

Grace Energized Men— MAINTAINING A BALANCED LIFE IN AN OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE WORLD Titus 2:2

God has placed a “Help Wanted” ad online in His Word. He wants to enlist a special group of older and younger men to be highly useful to Him. These godly men, along with their counterparts among the older and younger women, will be highly compensated with eternal, unfading, personalized reward accounts in Heaven. That summarizes our portion of Scripture in Titus 2:1-8 today.

As we begin to examine the first quality in the lives of men highly useful to God, remember that we are looking at the exact, literal Greek **words** that the Spirit of God guided the Apostle Paul to write. God's Word teaches a doctrine of inspiration that declares that the Bible was “verbally” inspired. That means every “word” in the Scriptures God gave to us, was fully guided, superintended, and engineered by the Spirit of God.

Jesus believed in and taught this high view of Scripture. He often reminded the religious leaders of the day that every WORD of God was settled in Heaven, and was directly sent from Him. So, the Bible is not some collected impressions that can mean just about anything. No, we have a God who has communicated in specific, understandable WORDS. So as we look at Titus 2:2 remember:

God Chose These Words

Our God has laid down a specific curriculum made up of 24 very powerful, very clear, and very understandable **words**. Today in v. 2 we are examining the first word God uses to describe these godly, highly useful, and greatly compensated men.

In the five key translations of God's Word, that are most helpful and useful in bringing God's Word into English, this word is rendered as:

*Titus 2:2 that the **older men be sober**, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; NKJV*

- “Sober” as this Greek¹ word **nephalious** is rendered in the KJV and NKJV;

¹ Strong's number 3524

- “Sober-minded” is the way that the ESV renders it; and
- “Temperate” is the rendering you find in both the NIV and the NAS.

This word is defined in Greek language dictionaries as: “to be sober, circumspect; to abstain from wine (keep sober), to be discreet, to be sober-minded, to watch, and to stay un-intoxicated”.

Practically applied, we can say that the word we will study today means:

To be un-intoxicated by any substance or pleasure; and to never get “controlled by” or addicted to any comfort, convenience, security, work, sports, amusements, or wealth. Which means a surrendered man with a godly, sober mind, maintains a balanced life in an obsessive-compulsive world.

This first quality, that God wants taught, is not coincidental. God is very purposeful. Each of these qualities impacts all the rest of the person’s life. Our God knows what we each need cultivated in our lives to be useful to His plan. So within each of the four groups that make up ALL believers, God has specific and chosen qualities which were sent by God in a specific order.

What is the **primary spiritual quality** God wants cultivated by each group of people within His church?

- **Older men** are to **first pursue** the balanced life, unintoxicated by work, sports, money, convenience, security or amusements in an extremely obsessive culture.
- **Older women** have as their **primary goal**, the reverent life, behaving as a representative for our Holy God in an extremely unholy culture.
- **Younger women** must be pointed to **first seek** a self-sacrificing love in contrast to an extremely self-centered culture.
- **Younger men** need deep encouragement to **above everything else**, be living a restrained life in an extremely lust-filled, unrestrained culture.

So since God chose the priority and the plan, that means:

Balanced Men Choose to Obey God

God’s plan to change the world is to reach into every church, every marriage, and every home by transforming men and women’s lives, from the inside out, into Christ’s image!² But He starts with the men, for they are His God-designed leaders of all obedient churches, of Biblical marriages, and of godly homes.

² This chapter is drawn from messages presented the morning and evening of October 28, 2007, the morning of November 4, 2007, plus the evening of November 11, 2007, which are parts 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the Grace-Energized Men series. These messages are available in their entirety at <http://www.dtbm.org>.

Turn back for a moment and look at II Chronicles 16, where we find that Christ is always on the lookout for balanced, anchored men to lead and guide others to spiritual stability and maturity.

God has not changed, 2,700 years ago, back in Old Testament times He told us:

“The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is **loyal**³ to Him” (2 Chronicles 16:9).⁴

What does it mean to have a “loyal” heart? The word “loyal” (NKJV) is also rendered: “**perfect** toward Him” (KJV); “**blameless** toward him” (ESV); “**completely** His” (NAS); and “**fully committed** to Him” (NIV). Hence, a “loyal” heart is one that is perfectly turned in His direction—completely His, fully committed to doing and being whatever He wants. God is continually searching for men who are loyal, sold-out, full-hearted, true-seekers of Him.

As Christ looks on your heart today, what does He see? Does He see a desire to be all that He wants you to be? Does He see a yearning to know and obey the pattern set forth in His Word? He wants us to give back to Him:

Lives He Can Use

Titus 2:2 is what God is watching for in the life of a surrendered man; and the first of six character traits that describe a man God uses, a life that God rewards, and a grace-energized man of godly balance.

We’ve already noted in Titus 1:12-13, that the Cretan culture was obsessed with the pleasures of the moment, and would grab them compulsively with no thought for the consequences. Things are the same today.

We live in a culture that often goes from one obsession to another—people wanting something or someone so badly that they sacrifice the permanent on the altar of the immediate. Our culture, like Paul’s world of the Bible times, is filled with compulsive people, who do things just because they felt like it, at the moment. There is no stability or balance, just a wandering, restlessness always looking for some new attraction.

God’s answer then and now is the same. Please follow along in your Bibles as I read this message from God to every man who wants to be highly useful to God:

*Titus 2:2 that the **older men be sober**, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; NKJV*

³ The word translated “loyal” in 2 Chronicles 16:9 is the adjective form of the Hebrew verb *shalam* (Strong’s #8003 – perfect 16, whole 4, full 2, just 1, peaceable 1, misc 3; 27x in Old Testament: complete, safe, peaceful, perfect, whole, full, at peace; full, perfect; finished; Strong’s #7999 verb – be at peace; to be complete, be sound).

⁴ Emphasis added to some verses in this chapter.

The word sober in Greek implies being unintoxicated. But it portrays far more than distancing your body from alcohol. There are so many powerful agents that can intoxicate and cloud the minds of men.

Paul is also saying, if you are God's man you will be careful to stay unintoxicated by anything—whether comfort, convenience, security, money, work, sports, amusements, or alcohol. This is God's two thousand year old, online posting that reads:

Wanted: Men of Balance in An Unbalanced World

Grace-energized men live a balanced life while surrounded by people who are driven back and forth by fads, obsessions, trivial pursuits, lusts, and emptiness.

Paul first charges Titus with training the godly, "older" men.

These "older" man are defined in God's Word as men who are over 50 years of age. This age group of men often at their peak of earnings, at the top of their careers, and thinking more-and-more each day about what really matters in life. These older men are making decisions about the significance and the lasting impact of their lives.

If you are a man age 50 or older, and missed the message last Sunday, please consider this. We studied God's clear and direct call to all 50 plus year old men who are believers, to invest their lives in Christ's church, and not waste these best years of their life.

If you missed that challenge from God's Word—I'd encourage you to go and get that CD out and prayerfully consider how you are spending these strategic days of your life from God's perspective.

God wants men of balance. The foundation of God's man that doesn't sway with the winds of life, and who life is not driven by the waves of the culture beating against him each day—is founded upon God's promises.

And each man who systematically makes choice to anchor his life to God's Word grows into...

A Balanced Man

The balanced man of Titus 2 has a solid Biblical orientation that keeps them on even keel emotionally and spiritually. They know God is ruling all things from the galaxies down to every event in their lives.

In each sphere of life the Lordship of Christ is evident:

- As a **dad**, or **husband**, or **grandfather** he would be a man who tries each day to be a caring, and sacrificially loving;
- As an **employee or employer** he would work hard at being diligent, consistent, and hard-working;
- As a **believer** he holds on to the consistent goal to stay in the Word, prayer, and ministry.

What others watching this type of man would notice is: that he is not given to extremes.

This man neither wearies himself with the mistaken idea that he alone can solve all the problems of the world and those around him; nor does he go through life uncaring of all the problems. He is balanced, he tries to follow his personal Biblical priorities and encourage others that he can reach out to in his life.

Seven Habits of The Highly Useful Man

Just briefly, listen to what I found by searching more than a dozen published books on this word, and finding what many have said about this word through the centuries:

1. This man ***has learned what is worth living for***, he invests his time, money, and strength carefully, living by priority rather than the moment—and has become contented with fewer and simpler things.
2. This man ***is balanced*** in that he has learned how to exercise appropriate emphasis upon the priorities he has concluded are his before God.
3. This man is ***not given to overindulgence***, knowing what God's Word that the pleasures gleaned from self-indulgence cost far more than they are worth.
4. This man ***has mental sobriety*** exhibited in self-restraint, a freedom from the debilitations of rash decisions, words and behavior, as well as being stable, circumspect, and clear-thinking.
5. This man is ***in charge of his priorities***, is steadfast, morally decisive, and not under the sway of the various allurements of the world, his flesh, and the devil.
6. The man is ***not controlled by outside circumstances*** but directed by inward convictions. In English we would say he is level-headed, clear-minded, well-balanced, and unwavering.
7. This man ***is obedient*** to this quality that Paul explains ten times in the pastoral epistles; and shares this sober-mindedness that also is to be the habit of elders in 1 Tim. 3:2. A Titus 2:2's grace-energized well-balanced man is a spiritually mature member of the church.

Grace-energized men are to model a balanced life in the midst of a people being driven back and forth by fads, obsessions, trivial pursuits, lusts, and emptiness. Because they are grounded in God's promises, these devout men won't sway with the winds of life; nor will they be driven by the waves of the culture beating against them each day.

We only have two possible operating systems: God's or ours. We were born with ours, so we naturally go astray from the womb. But when we were saved, the Lord implanted His Spirit within us and He wants to guide and lead us in God's way instead of our own. As a result, every man who systematically makes the choice to anchor his life in God's Word will grow into a balanced man.

A man whose faith is anchored won't swing from pole to pole in tangents. His strong sense of security in Christ's will leads to an inner peace and tranquility. In an increasingly obsessive and compulsive world, such a grace-energized man stands out.

He knows he's just one of the "strangers and pilgrims" here (1 Peter 2:11). That was the conclusion that comes when we understand:

Living the Balanced Life According to Peter

Peter writes the same thing we are seeing from Paul as he writes to Titus. Now let's look at what Peter had to say on this subject in I Peter 1.

Writing near the end of his earthly ministry, Peter pointed out that God's people are called to be separate in mind from those who are not God's; we are to be holy-minded in an unholy-thinking world; and we are to live in each generation of Christ's church according to the standards of our high and only King Jesus.

To explain the grace-energized life of balance in an unbalanced world, Peter surrounded this word translated "sober" (the same word in Greek **nephalious**) with a series of commands we must heed if we love the Lord and want to be useful to Him.

*1 Peter 1:13-16 "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be **sober**, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*

Peter reminds us that the grace-energized man never gets intoxicated by thinking as the world thinks: *This world is my home, and this is what I want to live for!* In contrast, a biblically balanced man is focused upon God's promises; his heart has an anchor line tethering his thoughts and emotions stretching to God's Throne (Hebrews 6:19-20) that tugs him daily toward setting his mind on things above rather than here on earth (Colossians 3:1-2). Look further on at 1 Peter 2:11.

1 Peter 2:11 "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, **abstain** from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 having your **conduct honorable** among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works, which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation" (see also 1 Peter 1:17–2:10).

This means that the highly useful man is balanced, and by God's grace resists the obsessions of this culture. In summary:

Balanced Men Are Pilgrims

In 1 Peter 1:13–16, Peter explained the balanced-mind God desires for His children.

1 Peter 1:13–16 "Therefore (1) **gird up the loins of your mind**, (2) **be sober**, and (3) **rest your hope fully** upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, (4) **not conforming yourselves** to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also (5) **be holy in all your conduct**, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

This passage in 1 Peter has five exhortations in the form of two imperative commands surrounded by three participles. The NIV renders them all as commands, and that is the direction being taken in this section. The "sober mind" (or "temperate mind") is a life balanced by these choices.

Today, if you want to begin, or deepen your usefulness to God, respond to these truths and say, "Yes, I want to":

1. **AVOID DISTRACTIONS: "gird up the loins of your mind"** (NIV—"Prepare your minds for action"). In Bible times men often wore long, flowing robes. When strenuous work or running was required they would pull up and cinch that robe into their belt to make what we call "shorts." This ancient practice of gathering up one's robes when needing to move in a hurry is here being metaphorically applied to one's thought process.

The meaning is to pull in all the loose ends of one's thinking by rejecting the hindrances of the world and instead focusing on the future grace of God (cf. Ephesians 6:14; Colossians 3:2). In other words, Christians in conflict need a tough-minded holiness that is ready for action, and this obedience is a conscious act of the will.

2. **AVOID INTOXICATIONS: "be sober"** (NIV—"Be self-controlled"). This is the word "sober" from Titus 2:2⁵ and describes a person free from every form of

⁵ via the Greek verb *nepho* (Strong's #3525—"be sober"), which is always used figuratively in the New Testament.

mental and spiritual “drunkenness” or excess; and one who resists the control of outside circumstances. God wants believers to be directed from within. The sober Christian is correctly in charge of his priorities and not intoxicated with the various allurements of the world.

3. **AVOID VACILLATIONS: “rest your hope fully”** (NIV—“Set your hope fully”). This balanced mind and holy life demands great determination. A believer’s hope is to be set completely, unwaveringly, and without reservation, solely by faith upon **God’s grace**. Only God’s grace can energize an anchored mind.
4. **AVOID NEUTRALIZATIONS: “not conforming yourselves to”** (NIV—“do not conform to”). Here we see Peter using that famous word from Romans 12:1 (Greek *suschematidzo*)—“not squeezed into the mold of” **the evil desires** of their past sinful lives, or the present evil culture surrounding them. Rather, **as obedient children** (lit., “children of obedience”), they were to pursue godly responses, and to seek the Spirit of God transforming power over their minds each day.
5. **AVOID COMPARTMENTALIZATIONS: “be holy in all your conduct”** (NIV—“all you do”). Grace-energized living brings a denial of the old, flesh-dominated ways in every part of our lives (their former **ignorance**), and a chosen daily walk in the Spirit. To be highly useful to God we open every door of our hearts, minds, and lives to God. We invite to the desires and wishes of our God Who gave us salvation; and we live to please God Who called us to be His own.

Balanced Men Cling to the Promises of God

In summary, a grace-energized man is one who lives a well-balanced life even though he’s surrounded by people driven back and forth by fads, obsessions, trivial pursuits, lusts, and emptiness.

He sets out each day to avoid distractions that divert his focus from God; and avoid intoxications that dilute his passion for God; and avoid a lack of faith that leads to vacillations and double mindedness. He also avoids any situation that neutralizes God’s power; and finally brings every area of life under Christ's Lordship, avoiding compartmentalization.

Because he is “sober,” he stays true to the Lord while living in the midst of the allurements of this world.

This godly man’s balanced life therefore models the first of six character traits that describe a mature man of God. And that is a man God uses—a life He rewards.

If you want to be a highly useful and greatly rewarded man of God—I exhort you.

Heed God's call, and maintain a sober-minded, balanced life, in an increasingly godless culture!

For Further Study:

Grace-energized Men Reject an Independent Spirit

What is one the strongest intoxicants this world has to offer? A spirit of independence. Most people (even believers) seek to live as independently as possible. We commonly ponder personal goals, dreams, and ambitions, but often fail to realize that we're just doing what we had already decided is right. Note this very last verse of Judges:

"In those days there was no king in Israel; **everyone did what was right in his own eyes**" (Judges 21:25).

Unless our lives are anchored by God's Word, self-determination and self-driven lives are the norm. Think of what you know about Israel entering the Promised Land. As the Jews entered Canaan they found it to be unbelievably lush, green, and productive. But God warned His people repeatedly about the evil of the Canaanite pagans and commanded that they be driven out and destroyed.

Rather than get rid of them, however, Israel gradually began to think that maybe they knew better than God. So Israel slowly conformed to think and act like the Canaanites. This whole decline was explained in Psalm 106:

"They did not destroy the peoples, concerning whom the LORD had commanded them, but they mingled with the Gentiles and learned their works; they served their idols, which became a snare to them" (Psalm 106:34–36).

They may have rationalized like this: "The Canaanites seem nice, look harmless, and make great neighbors. Though they have bad habits, worship fertility gods, engage in sexual promiscuity, and reject the truth of God, *maybe* the Canaanite gods really do bring prosperity and success. So perhaps it was actually those gods that made the Promised Land so fruitful!"

The Israelites, by choosing to live independently from God, mingled and blended in with the Canaanites. Consequently, God's Word has sternly warned future generations of the dangers of becoming ensnared in that same compromising lifestyle.

Living Among Today's Canaanites

The Canaanite snare to Israel, played out in the Book of Judges, is probably a good picture of the autonomous lifestyles many professing Christians in America are living these days. *Wikipedia*, the online source for many Americans, really does capture the essence of current thinking:

“In general, the American dream can be defined as being the opportunity and freedom for all citizens to achieve their goals and become rich and famous if only they work hard enough.”

This statement of the American dream is the most frank definition of what may actually be our deeply rooted national form of idolatry. As believers we have become so American that we think God and the American dream somehow fit together. We are so steeped in our culture’s lifestyle that we fail to fear the Canaanite danger all around us, and thus we’re in the same dangerous place as Israel was in the times of the Judges.

Our society offers all manner of consumer goods, pleasures, travel, and enjoyment to live the so-called “good life,” but we are asked to be “tolerant” of (and eventually to buy into) the pagan idolatry which is everywhere. And if we, like the Israelites before us, compromise our faith and mingle and blend in with the Canaanite culture in America, the terrible sickness and blindness of Revelation 3 will take hold of our lives.

Look at Christ's last and poignant letter to His church in Laodicea:

“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.” (Revelation 3:14–19).

There’s no doubt that we are now living in the most intoxicating time in history. We are surrounded by the constant allurements of wealth, comfort, and false promises of security. But whenever we give in to the “Canaanite” virus, we slowly detach from our closeness to Christ and independently drift around seeking our own goals, our own plans, and our own ambitions.

One of the clearest signs of the Canaanite sickness in the church is the growing pursuit of detached lifestyles. Listen to this piercing analysis of one very careful thinker:

The fascinating book *Bowling Alone* by Robert D. Putnam (Simon & Schuster 2000) documents the erosion of social groups, associations, connectivity, social support groups, and close personal friendships in recent decades. We are increasingly a nation of disconnected, isolated, lonely individuals.

This is especially bad news for the church of Jesus Christ which is called to bond together locally on an intimate basis—closer to one another than one finds in most ordinary family groups. For the church the old saying “united we stand, divided we fall” is especially relevant. As our culture and American society fall apart, it is most important for us Christians to take vigorous steps

in the opposite direction from the trends in our culture! If we each deal with the microcosm of our individual lives under God, we can leave the repair of the macrocosm to God.

In reading the letters of the Apostle Paul one can't help note the very large number of Christian brothers the Apostle knew, prayed for, and cared for—even though they were scattered about all over the Roman Empire. They were all “family.” We see Paul frequently stopping to pray for them or send them greetings though they lived hundreds of miles apart. It was not exactly as if he had nothing else to do! Today it is not likely we have any clue about our Christians in other congregations even when neighboring churches are just down the block. And next door neighbors? Many of us have no clue about them at all.

When the collective spiritual standards of a local church slowly slip away, the flame in individual hearts dies as well. There is a cure to this situation of gradual decline in the Christian community, but it depends on individuals who will resist the status quo, begin repenting on behalf of the rest of all of us, and renewing our own close daily walk with God by rearranging our priorities.

God has not given us Christians a plot of land, a temple, an earthly inheritance—things He did give to Israel in perpetuity. But He has given each of us a spiritual sphere of influence—the kingdom of our individual lives. Our invisible influence amongst our families, our friends, at church, at work, thrives only when we place ourselves under the authority and rule of Jesus, the King of kings. When Jesus rules in and through us, living His endless life through us, a lasting legacy is laid up for us in heaven—even though our position in the present world system may be obscure or unknown (Hebrews 11:32–40).⁶

In summary, a grace-energized man is one who lives a well-balanced life even though he's surrounded by people driven back and forth by fads, obsessions, trivial pursuits, lusts, and emptiness. Because he is “sober,” he stays true to the Lord while living in the midst of the Canaanites of this world. This godly man's temperate life therefore models the first of six character traits that describe a mature man of God. And that is a man God uses—a life He rewards.

If you are an older man in the faith, I exhort you to heed God's call to maintain a sober-minded balanced life in an increasingly Canaanite culture!

What promises of God are you holding onto today? If everything you have on earth was suddenly snatched from you—family, house, money, job, health, friends, and possessions, what would you have left? Take it a step further, because that is what death does. So think for just a moment about the instant of your death.

At the instant of death EVERYTHING is stripped away from us, including our body—except for one thing. We still have one thing we can hold onto at death and that is God's promises. They can never be taken away from us.

⁶ Lambert Dolphin email NL#80, 10/27/07.

Knowing God's promises give us what the author of Hebrews calls an "anchor for our souls" (Hebrews 6:19). That is what keeps us from being blown around, dashed upon the rocks by every storm of life or confused by every new teaching we hear.

Lives anchored in the Word of God are stable, balanced and usable for God.

With that in mind, how many of His promises are you holding onto today?

Promises like "I will never leave you or forsake you" (Heb. 13:5), or "I go to prepare a place for you...I will come back and take you to be with me" (John 14:2-3), or how about this one "your sins and iniquities I will remember no more" (Hebrews 8:11), "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses me from all sin" (I John 1:7).

The Bible is full of promises, made by God to us, through his Son—and a grace-energized man is holding onto enough of them that his life becomes visibly stable. Why not bow your heart before God, look inside and do a promise inventory. Quietly repeat to the Lord in your mind what you find that you are holding onto from His Word.

Those promises can never be taken from you.

Those promises are the anchor for you soul.

Those promises help you maintain balance in an increasingly unstable world.

APPENDIX: Series Overview

The 24 Spiritual Qualities God is looking for Today in Christ's Church

God has Six Desires For Every Mature Man

Sober: Maintaining a balanced life in an obsessive-compulsive world

Reverent: Getting serious about God in an amused world

Temperate: Living wisely in a foolish world

Sound in Faith: Guarding a healthy mind in a sick world

[Sound in] Love: Staying tender-hearted in a cruel world

[Sound in] Patience: Finishing hopefully in a despairing world

Godly Men of Maturity

The men of Crete, saved by grace, were to be personally trained by Titus in the six areas that God considered paramount for the survival of His Church. As we read through these descriptions of the highly useful men of Christ's church, ask yourself, "Is this the direction of my life?"

These qualities can be defined as:

*v.1 "But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine, v.2a that the **older men** be...":*

1. **"sober" (nephalious):** This is a call for older, godly men to **Maintain A Balanced Life In An Obsessive-Compulsive World; MAINTAINING A BALANCED LIFE IN AN OBSESSIVE-COMPLUSIVE WORLD.** God wants matured, godly older men in Christ's church to live a life that exemplifies Jesus to a watching world. These men are to model the life God wants, to encourage younger men, then the older men take time to mentor some of the younger men, and challenge them to abandon the temptations of youth such as reckless living, impatience with decision making, thoughtless communication, and the unreliability that often characterizes young people.
2. **"reverent" (semnous):** God also asks older men to **Stay Serious About God In An Amused World; GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT GOD IN AN AMUSED WORLD.** God wants older men who model what its like to live life seriously.

This man thinks deeply in an amused, shallow-thinking culture. This man never trivializes what God says is important; and lives a life that is not entertained by sensuality, never amused by vulgarity, and doesn't treat life superficially. He won't laugh at others troubles, nor mock their weaknesses. As an older person who has seen hardship, misfortune, and injustice—life is real, pain is serious, and time with people is important. He is an older man in the faith who understands the brevity of life, the gravity of God's Word, and the reality of eternity.

3. **"temperate" (sophronas):** Then they are to be characterized by **Living Wisely In A Foolish World; LIVING WISELY IN A FOOLISH WORLD.** God wants older men whose lives are yielded to His control. This man's life is characterized by the Greek word **sophronas** which means, "self-controlled, restored to senses, earnest". This one word is variously rendered into 4 different English words by the top 4 versions: "temperate" (KJV/NKJV); "self-controlled" (NIV); and "sensible" (NAS). God wants a man whose life speaks louder than his words; whose character is noticed and prompts other men to examine their own lives and seek to emulate his joy, his peace, and his walk in the Spirit--in evident and practical ways. The Titus 2 older-man-in-the-faith's life is a pattern for others to use in shaping their own lives. *Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. NKJV* To capture the sense of this verse it helps to put in the word 'estimate' then it would say: "Don't overestimate yourself (**huperphroneo** 'super-think') beyond a true estimate, but estimate yourself with a proper estimate". The godly older man cultivates a proper view of self that is honest and accurate. He has a realistic and Biblical view of his strengths, weaknesses, his God-given talents, and all his human deficiencies. After coming to an accurate appraisal of who he is and how God made him, he sees his place and purpose in God's program. This man avoids the two extremes, he neither thinks he is better (pride and conceit) or worse (self-depreciation). Rather he thinks with wisdom from God above, through His Spirit within.

Then Paul gives the second trio of qualities...**Sound in faith, in love, in patience.**

4. **"sound in faith" (hugeinos pistei):** This means God wants them always **Guarding A Healthy Mind In A Sick World; GUARDING A HEALTHY MIND IN A SICK WORLD.** God wants older men with healthy minds. **Sound** is from the same word (*hugiain*) used in v.1 for Biblical doctrine, and refers to things that are healthy, proper, whole, and as they ought to be. These godly older men, are as God describes them in Psalm 92:12-15. Their lives and words declare that God can be trusted in every way. They have learned not to question His wisdom. They hold fast to His goodness. They look and wait for His grace that comes with His divine plan.
5. **"[sound in] love" (hugainos agape):** Means that God also wants His servants to **Stay Tender Hearted In A Cruel World; STAYING TENDER HEARTED IN A CRUEL WORLD.** God wants men who have His love

overflowing within making them personally loving towards others, not bitter. Christ's prime emotion, most recorded in God's Word is compassion. Love in our hearts makes us compassionate in our responses. These godly men are not fault-finders, nor unsympathetic. They are open to new people, new ideas, and not frozen in their old ways. They grow more and more tender toward the views and the mistakes of those around them—instead of getting more and more inflexible and intolerant.

6. **"[sound in] patience" (hugainos hupomone):** And finally, as we'll see later today, God wants older men to **Finish Hopefully In A Despairing World. FINISHING HOPEFULLY IN A DESPAIRING WORLD.** God wants men who persevere through all the hard times life will always bring—and then model that triumphant hope Christ alone can bring. Among the aged who are often characterized as fretful and down-hearted, they radiate hope. *"They are to exhibit the ability to endure hardship, to accept disappointment and failure, to be satisfied despite thwarted personal desires and plans. They have learned to graciously live with such difficulties as physical weakness, loneliness, and being misunderstood and unappreciated. They do not lose heart when things do not turn out the way they had hoped and expected, but have the perfect confidence "that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28)."*⁷

Grace-energized men living in a sin-energized world is God's plan.

God has Five Desires For Every Mature Woman

These five qualities are to become the life-priorities for grace-energized women.

1. **Reverent in Behavior:** Living holy in an unholy world
2. **Not Slanderers:** Speaking gracefully in a graceless world
3. **Not Given to Much Wine:** Disciplining appetites in an undisciplined world
4. **Teachers of Good Things:** Modeling Godliness in an ungodly world
5. **Admonish:** Investing in others in a detached world

Godly Women of Influence

Titus is next instructed to be sure that the women of influence are tuned to what God considers most meaningful and profitable for Christ's church. Paul says to Titus, be sure that each of the older women are taught that these five characteristics should be characterizing their daily lives. As I read this list and describe these qualities, do a mental check up on how you are doing ladies.

v. 3 "...the **older women** likewise, that they be":

⁷MacArthur, John: *Titus*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, electronic edition, in loc.

1. "reverent in behavior": God is looking for godly, mature women who will **Live Holy in an Unholy World;**
2. "not slanderers": God is looking for godly, mature women who will **Speak Gracefully in a Graceless World;**
3. "not given to much wine": God is looking for godly, mature women who will **Discipline (their) Appetites in an Undisciplined World;**
4. "teachers of good things"— v. 4: God is looking for godly, mature women who will **Model Godliness in an Ungodly World;**
5. "that they admonish": God is looking for godly, mature women who will make it a life long goal to be personally **Investing in others in a Detached World.**

God has Seven Desires For Every Young Woman

These seven qualities are to become the life-priorities for grace-energized young women.

1. **Love Their Husbands:** Self-sacrificing love in a selfish world
2. **Love Their Children:** Nurturing love in a loveless world
3. **Discreet:** Focusing on God in a foolish world
4. **Chaste:** Pursuing modesty in an immodest world
5. **Homemakers:** Pursuing homemaking in a hostile world
6. **Good:** Pursuing kindness in a harsh world
7. **Obedient to their Husbands:** Pursuing submission in a rebellious world

Young Women of Godliness

Paul then asks Titus to address the younger ladies in the congregations. The younger women were to be pointed down a pathway that would lead to them becoming the godly, older women of great influence in Christ's church. To be that woman of influence, these were the seven characteristics God was looking for on your spiritual resume, Paul asks Titus to explain.

v. 4b the young women:

1. "to love their husbands": The most powerful tool in God's hands for a watching world is a band of godly wives who live out in their marriages, Christ's **Self-sacrificing Love in a Selfish World;**
2. "to love their children", v. 5: Then these women continue as mothers who demonstrate Christ's **Nurturing Love in a Loveless World;**
3. "to be discreet": The younger women who are in tune with the Lord also are **Focusing on God in a Foolish World;**
4. "chaste": They seek to be **Pursuing Modesty in an Immodest World;**
5. "homemakers": And, knowing the role God has given to them, they seek His well done good and faithful servants by **Pursuing Homemaking in a Hostile World;**

6. "good": And all through life they are **Pursuing Kindness in a Harsh World**
7. "obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed": And finally, in step with the Spirit, and energized by grace they are **Pursuing Submission in a Rebellious World.**

God has Six Desires For Every Young Man

These six qualities are to become the life-priorities for grace-energized young men.

1. **Sober-Minded:** Living a restrained life in an unrestrained world
2. **Pattern of Good Works:** Becoming representations of Christ in a Christless world
3. **Showing Integrity:** Maintaining Godly purity in an impure world
4. **Reverence:** Keeping a singular focus in a blurred world
5. **Incorruptibility:** Keeping an incorruptible life in a decaying world
6. **Sound Speech:** Speaking God's words in a Godless world

Tomorrow's Godly Men Start Today

Finally, Paul said that God put the spotlight on the next generation of leaders for Christ's church. The young men, who want to grow up to be the godly and mature servants of God must begin while they are young to cultivate these six qualities.

v. 6 "Likewise exhort the **young men**":

1. "to be sober-minded", v. 7: First in any godly man's life is a firm resolve to **Live A Restrained Life In A Lust-Filled World;**
2. "in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works": Next, these men seek to **Become Representations of Christ In A Christ-less World;**
3. "in doctrine showing integrity": Then is the constant desire to **Maintain Godly Purity In An Impure World;**
4. "reverence": And the vigilant attitude of **Keeping A Singular Focus In A Blurred World;**
5. "incorruptibility", v. 8: This means that God wants His servants to shine before our sin-darkened world by **Keeping an Incorruptible Life in a Decaying World;**
6. "sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you". (NKJV): And finally, the whole reason God left His servants here was to go and "tell", so godly young men are **Speaking God's Words In A Godless World.**