

Titus 2:6-8; II Cor. 4:1-7; Young Men and Pastors I. Called to this Life II. The Calling of this Life III. The Consequences of this Life

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, what do you look for in a pastor? What sort of traits- or qualifications- do you expect to find in a man called to shepherd the flock of God? The old saying is that every church wants a pastor who is 30 years old but has 40 years of experience. It is safe to say that almost everyone has a different idea and expectation for what a pastor looks like- what he will do and how he will relate. But today we get a front row seat as Paul instructs Titus on the qualities of a pastor. What are the traits or characteristics that are part of a pastor's calling? And as we look at v. 6-8 in Titus 2 this evening, we find a very close connection between young men and pastors. This is not to say that older men cannot enter the ministry later on in life- but rather that in this particular setting- Titus was both a young man and a new pastor. As you may remember, Paul was himself getting along in age- but Titus was a new pastor and this church on Crete was his first charge. Now before we dive into these verses, we need to remember that the pastoral ministry is a very important part of the local church. If faith comes by hearing, then it stands to reason that we need pastors who can preach so that the church can hear! We should, as Matthew 9 says, pray to the Lord of harvest that He would send forth labourers into the field! We should pray for our seminary student that God would equip them and call them to serve in local churches. We should pray for our vacant churches as well as missionary causes that these would also have the pastors they need. And as a church, we should be encouraging our young men to consider the ministry as well! As our boys become young adults- they can be asked; have you considered the ministry as a possibility? Are you open to this path- if the LORD places it on your heart? Perhaps our older members of the church could encourage in this pursuit- will you go if the Lord calls and sends? Having pastors and preachers for the church is not only a current need- but a future need of our churches as well! So we should be looking for godliness and maturity- spiritual gifts should be encouraged in all the men of our church! So today we are going to see that Jesus Christ equips young men and pastors for service within the church!

## I. Called to this Life

In our first point, we see that the calling holiness is something that all men- and especially pastors- receive. V. 6 starts by referencing young men- younger men- men of youth. These men are not necessarily new to the faith- but they are not as seasoned as the older members. They are likely newly married or having young kids in the home. Just starting off in their careers- making choices for families like buying their first home and making their way in the world. But again, how should our young men see themselves? As sons of God- heirs to life eternal- part of the body of Christ! Not just a cog in the machine at their work- but their identity is found in Christ! They are young men of the church- part of this sacred assembly! And even if these men are never called to the gospel ministry, that is not to say that their life remains their own! No- in whatever work they do- they are to do it unto the LORD! These men will desire to mature- to serve the church in whatever capacity they can. Perhaps serving as future deacons and elders of the church. The book of Proverbs has a lot to say to these young men- about working hard and avoiding the adulterous woman. Listen to these words from Psalm 119:9- how shall the young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to your Word. So whatever age you might be- or whatever work you are called to perform- the pursuit of godliness and spiritual maturity remains! As II Cor. 5:15 puts it, Jesus died for us so that those who live would not live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again! We are all called to live for Jesus! But in v. 7, Paul seamlessly transitions to young pastors- specifically Titus himself. As a young man and pastor- Titus is being directly spoken to. Now what is the identity of Titus- and pastors in general? Well, the pastoral ministry is a special calling that some men receive- they are called by God and ordained to be messengers- ambassadors of the King! Now the work of pastors is much too large of a concept to cover in one point, but there are 2 aspects we will consider this evening. Paul in II Cor. gives a defense of his ministry and pastoral identity- as we read earlier in II Cor. 4. What we find here is very instructive- pastors are called clay pots- earthen vessels in II Cor. 4:7. The worth of the pastor is not found in himself- but in the treasures they carry inside! The treasure of the gospel is the great focus- not the man himself. So, pastors are but the humble means by which Jesus proclaims His glorious

riches! This fact needs to be clear- what make the feet of a pastor beautiful is that they are messengers of good news as Isaiah put it. Pastors proclaim the way of salvation! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved- we do not preach ourselves but Christ crucified! Any confidence and confidence to preach is found in Christ alone! And the message that pastors are called to bring is this- the message of reconciliation. As found in II Cor. 5:20- the ministry of reconciliation. Go making His appeal through us. So pastors speak on the authority of God- the message of Christ- and the message is this- you all need to be reconciled to God! The only way that you can be at peace with God is if Jesus blood covers you- and by His hand you might be reconciled- restored to peace with God! That is the glorious message that pastors get to preach! So Titus is just a clay pot- an vessel of potter that has a noble purpose- to carry- to proclaim the riches of Jesus Christ!

## **II. The Calling of this Life**

Now that we have considered the identity of young men and pastors, in our next point we consider the calling of these men. So in v. 6 we find that these young men are called to display self-control! Your life will be well ordered- governed by God's word! Urge them- this is a strong word- a heavy admonition! Strongly encourage- almost demand this kind of life! Young men must learn self control! Self-control is important at every age- but if you do not learn to master your desires when you are young, it will only get harder as time goes on. So young men, learn when to say no. To have discernment- knowing when enough is enough. When it is time to turn off the TV, when it is time to say no to the extra portion or mug of beer- when it is time to leave work and spend time when with the family. Or as II Tim. 2:22 puts it, flee youthful lusts! Rather pursue righteousness! Learn to control your bodies- master your cravings. Be sober minded- once again the concept of clear thinking is evident. Learn to be moderate and balanced in your daily lives. And you, Titus, as a young man you must be a model of good works as v. 7 continues. To be a pattern for others to follow- honest in your actions and conduct. One of the sharpest rebukes that Jesus spoke was to the Pharisees- who spoke lofty things but their lives were inconsistent. Rather, a tree is known by their fruits! Good trees produce good fruits! As a leader of the church, pastors must model- setting an example for all to see. Kind and beneficial-

praise worthy actions. One of the ways in which church members grow is by imitating their leaders- which is a humbling truth that leaders should ponder! So let our lives be such that warrant imitation- setting an example in all respects. This is one of the burdens of parents as well- you children will imitate you- both your good and your bad traits! But the good news is that we do not tell others to just follow me- but rather follow me because I am following Christ! As Paul states in I Cor. 11:1- be imitators of me, as I am of Christ! Next, as a teaching elder within the church, Titus is commanded to teach a specific way. Teach with integrity, dignity, and be sound in speech. Teaching with integrity means that his instruction will be honest and incorruptible. Teaching with dignity means that he will take this work seriously. Titus is dealing with weighty matters- so the teaching must no be made light of. It is a faithful pastor's desire to rightly handle God's word of truth! And his speech must be sound- again this word "sound" means whole and healthy. Able to build up and make mature- benefitting those who hear! Like a well balanced and nutritious diet, preaching is to bring the needed, spiritual food by which we, as a church, can grow into maturity. Preaching trains us for righteous and holy living- and that is why Titus needs to be faithful and diligent in this! Or as Timothy was instructed in II Tim. 4- preach the Word- be ready in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. We find a similar point in Titus 2:15- where preachers are to declare with authority- to exhort and rebuke. The authority in preaching is not found in the preacher- but in the sender- found in the message not the messenger! There is a two-fold action found in v. 15- exhort and rebuke. To exhort is to call someone to your side. It is almost like begging- a constant urging and pleading! This is a winsome encouragement- exhorting people to be reconciled to God because God is the fountain of all good! As it is often said, honey attracts more flies than vinegar! This is the positive aspect of preaching. But also rebuke- this is to tell someone their faults. To convict- to chasten- to bring something hidden to light so that it might be exposed! Preaching the full council of God means that both heaven and hell are put on display! Eternal happiness for some and eternal pain for others! Exhort and rebuke with all authority.

### **III. The Consequences of this Life**

Now that we have considered the calling of young men and preachers in specific, in our final point we consider the consequences of this life of obedience. If you live a self-controlled life, if you are a model of good works and faithfully teach the truth, then your speech will not be condemned v. 8 says. No one can lay an accusation against your words- nor against your life. Even though your opponent may try to refute you, their logic will not stand. Even though your enemy will try to come up with some charge against you, they will not be able to lay an accusation or charge against your life. As I Peter 3 put it, have a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. This is kind of like Daniel- right! His enemies tried to find something against him, but they could not! He was blameless! So when we live a well ordered and consistently righteous life, our words and our works will be above reproach! They will have nothing bad to say about your life. This is plainly clear today as well- it is extremely sad when pastors fall in their lives! When a church leader gives opportunity to the world to slander Christ and His church. I am sure that most of you know of a pastoral fall from grace- where the life of a pastor disqualified him from service and left a black eye on the church. When pastors become infamous before the world- the devil mocks and great harm is caused to the flock. Too many pastors have used their authority to manipulate or take advantage of others. But this must not be! The life of the pastor is to be sound, healthy and consistent! When pastors do this, their ministry will have weight- purpose and standing. As v. 15 concludes, let no one disregard you. People ignore the preaching to their own detriment! Timothy heard the same thing in I Tim. 4:12- do not let anyone despise you because of your youth. At the end of the day, it matters not what age your pastor is! Young or old, if they are bringing the Word of God faithfully, they are fulfilling their office!

To conclude, young men and young pastors are called to maturity and faithfulness. In whatever calling they receive- whatever labor comes to their hand- they are to do it diligently as unto the Lord. Serving at the pleasure of their master. Jesus Christ equips young men to service within the church! In whatever they do, they are to be faithful in their service and support of the church of Jesus Christ. So let us all be models of good works- and learning to practice self-control as we listen to and submit to God's Word.