Titus 2 Series

Study 1

Daughters who want to please our Father

A story to start: Why Star charts?

When the children were young we had a star chart and a chores chart on the kitchen wall. One way the children could earn stars was to do their jobs! We didn't ask for joyful participation – that was harder for some than for others. So, one would be responsible for laying the table, one for clearing, one for putting the toys away, one for feeding the dog – and the chores were rotated and repeated.

It was often more trouble than it was worth to be honest – but we persevered for many reasons. We wanted the children to help out, so I didn't have to do everything myself, and to teach them that each member of the family has responsibilities to fulfil. But I also wanted them to help because they loved me and therefore wanted to please me and also because they could see how much I did willingly for them and wanted them to reciprocate. Of course, we also wanted them to exercise self-discipline and not to be selfish and self-centred.

They were learning how to live in a way that pleased us as parents, in a way that would bring out the best in them and prepare them for life as independent adults.

Time to share

Can you think of a similar story to share with the group? What chores do/did your children have to help with, if any? Why do you think it's important for children to help out at home – if you do that is!

Introduction to the series

Relevant verses are given in brackets but don’t try to read each one. The verses are noted on the worksheets so people can look them up in their own time.

A new desire to please God

When we become Christians we have a new desire to live to please God. This desire comes from the indwelling of God’s Holy Spirit within (Romans 8:10, 12-15).

A new way of life to please God

The New Testament gives the Christian lots of ‘dos and don'ts’ to follow as we try to live to please God. It may seem that the lists are too long and its going to be impossible to do everything right! (Galatians 5:16-21; Colossians 3:5-10)

There are 2 things to keep in mind!

- Just as our aim as parents is to see our children grow up to be happy, thriving adults who can cope with life, so it is God's aim that we should grow up to be just like His Son, our 'big brother'. God wants us to be like JESUS – the only perfect person who ever lived, one who is full of love, mercy, joy, compassion, strength and wisdom. This is the Son who completely fulfilled his Father's will and pleased Him perfectly. Read 1 John 3:2
- The Holy Spirit, who lives within every believer, is the power we have to enable us to obey and live lives that please God. Read 2 Timothy 1:7
In this series of studies based on chapter 2 of Paul’s letter to Titus we’ll discover some of the attributes that God desires Christian women to pursue and develop if they are to live lives that please Him.

As we spend time working out what Paul’s teaching means for us today, we’ll also see that as well as giving us the Holy Spirit to empower us God has also intended that our sisters in Christ are part of our transformation to be like Jesus.

**Information about the book of Titus**

Paul and Titus had been on the island of Crete together at one time proclaiming the gospel. Paul has had to move on but has left Titus to carry on the work of preaching, teaching and pastoring the believers there. He also has to organize the churches by appointing elders (Chapter 1:5-16)

It seems that after Paul left Crete Satan was at work to overthrow the government of the church and corrupt its doctrine through ‘rebellious people.’

False teachers have arisen v10, some are Cretans and some are Jewish, and they are out for personal gain v11. Titus and the elders must silence them v11, v13 by teaching the believers what is in accord with sound doctrine 2:1.

So Paul writes this letter to Titus to support and help Titus, and in doing so he confirms that Titus has authority to ordain elders and to pronounce what is the sound doctrine that the church must adhere to and teach.

**Teaching God’s daughters to live God-pleasing lives**

**Read Chapter 2: 1-10**

Here we have instructions for four different groups of people in the church: the older men, the women, the young men and slaves.

Remember that these instructions were being given to some newly formed churches. This teaching is to ensure that the members have clear guidance for everyday living to please God.

The verses that we are going to consider, verses 3,4,5 refer to older women and younger women.

Of course, our society is very different from that of the apostle Paul, and stating who is ‘young’ and ‘old’ might be fraught with danger!

But we don’t have to think of these distinctions – older and younger – as only referring to the physical age of a woman. Most of us will be able to think of women we know who are ‘older’ in the faith and those who are ‘younger,’ and it will be helpful to bear this in mind. It is also helpful to think of life as one of many ‘seasons’, and that we pass through different seasons as women: for example, the season of raising young children, the season of becoming independent when we begin work, the season of widowhood. We can all think of women who are in the same season of life as ourselves, and those who are in different seasons that perhaps we have already been through.
Down to Specifics

Read verses 3 and 4. Jot down what comes to your mind as you read through these 2 lists.

What does Paul say older women are to do?

Be reverent
Don’t be slanderers
Don’t be addicted to much wine
Teach what is good
Train younger women

What are younger women to learn?

Read verses 4 and 5.
To love their husbands and children
To be self-controlled and pure
To be busy at home
To be kind
To be subject to their husbands

Note: the second study looks at these verses and their application in greater detail with time to discuss them.

Time to consider

Allow time now for individuals to consider the following:

• Am I an older woman? Am I concerned to help those women who are younger than myself in the faith by teaching, training and setting an example? How am I doing this?
• Am I a younger woman? Do I acknowledge that I have a need to learn from others? Am I willing to be taught? Whose example am I following?

Discuss together:

How does this counsel and advice differ from the message we hear from the world?

If it’s appropriate ask for feedback.
A note for single women

Single women in the church might consider this teaching irrelevant. But, there are a few things to consider. Firstly, this series provides an opportunity to consider the biblical teaching as preparation for marriage.

Secondly, what seems obvious, and is supported by research, is that God has given women a special nurturing instinct as part of our femininity. These caring, sensitive qualities can be used to support and minister to others, if we are married, single, mothers or not.1

Thirdly, some ladies who have lost their spouse of course have much to teach others from their own experiences, and to be able to do so can prove to be a comfort and a joy to themselves and others.

Lastly, only study 2 deals with issues that specifically concern married women, and even then the Biblical principles addressed are useful to all of us.

Two Principles for us All

1. Christian women are to take care of one another.

There is a principle in these verses that applies to all women, married or single, old or young, and that is the principle that Christian women are to take care of one another.

This involves older, more mature women teaching, training and setting a good example of holy living to other women in the church.

It also implies that younger women NEED to be taught, and should be WILLING to be taught.

2. We've been equipped to live as members of Christ's Body

God has given each one of us gifts and talents which are to be used:

- 1 Corinthians 12:5 - *for the good of the whole church, our brothers and sisters, who with us form the 'Body of Christ'*
- 1 Timothy 4:16 - *to spread the Gospel*
- Ephesians 2:10 - *to fulfil his purpose for our lives*
- John 15:8 - *to bring glory to God*

During this series we’ll have opportunity to consider how are we using our God given talents to look after our sisters in Christ.

Between now and the next study

1. **Think and pray** about the following questions. Ask your prayer partner/s to pray for you.

- How am I using my God given talents for the benefit of others?
- For my family – husband/children/wider family?
- For my church family - in particular other women in the church?
- For needy women who are as yet outside the church?

As you read your Bible this week look out for what God will say to you that is related to the questions.
2. **Read** over the notes and verses prayerfully. Read one of the articles about the older/younger attributes on the Titus 2 page of the dorcasprogramme.com website.

3. **Learn** 1 Thessalonians 5:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:7

4. **Start reading a new book** - what about **HAVING A MARY HEART IN A MARTHA WORLD**: Joanna Weaver: *Waterbrook Multnomah?* (review on dorcasprogramme website)

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