

(Titus - Part 15): Temptations Peculiar to Young Women

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of Christian womanhood and the temptations that younger women may face, including love of excitement, neglect of husband, resentment toward children, indiscretion in thought and feeling, unchastity, and neglect of home.

Duration: 39:37

Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20, Titus 2:1-5

Topics: "Titus"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of submitting oneself to the teachings of the Holy Ghost by the apostles and living as a Christian should. He announces that in two weeks, he will be discussing the temptations faced by young men and encourages all young men to attend and bring their friends. The preacher shares a personal anecdote about a non-Christian woman who knows how to keep her husband's romantic feelings alive by anticipating his arrival home. He then mentions that the sermon series has been focused on the book of Titus, specifically addressing the temptations faced by older men, older women, younger women, and soon, younger men. The preacher concludes by reading a passage from Titus 2:4-5, which highlights the importance of younger women being self-controlled and pure.

Transcript

We have been studying the Book of Titus these mornings. We have started with verse 1 in chapter 1, and we have gone through verse following verse, analyzing, finding out what the Holy Ghost said. And in the second chapter we came to the admonitions concerning older men, older women, younger women, and younger men.

So I divided that into those four sections. I didn't create it here, it's here. Two weeks ago in the morning I talked on temptations peculiar to older men.

And last Sunday morning I talked on temptations peculiar to older women. And it falls in order that I should speak this morning on temptations peculiar to younger women. When I return from council two weeks from this morning, God willing, that is I'll be back before that, but I mean when I preach my next sermon on Titus two weeks from this morning, I'll speak on temptations peculiar to younger men.

But let me read what the Holy Ghost saith in Titus 2, 4, and 5. It says that the older women should be teachers of good things, and here's what they should teach the younger women. They should teach them to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, and all this that the word of God be not dishonored. Now this is a sort of a Mother's Day sermon, though I want to frankly say that it happened this way.

I didn't plan it. I think there isn't anything quite so completely beautiful and disarming to the toughest old sinning than the sight of a young woman with her baby. I visit the mother's room with great regularity back there.

I suppose the mothers are bored with it, but I love it. And then I think that one of the noblest sights to be seen anywhere is a good older woman with her brood gone from her, adjusting her glasses, opening the mail, and reading what her boys and girls write back to her. All this is very beautiful, and I'm for it, but I never preach Mother's Day sermons.

I practice Mother's Day observance. My wife is in Canada now, and so she missed her usual corsage, but she receives cards and gifts, flowers from her numerous brood, and even I break down sometimes and get her things. I'm not against it, but I just say I don't introduce it into the Church.

I have my orders. Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, and he told us what to do in Church, and he told us how to run a Church, how to order a Church. He never said a word about taking one day a year to eulogize motherhood.

I believe in Boy Scouts, think it's nice, think it's a fine thing. The more of that, there'd be less juvenile delinquency. I believe in Girl Scouts, and I'm a sucker for buying cookies.

Whenever the little Girl Scouts come around, they all look alike in their little uniforms. I buy cookies. I enjoy it tremendously.

I don't eat them, but I love to buy them. And I believe in George Washington, but I never celebrate his birthday in Church, never celebrate Boy Scout Sunday, the Girl Scout Sunday, because you see those things belong to the nations. But we're Christians, we're a company, a minority group within the nations.

So I want to talk to you about instructions our Lord gives to younger women. Now let's begin by noting that the New Testament never gives instructions to non-Christians. The Bible has something to say to non-Christians, but what he has to say, what the Bible has to say is warning and invitation, called repentance and the proclamation of the gospel.

Go ye into all the world and make disciples out of all nations, teaching them to observe whatever I have commanded. There's the order. We go to the world and we proclaim the gospel to the world.

Few people here and believe form themselves into a little company, and then that company constitutes a cell in the body of Christ. And that group then is taught to observe whatever Jesus commanded. But to go out to the world and try to impose upon the pagan nations of the world the ethics of Jesus is to misunderstand the whole New Testament.

Christ's promises and commandments and the apostolic instructions that make up the rest of the New Testament are never directed toward the once born. And the failure to grasp this has brought a great deal of confusion to the church. Certain periods of the year the newspapers, the secular newspapers, come out

with editorials about religion.

Senators and presidents make speeches and introduce the words of Jesus and try to impose them upon the nations of the world. We must understand that our Lord never intended that the pagan nations of the world should come under the discipleship and teaching of the head of the church. They will finally in that great day when our Lord returns.

But in the meantime, they are the Gentiles as distinct from the church and the Jews. And our Lord is not imposing his ethics upon the Jews either. He's calling them to repentance and belief.

And when they repent and believe, then the teachings and commandments and comforts and promises of Jesus Christ apply to them. But because we don't understand this, we're trying to introduce into pagan America the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. And thus we give false hopes to millions.

And this misunderstanding has led reformers to try to impose the ethics of Christ upon the nations and caused unconverted persons to hear the scripture and believe that the words of Jesus referred to them. And actually the comforting words and promises of Christ refer only to those who are children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. It's a kind of liberalism, only it doesn't pass by that name.

And there are many other evils that have resulted from not understanding that our Lord's instructions in the Sermon on the Mount and the writings of Paul and Peter and Jude and James are for the church of Christ, for God's children, not for the nations of the world. The only thing the church has to say to the nations of the world is to preach repentance and warn of the results of iniquity and call men back to Jesus Christ, they might be born again. This is the message of the church to the world.

And the church hasn't any other message to the world. Now, the Lord here instructs his women disciples. He doesn't instruct the women of the world.

He warns and pleads and calls to repentance, but he doesn't instruct them as a teacher, his disciples. But here we have instruction laid down by the Lord through an inspired apostle to his women disciples, his younger women disciples in this case. These women are followers of Christ.

They are another and a new creation. This woman has repudiated the values of the fallen world and has chosen Christ and his cross as the center norm and has accepted his ideal of womanhood. And his ideal of womanhood is God's ideal of womanhood.

And so the Holy Spirit instructs this woman and she hears, this Christian woman, and she makes God's will and word the test of her life. She doesn't weigh the teachings of the Holy Ghost against what some or a modern writer has said, nor against the standards of the day. She repudiates the standards of the day so far as they, or as far as they are disharmonious with the teachings of Jesus.

And she arrives at an ideal by hearing what the Lord says about it. Either she does that or she ought not to say she's a Christian. If she is ready to fight the teachings of Christ, then why should she say that she's a Christian? A woman falls overboard and somebody tries to rescue her and she fights her rescuer.

How can she hope to be rescued if she's fighting her rescuer? A woman says, I'm a Christian. I believe in Christ. I believe that I have eternal life and I won't go to hell.

All right, you're being rescued. You're being pulled out, as they say in the Valiant Valley. He pulled me out.

But how can you be pulled out if you fight your rescuer? Jesus Christ is your rescuer and he lays down the instructions and he tells you how to live, sister, as he tells me how to live. And if I fight him, how can I hope to be saved by him? Tell you what we need is, oh, I don't know. I was going to say somebody ought to write a book, but I've seen too many of those books.

What Christian young women ought to know, Pollyanna, saccharine, licorice stick stuff. No power in it, no intelligence in it, no ability in it. But we do need somebody to come forward and say, here's the standard of womanhood.

We need a Wesley to say once more or Simpson to say once more, here's the way women, here's the ideal women should drive at. I think it is not extravagant to say that 75% of the modern evangelicals take a modified form, in a modified form, the ideals of Lana Turner, Jane Russell, as their ideal of womanhood. And it's tragic, absolutely tragic.

Now there are particular temptations, as I said last week, which visit older women. There are no old women, but I just say older women. And then there are particular temptations which visit older men.

And I arrived at the understanding of that, not by introspection, but by observation. And now also there are particular temptations of younger women. Somebody will say this is a wholesale denunciation of younger women.

No, it is just telling the younger women what could be wrong with you if you don't watch, the direction you could go if you don't watch. To illustrate, as I said before, there are certain diseases of older men. They call them degenerative diseases.

I don't like the word, but they're degenerative diseases. Now you don't have to have them, but the doctors say, now watch out. You could have them.

And so there are certain bends, directions, which a young woman's likely to run in if she doesn't watch out. And if she's a whirling and belongs to the pagan world, then there's nothing we have to say, only to plead for her to come to Christ. But if she's a Christian woman, then she will listen to the Lord on this.

And she will say, as a follower of Christ, this is my ideal of womanhood, and I want to escape these things and live right. Well, now let's name them here. They're all in the text.

Only I'm going to change it around and state it otherwise. It's all here. And the first thing, particularly now, is true in Crete, and it's true in America.

One of the first temptations of young womanhood is love of excitement. So Paul plainly says, be sober. Cultivate sober godliness.

Now there are churches who run on such a high pitch of excitement that they appeal to these persons who love excitement, and people run to them because they are a tense, high-pressure, excited people. I remember some years back a man called me and asked me whether I would come to his home. He said he was having trouble with his wife.

His wife belonged to a certain sect or a certain church, and she was intensely spiritual, she thought, and highly emotional. And I went to see them, and she sat on the edge of the chair and looked at me with that sweet, self-possessed, kindly charitable, heavenly tolerance that a saintly soul feels for a blind pastor. And

her husband was desperate, and I tried to take the woman's side.

I tried to take her side. He threw up his hands, he said, but pastor, but told her, what would you do if just any time you woke up in the middle of the night and your wife was standing out in the middle of the floor in her nightgown making a noise like a vacuum cleaner? Well, I knew what he meant, you see. She had been brought into this intensely emotional, neurotic state so that she'd hiss and make sucking noises and gurgles, and that was spirituality to her.

And she'd never know what the Holy Ghost meant when he said, it's better to cultivate sober godliness, young lady, better to cultivate sober godliness. You'll find ten women who are ready to live on their high pressure of religious excitement to one who wants to be sober and godly and prove their holiness by their lives. So he says here, be sober, cultivate sober godliness.

Second, don't neglect your husband. That's one of the temptations. And that's, of course, the cause of increasing divorce rate in our day.

Two things, frumpiness and masculinity on the part of the younger women. Frumpiness and masculinity. If the last sight that a man has of his wife in the morning is an unkempt, ill-groomed front, and the first sight he has when he returns is a tired, overhauled thing that he's not sure when he approaches the house whether the male nook man got in by mistake or whether that is his wife, you tell me, will you please, how he's going to keep his romantic feelings tortured and how he's going to want to come home.

I remember seeing a cartoon one time that I thought was, I can't get it out of my mind. It showed a man. He had evidently gotten up and gotten his own breakfast and he was on his way to catch the 817 for his office.

And his wife appeared about that time and stood framed in the door. Her hair was done up in an infinite number of funny little curlicues. And having slept on it all night, some of them were down and some of them were up.

And she had on her feet a sloppy pair of run-down-at-the-heel slippers and a baggy old housecoat or bathrobe thrown over a rather ill-shaped frame. And she was standing there weary and tired and with rings under her eyes looking at him. He was all fixed up ready to go to the office.

Here's what he said to her, and I've smiled about this and chuckled over it a lot of times, but it isn't very funny really. He said to her, wait, wait, don't move. Don't move.

I want to remember you just as you are. Stand there and let me drink you in. Well, my brethren, if you all you got to remember when you're office all day or at work all day is that kind of a sight, not a vision, a sight, when you leave your house in the morning, you can't be excused for letting your eyes stray, but at least people understand why they do.

And then if when you come back home at night you arrive to see the lady in overalls, you can't be blamed too much for not hurrying up the walk. I told a friend this morning that I know a little lady and she's not a Christian. I think she's not a Christian or at least she's not what we'd call born again Christian.

They go to church, but you know what, no matter what work all day does to her, she knows the train her husband comes in on and just about the minute he'll arrive at the door. And you know what she does? She fixes herself up, combs her hair, puts on a nice fluffy little house dress, and looks as if she just stepped out

of the magazine hat. Now, my brethren, let me point out to you, or my sisters in this case, that you owe it as a Christian to love your husband and not take him for granted.

But to work a little bit at looking as you used to look when you were going to get. Now, the next third one is, the temptation of younger women is resentment toward their children. Love your children.

Resentment toward children. Why do women often resent children? I've been very much encouraged and pleased, I'm an old sentimentalist as you know, but I've been very much pleased to see a change in the attitude of womankind in America toward children. They have them and love them now apparently to some degree, but it's such a thing as resenting the children.

A woman loves to travel around and loves to look nice, and so she doesn't want to sacrifice that to a child having children. You know, I used to talk about it, but a woman's once had a child, she's just exactly not what she was before. It takes something out of her.

She has two, it takes twice as much. And there's danger that women be worldly minded and become resentful. Well, these children, these children, time I take care of them and I never have them in its peace and all the rest.

Well, that's resentfulness. A Christian woman won't feel about it like that. She'll say this life is from God and I thank him for it.

And I'm going to make the care of my child a holy sacrifice of love. And I'm going to do everything that I can do to bring up this little one in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Now that's the Christian woman.

And I would say that most of the Christian women I know, practically all of them take that attitude, but the wise old apostle knew that some of them wouldn't. He knew that some of them would resent their children. And he warned, he said, love your children, young lady.

He said, you older women teach the young women, love their children, accept them from God, accept them as plants around the table and look after them good because they're God's gift to you. And the fourth is indiscretion, indiscretion in thought and feeling. I'm deliberately not going to say too much there, but I'm only going to warn you that a Christian woman must go to the Bible to find out her attitudes and not adopt them from the world.

I think I've lived in the world now quite a while since the turn of the century. And this is to my mind, the crudest period I've ever lived in the crudest. One young brother said this was the worst world he'd ever lived in.

But I would say that this is the worst and crudest age. People have no hesitation, men and women, young or old, discussing things that our grandmothers would have blushed to have heard discussed. They'd scarcely have discussed them with grandfather, but now everybody discusses everything.

I don't watch that, sister. You're a Christian now. Remember that indiscretion in thought or feeling a word or action can bring discredit upon the name of Christ.

Your Bible under your arm won't make it any better either. It'll only make it worse. It'll reflect badly on that Bible you carry.

Modesty, says the Holy Ghost, be discreet. I looked that up carefully. I always look these.

Whenever I give an exposition of the word, I always go to the Hebrew and Greek and find out just what the Holy Ghost said. And what he said was, be circumspect, temperate, and moderate. Circumspect, two words meaning look and around.

Look around. Don't stumble and fall and walk foolishly. Then unchastity.

I won't talk much about that because that happens to be one of the sins that the whole Church of Christ condemns out of hand. But the sixth one is neglect of her home. I spoke of the neglect of her husband, but now I speak of the neglect of her home.

Keepers at home, says the Holy Ghost. Christian women should be a keeper at home. You see, there's an urge in the day in which we live to be constantly on the go.

And the idea that a woman's place is in the home, that her business is to take care of that home and to have it a nice place in which she could live and her husband and family, it's kind of gone down the drain. And instead of that, things are quite different. But let me remind you this.

The adopting of Christianity by any woman will never make that woman less a woman than she is. It'll never make her less feminine. It will never make her less beautiful.

It will never lead to carelessness in dress, will never lead to carelessness in her home. If in her zeal to do the work of the Lord, she leaves her dishes in the sink and neglects her home and her husband jumps on her for it, she runs to the pastor and says, pray for me, my husband's persecuting me. And the chances are very strong that if she would look after her house, her husband would have nothing to say.

Maybe certainly instances where that's not true, but it's also true very often that women have lain in bed and let their husbands look after themselves and then gone out at night and run from one here, one preacher to the other, take notes and come home and pray, but forget that God said be keepers at home. So dear sister, I haven't anybody in mind now at all. This is just thrown out, but if when you became a Christian, you became frumpy, you just reverted to type.

Don't blame that on Jesus Christ. And if when you became a Christian, you got so busy in the Lord's work that you can't keep your house clean, don't blame that on Jesus Christ. You're just yielding to the old desire not to keep it clean.

I remember the Quaker one time he made a call. I was going to say Quaker pastor, of course they don't have pastors, but some old Quaker brother went to visit a woman. He hadn't seen her around the church house.

So he went to visit her and he found her there in one of the most unkempt and worst littered houses he'd ever seen. He talked with her a while and he was about to go. She said, brother John, let us kneel.

I want you to pray for me. He said, sister Mary, God never called me to kneel in a pig pen. If you'll clean up this mess, the next time I come back, I'll pray.

Goodbye. And he left. I think he was on the right side.

I really do believe he was right. Keepers at home, it says here. Keepers at home.

Always remember that the voice of the Lord, rightly heard, never contradicts itself. And if he calls you to be a keeper at home, and he calls you also to sing or travel or do anything you're supposed to do in the work of the Lord, cook or whatever you do in the work of the Lord, he never contradicts himself. And one will never cancel out the other.

You can be a keeper at home and do the work of the Lord. And if you can't, then what you're doing is not the work of the Lord. Something else.

For part of the work of the Lord is to be a keeper at home. You know, that kind of doctrine doesn't get followers. It's not dramatic enough.

It's not colorful enough. It is not gorgeous enough. There's not enough drama in it to say to a young woman, now, Mrs. Jones, you are to follow Jesus, pray, love your husband, look after him, don't neglect him, love and accept your children as gifts from God, keep your home clean, be chaste, discreet.

That's the kind of life you're to live. People aren't interested in that. It isn't colorful enough.

There isn't enough excitement in it. That's Christianity. The old Quakers taught that.

Methodists taught that. And Paul taught that. And then the seventh is grumpiness.

Where it says here be good, a young woman should be good, it says good nature in some translations. Good nature. That's all I have to say about that.

Good nature. You say, till I get my coffee. Well, if it's coffee you're sanctification, are you sanctified by Chase and Sanborn? You get your sanctification out of a pot? What is it sleeping all night makes you grumpy? I ask you, what makes you grumpy? You just can't help it.

You're not in possession of yourself, not a follower of Christ in truth and in deed, giving up to your bad disposition, blending it on that you didn't have your coffee or you didn't sleep well. And then the last of all is bossiness. Be submissive to your own husband.

The bossy wife is a nuisance. And I suppose there are Christian women that just run the shebang. Just run the whole thing.

Submit yourself to your own husband. Who said that? It's what it means, submit. I wrote it down there, but actually in the text it says obey.

But I looked it up and I find out what he's talking about, submissiveness. Submit yourself to your own husband. The bossy wife, the grumpy wife, the neglectful, the woman neglectful of her home, she's not a good example, that the word of God be not blasphemy.

Now I want to read in closing a passage from the Bible, which is going to take a beating today, believe me, all over the English speaking world. I suppose that this will be read more today than any other passage of scripture in the whole Bible. And it properly should be, but I don't know why we neglect it other times.

Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. She dolloth herself in the latest chemise. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

She'll do him good, not evil, all the days of her life. She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She doesn't wear rubber gloves, lest she get a blister on that delicate patty.

She and her, in like the merchant ship, that bringeth forth her food from afar. She riseth also while it yet night, and doesn't sleep until ten o'clock in the morning, until her husband has long been at work. And giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

She considereth the field, and batheth it, and with the fruit of her hand she plants a vineyard. She girds her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good, and her candle goeth not out by night.

She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff, and she stretcheth out her hands to the poor, yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She's not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet. Double garments, says, gonna have double garments, so they're not afraid of cold weather.

She maketh herself coverings of tapestry, and her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, where he sitteth among the elders of the land. She makes fine linen, and sells it, and delivers girdles unto the merchants.

Strength and honor are her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come. She opens her mouth, and what comes out? Wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

Her children rise up, and call her blessed. Her husband also, he prays of her. Then he concludes by saying, many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excelleth them all.

There is the ideal of womanhood. I wonder how much of this was taught today. I suppose very little, mostly there would be tearful, broken-voiced platitudes and eulogies spoken about mothers, but the Holy Ghost is more practical than that.

He said, if you want to be praised, live so as to be praised. And if you want your husband to say, you should know my wife, live so he can say it. You want your children to remember you tenderly when they're older and gone, live so they can remember you that way.

You want people to believe in your Christianity, submit yourself to the teachings of the Holy Ghost by the apostles, and live as a Christian should live. Two weeks from this morning, I'm going to talk about the temptations of young men. I want all you young men present, and I want you to bring your friends.

I'm not going to preach a sermon what young men should know, or to men only, but I am going to talk about the temptations of younger men. All right.

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