

INTRO-

Introductory Illustration

- I remember my freshman year in college — I was a young 18-year old. I enrolled in a class called “1&2 Corinthians with a man named C.W. Smith” — He was a gray-headed man, serious in demeanor, still with a sense of humor, and very dignified with a legacy of prayer, Bible study, and fidelity to Christ and His Truth & battling cancer. >> I watched young people FLOCK to this older man to listen to him, to glean his wisdom, to ask him practical questions, to observe his conduct >> TO IMITATE HIM. **May God give more!**
- When I think of the people who have impacted my LIFE the Most >> it’s *NOT* my peers of my generation or the youth of the next generation. >> It’s the older men of God, soldiers for Christ — who have intentionally invested in me, a young man seeking to follow Christ.
 - Dr Will Varner – disciplined me thru college, in Greek.
 - Doug Bookman – disciplined me in my first pastorate in Pasadena
 - Geoff Williams – spend many years discipling me about godliness, dating, marriage, and sexual purity
 - Dennis Hutchison – disciplined me each Friday afternoon as we read the Greek NT together (1-2 Thess)
 - Dave Costanza – an older man who took me under his wing when I went to his CARE group bible study (while attending Grace)
 - My own father – a man I’ve seen go through hardship, suffering and remain steadfast with integrity & perseverance thru it all.
- In the CHURCH >> far from shoving the elderly to the ‘60+ ministry’ or promoting a young, energetic church with entertainment that shoves the wise gray-heads to the fringe >> WE NEED TO PLEAD & BEG & IMPLORE all older men that we need you NOW more than ever. >> **A clarion call: we desperately need you!**

****READ THE TEXT****

Background to Titus 2

- Ch1 dealt with leaders; ch2 deals with congregation.
- Now we turn to various “groups” in the church (5 groups: older men/women; younger men/women; slaves).
- V.2 - **Older Men:** Philo and others saw this as the age range from 50-66. Somewhere upward of 40 years old, maybe in the 50s or 60s. **We want you to show us a Trustworthy Christ, tell of a Faithful Savior, Show us a godly lifestyle!** Speak of Christ’s glory & beauty!

THESIS — From TITUS 2.2, I want to show 4 reasons why we DESPERATELY NEED Older Men in this Local Church — serving, discipling, modeling, and exhorting...

1. The **importance** of older men
2. The **temperance** of older men
3. The **perseverance** of older men
4. The **guidance** of older men

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF OLDER MEN

- A. The older men are addressed *first* here (not more important; but *vitaly* important!)
- Denny Burk writes: The church desperately needs her older men to be like this. We need an army of laymen who believe well, love well, and suffer well. And we need them because they are the pace-setters for the rest of the church. It's not an accident that Paul begins this list with the older men. He begins with them because he intends for the old guys to be leading out in these things in the church and in their homes. **You're important!**
- B. Survey the Scripture together with me:
1. Abraham died an OLD MAN, satisfied with life (Gen 25.8)
 2. Isaac died an old man of ripe age (Gen 35.29)
 3. Job died, an old man and full of days (Job 42.17)
 4. Zacharias was an old man, married to Elizabeth, and had John the Baptist (Luke 1.18)
- C. **A place for old men? O yes!**
1. Psalm 148.12 - old men are to worship the LORD
- D. **And** --> Older men are to be treated as fathers and if and when in error, they are to be appealed to respectfully and humbly as a "father" (1 Tim 5.1)
- E. **And**, Older men are to TELL the generation to come (1) the praises of the LORD; (2) His strength; (3) the wondrous works that He has done. (Psalm 78.4)
1. MOSES was 80 when God called him to lead Israel out of Egypt
 2. Hudson Taylor was 70 when he was vigorously pushing into new areas in Inland China.
 3. George Mueller was 90 still expanding his orphanage work housing 1,500 orphans and sending missionaries out to 12 mission fields!
 4. Caleb was 85 years old when he went up to the fortified cities of the pagans & defeated them b/c he followed the Lord fully!
- F. And remember! **Old age is no bar to the power of God.** The psalmist says that older saints "They will bring forth fruit in old age" (Psalm 92:14)

II. THE TEMPERANCE OF OLDER MEN (2a)

- Here we see 3 main character qualities dealing with the older men:
 - *Men of God: show us this! It's not in the world; YOU show us!*
- A. **Temperate:** νηφαλίους.
1. Self controlled; sober; sober minded; those who are not intoxicated; over-indulgent. ONE who is Not careless and given to passions; free from addictions & harmful things.
- B. **Dignified:** σεμνούς.
1. One who is worthy of respect; serious-minded man. He's honored for his pattern of good character. One who is serious.
 - a) This respectable man does not laugh at the wrong thing: off color jokes; suffering of another person. He is not superficial or shallow. There's a DEPTH to his character. There is a *weightiness* about him. >> he has grown up!
 2. A man of dignity, wholeness, integrity.
- C. **Sensible:** σώφρονας

1. A self-controlled, wise, good thinker. He has a **sound mind**; his senses are right; he's discerning. Accurate and able to curb and control his desires and impulses. Good discretion from walking with God for many years. Controls his passions.
- D. **Far** from being a man who comes home, plops in front of the TV, calls his wife to slavishly come to his bidding, ignoring the kids & grandkids, living for his own pleasures, hobbies and passions. He does what he wants. He goes where he wants. He spends what he wants.
 1. Church may be IN his life but his LIFE is not ABOUT the Church.
 2. God may be IN his life but his LIFE is not ABOUT HIS GOD.

III. THE PERSEVERANCE OF OLDER MEN (2b)

- Not only *godly in his character* but also *godly in his Christianity*:
- A. Sound --> healthy in a *triad* of *exemplary* qualities:
OLDER MEN are to be an example for others in the Church congregation in such a pagan city/worldly context in which they lived in Crete.
- B. **Faith** -πίστει- in his own personal faith/trust in Christ - *who died for him!* Strong faith!
- C. **Love** -ἀγάπη- he is selfless, sacrificial, and self denying in his love and sacrifice for others.
- D. **Perseverance** - ὑπομονή- steadfast IN/DURING/THROUGH suffering/hardship; perseverance, endurance, staying thru the long-haul of hardship/trial. He does **NOT GIVE UP** when times get tough.
 1. This man endures hardship, accepts disappointment and failure. He lives with difficulties; he knows what it is to be misunderstood, unappreciated and unthanked. *BUT!* he don't lose heart but has confidence in GOD and in HIS WORD. He has a patient perseverance in the face of opposition to the faith.
- E. Like in the example of When **Polycarp** (the 2nd c. bishop of Smyrna) was given the alternative of denying Christ or suffering martyrdom, the aged saint replied: "Eighty and six years I have served my Saviour and He hath never done me any harm; and shall I deny Him now?" What heroism is this! What faith! Perseverance!

IV. THE GUIDANCE OF OLDER MEN

- We need older men to LEAD THE CHURCH.
- We need older men to LIVE FOR CHRIST.
- We need older men to SUFFER WITH ENDURANCE.
- We need older men to DISCIPLE THE YOUTH.
- We need older men to PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.
 - Spurgeon said: There is nothing that more tends to strengthen the faith of the young believer than to hear the veteran Christian [the older saint], covered with scars from the battle, testifying that the service of his Master is a happy service, and that, if he could have served any other master, he would not have done so, for His service is pleasant, and His reward everlasting joy.
- Do not forsake me *until* I declare your strength to this generation & your power (Ps 71.18)

- Tell the generation to come the praises of the Lord & his strength & his wonders ... and for them to put their confidence in God (Ps 78.4, 7-8). ***We need your guidance!!***
- **Lea/Griffen wrote:** *“The latter years of life, especially for men, can be filled with regrets, a sense of uselessness or worthlessness, feelings of despair, self absorption, or even a tendency to relax moral standards because of old age. However, Paul desires for the older men what he desired for himself as he approached the end of life: FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT, FINISH THE RACE, AND KEEP THE FAITH (2 Tim 4.7)*

CONCL-

Concluding Illustration

- ***Far from pushing the older men away, we call you & beg you*** to draw near to help us, guide us, point us & model for us what GODLINESS IS. ***So now, it's your job: to hear & to do the Word.*** Let these words sink deep into your ears (Luke 9.44)
- ***To disciple is to help another Christian follow Jesus Christ.*** Find a man, make the time, set a location, have a plan & see the Word *work*. Don't be distant! Please, be more involved!