got my title from? In Titus chapter 2, Paul says to Titus specifically, show yourself.

So he's giving counsel to his young missionary. I say young. I'm assuming he's young.

His missionary counterpart who he's left here on Crete. So let's think about what it is that Paul is calling Titus to. Right? Because if Paul could write any of the missionaries that we have on the field a letter, what would he emphasize? And I realize we've got to consider what's going on at Crete.

That affects what Paul emphasizes. And clearly one of the big issues happening at Crete is what? It is people's conduct at Crete showing forth the true doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ. No, not at all.

I mean, you know, many of you know Titus 1.16, right? They profess to know God. They deny Him by their works. They're disobedient.

They're unfit for any good work. I mean, that's the type of environment you had on Crete. You had people saying one thing, professing to know God.

Their lives totally contradicted that they knew the Lord. So let's think. What would Paul say? What would I even emphasize to Clayton and Evan? And remember this too.

He's telling Titus to show himself an example of these things to who? Who's going to be witnessing this? The church. The church, right? The people. That's you and me.

So what's the implication there? The very conduct that the missionary is representing to the congregation is seeking to raise elders up. Who also is going to go copy that conduct? The church, right? So this showing yourselves these things, it's not just for those who are sent. It's for all of us.

This is something all of us should ask and say in my life. Verse 7 and 8, is this true of me in some way? And so let's think about what is actually being stated right here in these verses. First, I want to think verse 8, where he says the result that he is seeking to bring about.

If you see it, verse 8, sound speech that cannot be condemned. So he mentions these aspects of conduct. And then what's the result he's after? That an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

By Paul saying us, what's he doing there? What's he saying to Titus? Titus, how you conduct yourself, it's interconnected with how people view me, the apostle. That's an incredible thought. Paul puts the pressure on Titus that how you behave, it doesn't just affect your own reputation, it actually affects me as well.

This is one thing to consider in all of this. Our relationships are interconnected. If I go do some grievous thing as one of your shepherds, guess what? That has an effect on you all, right? I'm not doing that out there as some isolated Christian.

I have a connection to a body and my conduct can affect the body's reputation. I could give someone the ability to speak evil of GCC, right? By my conduct and then they speak evil of you. So that's something to consider.

We should feel the weight of that. This isn't just about me and my reputation, but my conduct can affect you as well. We're interconnected.

Okay, and so what's he calling us to do in this interconnectedness that we could have a negative impact on others' reputation? He's calling us to a conduct that the opponents end up being put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. Who are the opponents in the book of Titus? Who's he thinking about here, maybe specifically? If you look back at chapter 1, verse 13 or verse 12 even, you've got verse 11. I just keep going up in verses, but you've got people being empty talkers, deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party.

So you've got Judaizers there, something similar that was happening at Galatia. They've got to be silenced. What's happening with their teaching? They're upsetting whole families by teaching what they ought not to teach.

He says in verse 13, to rebuke them sharply, that they might be sound in the faith. Is verse 13 talking about correcting unbelievers out there? Just pagans? No. He's dealing with people within the community that he's trying to appoint elders and see men raised up.

And at the same time, he's having to correct error that is being propagated and taught by, verse 14, people devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth. And ultimately this conduct, verse 16, their whole profession, they're denying it. And Paul's whole goal for you and me is to do the opposite of verse 16, right? He doesn't want our conduct, our deeds to deny our profession.

He wants our deeds to validate what we say we believe. And you see that by the start of chapter 2, verse 1, right? He goes right after talking about they deny him by their works to saying, but as for you, in contrast, teach what accords with sound doctrine. And so what the conduct he's calling Titus 2 is this missionary representative there and the conduct to model before the church at Crete.

It's basically conduct that's consistent with sound doctrine. Sound doctrine and knowing who God is will create a change in one's life, right? I mean, that's what he says in chapter 2, verse 14. He gave himself for us and look what it produces.

It purifies a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. So Paul's really calling Titus and every believer to the opposite conduct of verse 16. And you could ask yourself, is there anything with my profession to know God right now or by my works I deny him? Right? Is there any conduct that's actually communicating a denial to the Lord? This is really important for all of us as Christians, right? Peter deals with this a lot in 1 Peter.

But think about how important is this when you're a unique representative in a foreign land, right? They don't see all 300 of us in Nepal. They see a few individuals representing the truth that we embrace and the gospel that we proclaim, right? That's a weighty responsibility in that sense. And A.J. Gordon, he emphasized the importance of this in his lectures to missionary students.

He said, we are not surprised to find that William Burns, biographer, declared that the impression of his words on the people of China, listen to this, his words was insignificant in comparison to that of his Christ-like life. This is always the case. The man is greater than his sermon.

Listen to this, translators are always needed on heathen fields, but the greatest among such is he who translates the example of Jesus Christ into the dialect of daily life, into the universal speech of pain, poverty, and suffering for the sake of others. You get what he's saying? You can go over to Nepal and learn the language and translate the Bible into Nepalese, but if your life isn't translated into adorning the doctrine of God our Savior and sound speech and all of those realities, you can translate the Bible all day long, but they need your life. They need the Word too, yes, but they need our lives, our examples.

This is so, so vital, so important. And that's exactly what Paul emphasizes here to Titus right there in verse 7. Show yourself. Notice the word show.

Show yourself in all respects. And then he says, in your teaching, show. Right? There's something that we're displaying and modeling to the on-looking world, especially those over there in a unique situation where they're the sole representative of the name of Jesus Christ.

That is a right pressure to feel. Right? We should feel it here. But you know, if one of us is kind of hypocritical or something and they get around the majority of the body and they see, oh, most people are consistent with what they live, they can overlook it.

But over there, if you got someone on the field and they're hypocritical and that's the one person these heathens have to observe, you're in trouble. All right. So let's think of this more deeply on what Paul is getting at.

And so first you see right there in verse 7, he exhorts, Titus, show yourself to be a model of good works. So he's thinking clearly about his life there. And then in the second thing, he exhorts Titus in his teaching.

And he mentions three items. In your teaching, show integrity. In your teaching, show dignity.

And in your teaching, show sound speech. Right? And then after all of this, the result is so that your enemies, your opponents will be put to shame. Their accusations, they won't stick.

They won't stand. That's what Paul's really seeking after. And the NET actually renders it, you conduct yourself in this way and no one will have any reason to criticize you.

So that's interesting. You know, we think about criticism, right? We get criticized and Paul's in a way saying, live in such a way where they don't have a way to criticize you. It almost feels like, oh, that's an impossible expectation.

I mean, you really expect that? That they might not be able to condemn me? I mean, apparently. Paul doesn't like add all these qualifying statements and say this is some impossible thing. He's actually painting a picture that Titus could conduct himself in such a way where his opponents can't say anything.

Their mouths are shut and they go away ashamed based on the conduct and the doctrine of this man. So rather than think this is impossible, we should say, Lord, help it be a reality. And this is very common.

We're some other places that the Bible, and I mentioned one, 1 Peter 3, when you're slandered, those who revile your good behavior may be put to shame. If you thought of that much, your conduct should make people embarrassed and ashamed. Elijah's conduct on Mount Carmel, did that make all those prophets feel pretty ashamed? Yeah, we want to live in such a way.

That's not a negative thing. You could say here what Paul's calling Titus to, it's very similar to 1 Timothy 4.16 that Don Curran just looked at months ago. Keep a close watch on yourself, right, character, and on your teaching.

Persist in this, and by so doing you will save both yourself and who? Your hearers. You see, same idea here with Titus, right? Your conduct, Titus, is going to affect the hearers. If you don't model these good works, if you don't model the sound speech, it's going to have a negative effect, not just on you, but on your hearers.

Same idea in 1 Timothy 4, right? We see the same idea again in Matthew 23, just Jesus scathingly rebuking the Jewish people, the leaders, the Pharisees. He says, do and observe what they tell you, but not the works that they do. For they preach, but they do not practice.

You could kind of summarize Paul saying to Titus, preach and practice, right? Do both. And I think, you know, we hear that and we think, well yeah, of course we all know that. Brethren, who cares if we all know we need to practice what we preach? Of course we know that, but I wonder if we don't recognize the areas we fall short of doing that, and we kind of pat ourselves on the back thinking we're doing that better than we are.

And so may the Lord help us to see inconsistencies in our lives that we would preach and practice have both realities. And another thing here, what's Paul seeking after here? If you look, verse 7 does come on the heels of him telling Titus to urge the younger men to be sober-minded, to be self-controlled. And so I don't think it's an accident that right after calling Titus to urge the younger men to be self-controlled, he then looks at Titus and says, model.

Live a model life of good works. It's almost like he's saying, Titus is your example. Even in this area of self-control, if you're going to urge the young guys, you guys need to be more sober-minded.

Do they look at your life and say, wow, he's really sober-minded. I'm going to imitate him. Right? I mean, the young people in this church are going to be affected for the positive or the negative based on older people's conduct.

We should feel the weight of that reality as Christians. Another thing here thinking about what Paul is calling him to and what he's hoping to produce, it makes you ask the question, do I recognize how much one real error might give the enemy such an advantage? Right? Apparently, Paul's communicating to Titus, one error in your doctrine, right, because he deals with doctrine, or in your character, it can really give the enemy some ammunition. I mean, you're basically taking the clip off of his gun and you're throwing in some bullets by compromising in that doctrine, compromising in your life in a certain way.

And so we want to recognize that one real error can really give the enemy ammunition. That's why we want to have in all of our errors, whatever errors we have, we want to manifest the greatest humility we could possibly have and acknowledge where we blew it, where we missed it, right? That those people will see the Christ-like humility in us, even in the midst of our error, whatever that error was. Especially when you've got some of these opponents are the ones within the church.

They're the ones professing. This isn't just enemies from the outside. And so Paul's saying, Titus, Titus, you, by your conduct, you can actually take the spread of malicious gossip or formal charges and you can cause it to be miscarried, where it's giving birth and then bam, it dies.

It stops. It doesn't get carried on. Why? Because your conduct is beyond your approach.

You're modeling a consistent character and living out what you are preaching. And then they get put to shame. And what does it mean when he's looking at this result, having an opponent maybe put to shame? What do you think that shame means? It could mean two things and it might mean both of them.

They're ashamed, and number one, he says, they have nothing to say, right? So their mouths are shut. But what could that shame lead to in their life? But I don't think it's outside of the possibility of being on his mind because some of these people are opponents within the church. So what's his hope? They'd be ashamed and then do what? Acknowledge their fault and repent of that error.

And you find that with the church disciplining people who do not work, right? To the Thessalonians. He says, put them out and he says that they might what? That they might be ashamed. As you find the Bible talks about a right shame that produces a godly grief, that produces a godly repentance.

But either way, Paul's saying, Titus, your conduct can be such a way where it shuts their mouths. It makes them ashamed. Jonathan Edwards on this verse, he said, in real errors, things that are truly disagreeable to God's Word, we cannot expect God's protection and that God will appear to be on our side as if our errors were only supposed once.

That's a humbling statement. You catch what he's saying? If I have a real error in my life, should I expect God's going to be behind me defending me? No, I shouldn't. So Lord help us in that.

So let's think more about this specific exhortation that he has right here in verse 7. We've thought some about verse 8 and the opponents being put to shame, the opponents having nothing evil to say. We've seen that some of these opponents are people professing within the church and that how he conducts himself can cause their mouths to be shut and that Paul wants Titus to live in such a way. But what's the conduct, Paul, that you want me to model specifically? And again, remember, specifically is in the context of a church here where people's lives are not bad.

They got bad doctrine and they got bad conduct. And so first he says we all need to be a good model to copy, right? Verse 7, show yourselves in all respects to be a model, right? This is the type of model you

want to be, right? You should grow up as a Christian wanting to be a model of good works, a model of a Christlike character. This is emphasized again and again in the New Testament.

Precept and example must go hand in hand. Teaching a precept is never going to do. You've got to have the example.

In Hebrews 13, he says, remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the Word of God, consider the outcome of the way of their life and imitate their faith. 1 Peter 2, Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example so that you might follow in His steps. 1 Timothy 4, talking to Timothy there, set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

So he's calling Timothy to do the same thing. Set an example. 1 Thessalonians, he tells the church, you became an example to all the believers.

Philippians 3, 17, keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. We should all want to be a good example. And guess what? You are an example whether you want to be one or not, right? I'm an example right now.

This week in my life, I've been modeling something and setting an example to whoever is around me and observing my life. That's just, we can't escape that reality. You know what this tells me? I could teach here, right? I could teach these things and not go and set an example throughout the next week, right? On whatever it is that I'm teaching.

When someone sees another person behaving in a certain way, they're more likely to emulate that behavior than if someone just simply tells them to do it. I mean, we tell our kids, actions speak louder than words. Paul's saying that to Titus.

Actions speak louder than words, Titus. And he says here to exhort them to be an example of what? A model of good works. Well, what does he mean, good works? Good works are talked about a lot in this letter.

A model of good works. And I thought about, you know, there's an actual, there are multiple good works directed at Titus in this letter, but look at one of them in chapter 3, verse 13. And he says right after this, verse 14, let our people learn to devote themselves to good works to help the cases of urgent need and not be unfruitful.

But look what he says to Titus in verse 13. Do your best. Okay, man, Paul's wanting me to do something.

What's this good work he's wanting me to do my best about? Speed, Zenos, the lawyer, and Apollos on their way. See that they lack nothing. Wait, that's a good work? Yeah, you know, getting under someone's car and helping fix something before they go on a trip, giving them a gas card, whatever.

Those are good works that God is pleased in. Brethren, that's not foolish stuff. Paul the apostle tells Titus there's this lawyer and then there's Apollos.

Speed them on their way. Get them a better plane ticket to get there at a better time. It's not a random thing that's insignificant.

All right, so that's model of good works. It's interesting. Right after what he says there, he then says in verse 14, let our people learn to devote themselves to good works.

Implying what? As Titus is involved speeding Zenos, the lawyer, and Apollos on their way, and the church witnesses Titus's involvement with doing that, he's actually modeling the church helping urgent needs. He's putting a priority on something that might seem to be insignificant, but it's not insignificant, and others are recognizing that. And notice verse 14, let our people learn.

You see, the people are learning, right? Titus is an example. Missionaries are an example to those around them, and they're learning, and they're witnessing certain things as certain people show Christian love in a unique way. The on-looking world of people who just got converted, they're saying, wow, I never thought about doing some crazy act of love like that.

And all of a sudden, you're putting the idea in their mind through the conduct. It's not just saying it in the sermon, but the life is showing it forth. And so there's obviously this thing of good works.

You could give all manner of examples, but that's one specifically right here in the context that he connects. So let's move on from this. That's the first thing.

You're an example, Titus. An example of good works. Good works such as speeding people on their way.

That's going to help everyone else learn to be devoted to help urgent needs. And you know, one of the places Paul sent Titus was to Corinth to help them get the gift ready for the relief effort. And you know, those things to me, I mentioned that because those things could almost seem kind of small.

I don't know if you guys face that in your Christian life. There's just certain things I feel like it minimized is minor. And it bothers me because God's Word says it's major.

And I don't want you as a Christian engaging in those things and not viewing them for as precious in the eyes of God as they are. And I want that in my own life too, that right heart attitude. Okay, Titus.

So model good works. And then he says the next things in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech. So think about this.

In your teaching, show integrity, dignity, and sound speech so that you can't be condemned. All right, what out of those three phrases, do all of them deal with the content of a sermon? The content, the matter? Or do some deal with the manner of his speaking, of his even delivery of a sermon? Right? He's hitting on both things here. And there is debate over what term refers to the manner and the matter, meaning the doctrine, but both are being emphasized here.

And so is it integrity? If integrity is dealing with the matter, the content, then what's the sound speech emphasizing? So many would take the sound speech as talking about doctrinal purity. He's saying have pure doctrine. Have soundness in what you're saying.

Don't contradict the Word of God. Don't misrepresent God. Don't give an imbalanced view of the Lord.

Rebuke them sharply. Right? That sound speech needs to happen. And then many would say integrity is really referring to his activities as a teacher.

Right? His life, his character there as a teacher. And so Paul's worried about both of these realities in Titus. Yes, his sermon should give no evidence he's been infected with the lies and distortions of his enemies.

Right? No sense of, oh, this guy's like influenced by the Judaizers. What's going on with him? None of that. Right? None of that.

At the same time, he's worried about his conduct. And you remember 2 Corinthians 4, Paul defending himself. We have renounced disgraceful underhanded ways.

We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's Word. Is that having integrity? Is that having sound speech if you tamper with God's Word? No, it's not. It's not.

But by the open statement of the truth, we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. And so I might have doctrinal purity in what's being shared, but what if during the week I'm out there with a foul mouth? Maybe, I mean, some people, they'll even have a foul mouth in the pulpit. They're saying all this truth and then they're having a foul mouth in the pulpit.

That little edginess in the preaching might give a short-lived rush of excitement and give the appearance I'm fighting against the tradition that's grown so cold and whatever. But you know what? It's soon going to produce corruptness in the body. I mean, we've seen that from that one church in Seattle years ago.

You have a lot of truth. You might have some sound doctrine, but you don't have integrity. You have corruptness.

And what happened? The whole thing, that whole mega church deteriorated. It doesn't last. And the living testimony of it is a negative testimony.

So a preacher can truthfully speak what is true and yet be an error in his manner. And so the content matters. I would say that's the sound speech, right? It's the doctrine.

You can't condemn it. You can't criticize it. It's faithful to the Word of God, but also you need the attitude Titus.

You need to show integrity and dignity. It's not just the pure content, but the method of your life, of your speech. 1 Timothy says there's some of an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, and evil suspicions.

That is not sound speech, right? He's giving an example of the opposite of sound speech right there. What's dignity? That's an elder qualification, right? And here he's saying this to Titus. What does it mean to be dignified? Dignified.

That refers not to the matter, but the manner of his life. Paul's concern is not just the content of the teacher, but the delivery of the message himself. Dignity, it's this characteristic of reverence, of respect, of gravity, of majesty.

There's something set apart. I was talking to a brother recently about something in another far-off place and how there's a situation where something sobering was being dealt with and it kind of became a laughing matter, and it just made me feel like you're not being dignified. There's a right place for humor and laughter, and then there's also the place where it enters in and it cuts whatever it is that's weighty that God is trying to communicate.

In 1 Timothy 2, lead a peaceful, quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. It denotes there a decent and becoming behavior which commands the respect of others, right? This gravity. It's the attitude of men who

take serious, though by no means a gloomy view of life, but they take it serious.

There's a sense of seriousness. Titus has to represent these things to the church there because this is really a serious matter. And so, when you think about people like Clayton and Evan and others, those who are going to the field and those who are already on the field, these are areas in their lives we should be praying for them specifically, right? Praying, Lord, help them in all respects to be a model of good works.

Lord, help that even in little things like hospitality. And help them in their teaching show integrity and dignity where people, there's a seriousness about the truth that is being communicated and there's an integrity in their life. And then, yes, sound speech in the doctrine that's being taught.

That's this whole thing. He wants you to not be Titus 1.16. He wants your profession with the truth to have a life that's consistent with that because that is a major factor on the mission field. It's a major factor in our own local church.

Like I said, these commands here to the younger missionary are ultimately something he's modeling for the church. And once he's gone, that church is going to carry on that conduct. So this is for all of us.

What type of model am I? What type of model are you? Are you an example of good works? Are you an example of sound speech? Are you an example of dignity and integrity? Is this what is being displayed and communicated? And again, the only way we're going to have any of these characteristics in our lives is you find all of that answer right there in verse 14. You find it in the Lord Jesus Christ who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness. You find it in Titus 3.5 that you're not saved because of works.

I mean, resting in the fact you're not saved because of works is going to make you do more works, right? Have you figured that out yet as a Christian? The more you know you're not saved by works, the more works you do. But the more you have a wrong idea that works, you know, you need to do all these works, the less true genuine works you do because your heart isn't led by love for the Lord Jesus Christ. But this matters.

Adonai Judson wrote to Luther Rice 1816. He said, encouraging other young men to come out as missionaries. Do use the greatest caution.

This is Judson. This isn't his first rodeo. One wrong-headed, obstinate fellow will ruin us.

Humble, quiet, preserving men. Men of sound, sterling talents, though perhaps they're not brilliant. Of decent accomplishments and some natural aptitude to acquire a language.

Men of gentle, yielding character, willing to take the lowest place, to be the least of all, the servants of all. Men who enjoy much prayer time in the closet, who live near to God, and are willing to suffer all things for Christ's sake without being proud of it. These are the men.

And you know what Judson says the very next thing he says? I love this. He says, but oh, how unlike to this description is the writer of it. Still, however, I am with never-ceasing affection, your most affectionate brother.

You see, he's acknowledging he's got more ground to take, right? But Judson saw it. One wrong-headed, proud person can absolutely ruin a work. Brethren, I know I'm... Ansgar, a missionary to the Scandinavians in the ninth century.

He was asked by his heathens, the heathens, whether he could perform miracles. You know how he responded? With very good wisdom. He said, if God were indeed to grant the power to me, what miracle do you think he'd ask for? If God were indeed to grant... This isn't... I mean, you know, 900s.

If God were to indeed grant the power to me, then I would ask that I might exhibit the miracle of a holy life. The evidential character of such a miracle is perhaps even greater than those performed on an external nature, for it touches the heart by its brotherly appeal instead of staggering the intellect by its supernatural mystery. And you know what? You know what verse backs up that assertion? Matthew 7. On that day, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, do not cast out demons in your name, do many mighty miracles in your name.

And then I'll declare to them, I never knew you'd depart from me, you worker of lawlessness. They had miracles, but they didn't have character that backed up the doctrine that they proclaimed. And so he's right.

That's the miracle. That's the miracle for you guys. That's the miracle for all of us to pray for.

Lord, help me live a consistent, holy life with integrity, dignity, and sound speech being a model of good works and the love of Jesus Christ. That right there will have a massive, massive impact. Gordon goes on to say, it's only the Spirit of the Lord within us that can reproduce the image of God set before us.

Being like Christ is the most powerful of all sermons for influencing the heathen. An intelligent and respected Hindu in addressing a company of students not long ago in Calcutta, India said, what India needs for her regeneration is not simply sermons and addresses and Bible texts, but they need the presentation of a truly Christian life. The gentleness and the meekness and the forgiveness such as Christ exhibited in his life and death.

A Brahmin said to a missionary, we are finding you out. You are not as good as your book. If you were as good as your book, you would conquer India for Christ in five years.

You know, this matters. And many of you have heard some of that series, Missions is War, and the one missionary in that, he mentioned getting to China and just wanting, his whole idea is just going to go preach, preach hard, preach tough doctrine. And one day they're out on the street and a lady is being trampled by the Chinese people and his wife wanted to get out of the car to help her.

And he basically said, we don't have time for that compassion. And he locked the door and didn't even let his wife leave the car. It sounds absurd that he did that, but his mind was so gripped with all the preaching of sound doctrine.

He's missing the compassion, the gentleness, and the character of Jesus Christ. And you know what happened? As time went on, his wife started taking in children, and that gave an open door for the gospel. That gave ears to now hear the doctrine that he was going to proclaim.

And so, you know, I'm grateful, brethren, for those that we have the great honor and privilege to support. I'm grateful that we've got a good base here who's seeking to be a supply chain to those who are out dangling over wells and dangerous lands and those who are going to go forth in a very short time. I'm thankful that Clayton and Evan are not obstinate and proud, and they've been models of good works here.

No, not perfectly, but they're excelling in that. And may the Lord all the more help them excel. Let's pray.

Father, Lord, I pray You would continue to work more in us the likeness of Jesus Christ. Oh, Father, there's so much we know in our heads. We've got fat heads.

Lord, we've got knowledge. Yes, it's true, Lord, we've heard so many sermons. We've had so much truth.

Lord, help us in all of it to not miss living out the truths that we know. Lord, I pray You'd help our church to be a greater model of good works, works serving one another, loving one another. Lord, I pray for those on the field, Lord, that their lives would be marked by integrity in their character, sound speech in their doctrine.

And Lord, that the way they hold themselves would be with a sense of dignity. Lord, a right reverence for the eternal matters that are at stake. And Lord, that You would use that.

Lord, that enemies would be put to shame. And Father, we've seen that. Lord, how many examples we've seen even in the Middle East where the conduct of the wicked, Lord, they're even going to assassinate the missionary.

But their conduct, Lord, of being like Christ, Lord, it kept the gun back. It kept the sword from swinging. Their mouths were shut.

They were ashamed to think that they had agreed to kill that missionary. Lord, that wasn't an eloquent sermon that did that. That was a Christ-like life.

Lord, do help us to translate the life of Christ in our own lives before our hearers. And Lord, forgive us. Forgive us for all the ways that we fail.

Father, forgive me for all the ways that I fail, that I lack consistency and balance in my life. Lord, I'm thankful that You've not abandoned us. You're growing us to make us more like Your Son.

Please, Lord, we ask You that we might grow. Pray all of this in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

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