



## You! Who, me?

Have you ever had someone single you out in a crowd? It can be an uneasy feeling depending on the circumstance. Oftentimes, this pointed exclamation is followed with a message of accusation or blame. “You”, makes things personal; it narrows the audience of its subsequent words to a single intended subject, you! Whether through spoken or written word, the use of “you” should draw your attention to listen or read carefully as there is a message to follow.

The Apostle Paul uses an emphatic “you” in his letter to Titus that helps us to understand the importance and contrast between living for Jesus and living for the world. Titus chapter 2:1 reads “You, however...” or as some translations might say, “As for you Titus...” must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine.

In the last several of verses in chapter 1 Paul talks about the “many rebellious people, full of meaningless talk and deception... by teaching things they must not teach”. This contrast to what is true and faithful to the life of a believer outlines the charge Paul gives to Titus, “to teach what is appropriate” in life in faith.

Titus was chosen by Paul to lead the charge in teaching or promoting the truth and transformational power of the gospel, to live a life that reflected the correct behaviours and attitudes that would be an inspiration and model for the leaders of the church and ultimately the church itself.

Paul does not leave Titus empty handed in his given task. The words that follow help identify some of the foundational truths and heart and mind attitudes that will help people

separate and protect themselves from the false teachings that were being taught. Speaking to a society distant from how the world defines culture today Paul’s words still stand as good practice in our lives today.

The central themes of self-control, respect, reverence, love, purity, kindness, and integrity are part of the instruction given to the older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and slaves. These actions are not just empty directives that only help us live better lives, each speak into a greater purpose and motivation. In the following verses Paul gives us the answer to the question why we should live this way,

“so that no one will malign the word of God” (2:5); “so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.” (2:8); “so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.” (2:10)

You might ask, how it is possible to live in a way that truly reflects God while the world around us becomes more resistant to recognizing who he is? Paul reminds us about the incredible grace and salvation God has given to us through the death and resurrection of Jesus. “It teaches us to say” NO” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled lives in this present age”. (2:12)

How are YOU, yes YOU, leading the charge to teach or promote the truth and transformational power of the Gospel in your life? My prayer for you, (something I pray for myself) is that you would continually experience the incredible grace of God in your life. “let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven”. (Matthew 5:16)