

Gospel Living for Older Men

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[0 : 00] Turn in your Bibles to Titus chapter 2. And we're going to read the whole chapter of Titus 2 tonight.

! Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.

Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the Word of God.

Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything, set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching, show integrity, seriousness, and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about our God and Savior attractive.

[1 : 37] For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness, and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

These, then, are the things you should teach. Teach, encourage, and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you. The church in Crete was a mess, so what do you do when a church is in a mess?

That's what Titus is mostly about, and Paul begins by saying what you do is you start to think great gospel thoughts. You need to start here.

It doesn't start with getting the right programs in place. It starts with thinking great gospel thoughts.

What do you do when the church is in a mess? You get the right people into leadership.

If you own a business or you're in charge of people, you know that hiring the right manager is the beginning of the end of a lot of problems.

[3 : 01] Hiring the wrong person as a manager is just really the beginning of a whole lot more problems. So, Titus, these are the sorts of men that you need to appoint as elders, and he gives that list.

And then the third part of chapter one was about fighting against false teachers. The first two things are planting.

They're positive. This third is more weeding. You need to get the wrong ideas, the wrong people. You need to confront them. So, there's positive work to do.

There's negative work to do. You need to dig these people out. And so, that's Titus chapter one.

That's the plan. That's the agenda, so to speak, for new churches or churches that are in a mess.

And really, that's the plan for any established churches. That's the plan for Grace Fellowship Church. We haven't really moved beyond any of these things. We need to continue to do them.

[4 : 00] That's our business here. So, we're not just talking about other people. We're talking about what we need to be doing. So, what do you do when you have a messy church in a messy culture, a sinful culture?

And really, that's every church in every culture. So, what do you do? That's where we're at. What do you do? Well, you see next, and that's Titus chapter two, is you tell people exactly what to do and why.

You tell people exactly what to do, all the different kinds of people, exactly what to do and why. Not generalities. Paul isn't talking generalities.

He's talking particulars. We aren't just letting these people figure it out or work it out for themselves. It's not give them the gospel and that's all you need to do. They'll figure it out for themselves.

No, Jesus, Paul, all of the prophets, they get down to brass tacks, so to speak. They get down to particulars.

[5 : 08] And so, that's what Paul is doing here. Jesus said, teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. There's things I've commanded you. Now, everything that I've taught them or commanded them, you need to teach them to obey that.

It's not just knowing about what the right things are to do or knowing the gospel. It is we need to teach them to do it and exactly what that is. Now, thankfully, the Holy Spirit has a teaching ministry. And so, we're not alone in this. You and him work out a lot of things on your own. That goes on. And thank God for that.

But here in Titus and in a lot of other places, Paul makes it crystal clear. He says, now, this is what you need to do. You in particular, what you need to do, and why.

Why you need to do it. So, that's where Paul is going in Titus chapter 2. So, he talks about Titus 2 women. That has become a very famous or well-used expression.

[6 : 17] But he also talks about Titus 2 men. We hear a lot of talk about Titus 2 women. But he talks about Titus 2 older men. And Titus 2 younger men.

Titus 2 slaves. And so, men, women. That's the basic categories. Old, young. Each group has their part. Now, men and women are different.

We need to say that. We need to say that in our culture. Men and women are different. I can drive all the way to the condo where we stay in Florida from my driveway to the front door of that condo without a map.

My wife, on the other hand, can open the refrigerator and find the jar of pickles without asking for help. We are different. We're different. Now, in our day and age, there is so much confusion and honestly rebellion about this issue.

That there used to be two genders. There are only two genders, but everyone used to recognize that. And now, I kid you not, Facebook allows you to choose between 58 different genders.

[7 : 36] Now, some of them are pretty repetitive. But just to say that somehow we have gone from 2 to 58, or whatever number that is, it speaks to the confusion and the evil that is at work in our culture.

And so, when we come to a passage like Titus 2, we need to see how countercultural it is and how absolutely necessary it is.

So, in the beginning, God made man. Male and female, he made them. But now, the lines are blurred. And so, Paul's words to Titus and his words to the people in Crete are relevant.

They're very relevant for us. So, if everything is blurry in our culture, what Titus 2 is like is like going to the eye doctor. And you walk in and you can't see everything is blurry, but you walk out with a new pair of glasses and everything is sharp.

The lines are defined. That's Titus chapter 2. This is what godliness looks like. So, here's the straight line. Male, female. Here's your responsibility.

[8 : 45] Here's what godliness looks like for you, men. Here's what godliness looks like for you, women. Again, the lines are clear. And so, we need that. And it's good for us that we're in this passage.

And so, let's get started. Paul begins, verse 1, with a very brief word to Titus and to the other elders in Crete there.

And really, to all true pastors. Chapter 2, verse 1. In the NIV, it begins, you must teach. In other translations, and really in the original, it's actually an emphatic, but you.

But you speak these things. But you teach. Now, you remember, it's been a while, but those false teachers were teaching all sorts of things that rot people, that decay people, that make them useless and unfit and disobedient.

For everyone who believes their message and obeys that message, it makes them unhealthy spiritually. And that's what the false teachers are doing. They're doing it for dishonest gain.

[9 : 48] That's what they're all about. They're teaching things that they ought not to teach. But you, Titus. That's what they're doing.

That may be what the majority of people are doing. But you, Titus, but you, elders, must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. They're doing this.

You do the exact opposite. Teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach what harmonizes or fits or is appropriate to sound doctrine.

Now, I think what he means by sound doctrine is just the whole gospel message. The gospel message. The truth about Jesus Christ. The whole healing, wholesome message of the gospel. Now, you teach what harmonizes with that message. Teach what harmonizes with it, what goes with it. The life of holiness. The life of godliness.

[10:53] And good deeds. Now, are those things themselves the gospel? Holiness, godliness, good deeds. Those things aren't the gospel themselves.

The gospel isn't be holy. The gospel isn't be godly. The gospel isn't Jesus was a good person. Now, and then he came and he taught us how to be good people. Now, you go do that.

That's what a lot of people think the gospel is. But that's not the gospel. The gospel is what he says in verse 11. The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared.

He's talking about the first coming of Jesus Christ. And one or two verses later, he's talking about the second coming of Jesus Christ that finishes our salvation.

So the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared. It's grace. It's mercy. Now there's pardon. And out of the heavens, it has come down. It's God incarnate, God in flesh for us.

[11:54] God unveiled to us in the Son. Jesus himself is this grace of God that has appeared and he is bringing salvation.

So grace in a person, in Christ, everything else, everything else is no gospel at all. Christ is in a category all of his own.

So everything else, even the be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, being sound in faith and loving and endurance, even what Paul puts here, all of that by itself is not the gospel.

That leaves men in despair. If all I did was come up to you and say, this is the good news, do these things, well, it really wouldn't be much good news at all. But that isn't what Paul is saying.

And this is what we need to make crystal clear. He's saying, teach the things that harmonize with the gospel. The gospel is the melody. The gospel is the main tune.

[13:01] It's carrying the song. It's what we hear first. So you can play Amazing Grace with one hand on the piano. But when we play Amazing Grace, when Tom plays Amazing Grace on the piano, he doesn't use one hand.

He uses his other hand. He plays the notes and the chords that go along with the melody. He bolsters it. He elaborates it.

But the melody is ever the same. The tune is the same. So there's the melody, the gospel, and then the harmony. And that's what Paul is telling Titus and all the elders to do.

We're not just to teach the gospel. We are to do that. We are to do that first. But we are to teach what accords with the gospel. What goes along with it.

What elaborates. What comes from it. And so there is a life that harmonizes. That is appropriate.

[14:02] That goes with the gospel. I wonder if you could say that about your life. And there is a life that doesn't.

That clangs. That isn't a harmony, but it's a concophony. That it's jingling and screeching and dissonance. And so when you hear the gospel and then you hear this or you see this life and you say, those two things don't go together.

This is making that melody sound bad. It doesn't go. Now, as Christians, when we're first born again, I suppose there's a lot of concophony still in our lives.

There's probably more concophony than harmony. And so we begin our lives with the main melody. The Holy Spirit has taught us the gospel. And by the grace of God, it's in us.

And we believe this gospel. And we have the beginning of an understanding of it. And yet, not always is our lives very reflective of that. And our lives don't match it.

[15:07] They don't go with it. And that's what sanctification is. It's about bringing this whole life into harmony with the gospel. This is now these two things go together. This is appropriate for each other.

So sanctification isn't how you're saved. But it's that living growth in the harmony of the gospel. And so he's getting down to brass tacks.

And he starts with older men. And that's what we're going to talk about for the rest of our time. Older men. What harmonizes with the gospel for you? What's appropriate in your life if you are a professing Christian?

Well, he has some things to say in particular. I guess the question is, maybe needs to be answered. How do you know if you're a younger man or an older man?

It's not exactly clear when you pass from younger to older. I suppose you're now in your second part of your life. The second half. There's probably more younger men than older men than you.

[16:18] You've been married a while. You've been a parent for a while. You have some miles on your tire. You're in the second half of your life. So what does the gospel living look like for you? And he starts with be temperate.

Be temperate. It means specifically be temperate in regard to alcohol. That's how it's specifically, generally used. So drunkenness and the gospel don't go together.

Paul in other places says, don't be drunk, but be filled with the spirit. Being drunk is being controlled by the alcohol. It's being out of control. But being filled by the spirit is being controlled by the spirit. And so it's appropriate to be filled by the spirit, to be under the control, under the domination of the Holy Spirit. So we're reacting to him.

We're doing what he wishes. And so be temperate. It means specifically don't be drunk. It generally means, though, be level-headed. Be sober-minded.

[17:21] Wise in your decision-making. Careful in making judgments. So men, older men, that is what is appropriate for you.

Be temperate. So let me just try to flesh this out some more. The time for flying by the seat of your pants and making uninformed decisions, unthought-out, rash decisions, rash judgments, leaping to conclusions, jumping to rash conclusions, that period is over, where you blurt out whatever you first thought.

It's bad enough when you're a young man, but older men should learn by now. Now, the gospel has a way of making us wise in that way, doesn't it?

The gospel itself begins with what we were talking about, with our sin. It begins with our sin. And so maybe there's a problem with me.

And so maybe I shouldn't trust my judgment so much. Maybe I shouldn't trust what I think. Maybe I need to be more careful. So older men, you should be the slowest to rashness.

[18:37] The slowest to jumping to conclusions. The slowest. The most level-headed. So you aren't a teenager anymore. You've seen some things. You've made some mistakes.

There's that saying, the burnt hand learns best. Well, you've burnt your hand a few times. You've stuck your foot in your mouth a few times. So now is the time to be temperate.

Level-headed. Quick to listen. Slow to speak. Slow to become angry. That's what harmonizes with the gospel.

That's what makes the gospel attractive. That's where people say, look at that man. There's something to this gospel. This man is a temperate, level-headed, thoughtful individual.

He listens. He thinks. He's thinking before he acts. So be temperate. The second thing is, be worthy of respect.

[19:42] Be worthy of respect. It means grave or reverent. Now we need to get this straight. When it's talking about being grave, it's not talking about being somber or severe or gloomy.

The gospel older man shouldn't be going around grouchy at everyone with a sour look on his face. Sometimes that is passed for godliness, and that is not godliness.

H.L. Menachem, a satirist, mistakenly said this, Puritanism is the haunting fear that someone somewhere is having fun.

That's what he thought of the Puritans. That isn't mainly true, but to whatever degree it was true, that is not what Paul is talking about here. It's not go around and be severe and grave.

He's talking about being reverent. Reverent or worthy of respect doesn't mean that. It doesn't mean that you don't know how to have fun. It doesn't mean that you don't have a sense of humor.

[20:52] It doesn't mean that you don't know how to smile or to take yourself not so seriously. It means, though, that you do have a generally serious view about life.

That you're not frivolous. You're not silly. You're not trite. What I mean is, is life isn't all about getting as many toys as you can have. It's not all about having fun.

All those things can be appropriate in sort of proportion. But there is a God. He is a holy God.

And he is keenly interested in my life. And I am going to see him. I am going to be judged by him. So my life matters. My living matters. I don't have very much time here. What was that saying that John Wesley had?

[21 : 56] I'm like an arrow shot across this gulf and passing from eternity to eternity. I'm just here for a little moment. My life matters. It is short.

My life matters to God. Your life matters. You have a soul. What will it gain you if you gain the whole world and lose your soul? And so I live reverently.

I put the Lord at my right hand. The days of living for frivolity are over. That's what it means to be reverent. So Jesus saved me from the worthless life of my fathers.

He saved me and he gave me a hope. We're going to talk about that. So older men, you should be saying, I am living for the next life.

I am living for the next life. This life is serious. Your life is serious. God is serious. And other people should be seeing that about you.

[22 : 57] They should be seeing that about you. Not that you're gloomy. But that you do have a generally serious view of life. And you have a respectful, you fear the Lord.

That's what Proverbs is about. It's the beginning of wisdom. Well, you live in the fear of the Lord. So at your funeral, I don't want to have to hope that you were ready for death.

I want to be able to say, well, to be with Christ is better by far. To live is Christ, but to die is gain.

There's no doubt what this man was living for. There's no doubt what this man's life was about.

He feared the Lord and it worked itself out in his life. You saw it. He was worthy of respect. But that's what it means to be reverent. That's how you gain respect.

Paul talks about it to Titus. And he tells him to have that seriousness of mind and integrity. So that the younger men, when they're looking at Titus, they don't find anything to put a finger on.

[24 : 03] They don't find anything in him that says, well, maybe he's not taking all of this very seriously. Maybe this isn't real. Maybe he's just playing around. So Titus was to be this.

And older men, you are to be this. You are to be setting the standard. You are to be in the lead. So be temperate, be reverent, and then be self-controlled.

And that's probably the main idea of this whole passage. All of chapter 2, really, is the gospel makes you self-controlled, so you need to live a self-controlled life. That's almost Titus chapter 2 in a nutshell, because every group is called to this.

Older men, older women, younger men, younger women, they're all called to be self-controlled.

Obviously, in the island of Crete, and we've talked about this, but there was a lot of people not living self-controlled lives.

They were just, whatever the opposite is, living according to ungodliness and worldly passions.

That's why Paul says here, the grace of God has appeared that teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live those self-controlled lives.

[25 : 12] And so what are those worldly passions? It's like, well, I just want to do whatever I want to do, and I don't care, I'm going to do it. Worldly passions start out with the desire, a sinful desire, a short-term, worldly-minded, no heaven, no hope, no grace desire, and it starts out with that, and it ends in slavery.

It starts with pleasure, and it ends in misery and chains. But the grace of God has appeared, older men, and it's appeared to tell us to say no and to show us how we can.

So he's not only forgiven us, he set us free. Just think of Romans 6. Our old man has been crucified with Christ. We've died to this world. Sin doesn't reign, and so we are saying no now to our desires, where before we just always said yes.

Are you learning then to say no? Another way of putting it, are you getting rid of the cacophony and putting on the harmony?

All those worldly passions, getting rid of them. Older men, however much we wish it was true, these things aren't automatic.

[26 : 37] It's not automatic. I think men sometimes think that self-control will just come with age. And I think I have to say, isn't it clear that it doesn't?

It doesn't. If it was automatic, if it just came with birthdays, then Paul wouldn't have to say, now Titus, you need to teach these men that this is what is expected.

This is what matches the gospel. Self-control. And they need to do it. And they need it. Holiness, maturity, is not automatic.

It doesn't necessarily come with age. Old age does seem to be a time of hardening. It's like we become more and more of what we really are.

And some men harden. They set like clay into maturity, into holiness, into sweetness, into graciousness, into kindness, into love.

[27 : 40] They become more than what they were before. But other men harden into folly. They harden into insensitivity.

They harden into stubbornness. And so no one can think they're mature just because they are old. self-control.

That's not how it works. You should be. But it doesn't necessarily mean that you are. So self-control doesn't just come with age.

It has to be learned. It has to be practiced. It has to be taught. It has to be worked out. It needs to be intentional. It needs to be put on. And that's what Paul is saying. That's the life that goes with the gospel.

That's what your life, you need to bring your life into accord with the gospel. So be temperate. Be level-headed. Be sober-minded. Be reverent.

[28 : 41] Live in the fear of the Lord. Be self-controlled. And now last Paul, literally it says, being sound in faith and love and endurance.

Be sound. Being sound. So this is important. I don't think this is just more things to do, although in a way it is. This tells us how those first three things work.

This tells, this is another way of expressing that idea. How do you learn to be reverent, temperate, be self-controlled? How does that work out? What does that actually end up looking like?

Well, it ends up looking like being sound in faith, in love, and endurance. Healthy, healthy is another, a synonym for sound.

Healthy, sound faith. Healthy love. Healthy endurance. That's how the first three things happen. They're sort of the soil that grows temperate, reverence, and self-control.

[29 : 40] They're the natural working out. So if you're in love with God, then you're going to be self-controlled. If you love people, you're going to be wise.

And if you have this endurance about you, so you're not stopping. You're a soldier on the march. You have this endurance. Well, it's going to look like I am taking life seriously. And I'm not going to be controlled by anyone else. And I'm living for that world. And it's going to say, I believe God. I believe in the grace of God. And so here I go. Now you can follow me. That's healthy faith, love, and endurance. And so, men, we need to go to the doctor's office.

Older men. You know, as you get older, the checkups become more frequent. And so you're 50 now, and certain checkups are now required. You've got to be there.

[30 : 37] So, let's go to the doctor's office, men, and older men. How is your faith doing?

Is it healthy? Or is it weakening? Atrophy has set in. Are you still trusting God?

I'm not talking sort of just glib, the language of Israel, where we're just always talking about trusting God. I'm talking, are you trusting God in the moment-by-moment parts of your life?

The trials are coming, and I am trusting Him. I'm going to this Word to hear promises, and I'm trusting that this Word is true. And when it tells me to do something, I believe that it's what is good for me, and so I'm going to do it.

Are you still living dynamically on His promises? Are you still relying on Him? Are you doing it more and more? Life is a moving thing. It's either growing or dying.

[31 : 42] They say that about businesses. A business is either growing or it's dying. It's very much the same thing with Christian life. It's either growing or it's dying.

Now, sometimes there's great periods of big growth, but where there's life, there's growth. Are you doing it more and more? How's your assurance?

And maybe I'm just using this as another way of saying faith. Not just that you are saved, but that you have this assurance, this growing sense of comfort and peace with walking with God.

The 60-year-old you, the 55-year-old you, is different than the 35-year-old you. There's more assurance. There's more father-son faith.

More of what we heard this morning about Billy Bray of saying, I've got to go talk to father about that. Different. Are you growing in that? I know him. I don't need to be worried.

[32 : 47] He's got this. And how about love? Love for him and love for others.

Old age and retirement, it really is a, can be a blessing, but it also can be a terrible temptation to just waste the remaining years of your life.

And where you sort of circle the wagons of your life and you care less and less about other people. It doesn't have to be that way. Are you being healthy in love?

Love towards others. Love towards your family, yes, but love towards others. So there's more affection, greater care, and your endurance.

Are you still keeping on? Fighting the fight? Running the race? In my Bible, I just have to look right across the page and I see what Paul wrote to 2 Timothy.

[33 : 55] and he says, you know, I fought the fight. I finished the race. Here he is. He's now at the very end and he's saying, I fought it to the end.

I didn't throw in the towel. I didn't walk off the course. I ran the race and I finished it. Older men, this is especially for you because old age can be a time when you just quit.

You just, I'm going to coast in, but what you do is just coast off the road. You quit on faith. You quit on love. You quit running the race. You quit fighting the fight. You say, well, I've gone far enough.

I hope that's good enough. And you quit. Maybe some of you remember Ross Perot. He was that kind of funny little guy.

I don't know if he was funny. He seemed kind of funny little guy that ran for president 30 years ago and he brought all the charts to the debates and everyone's like, what is this guy doing? Well, he was a billionaire. He is a billionaire businessman.

[35 : 02] Very successful. Started with very little. He started at IBM. He left IBM to start his own business. He was, he was rejected 77 times before he got his first contract at his new company.

Now, if you've started a job, started a business, and now you're rejected 77 times, what do you do? Well, he just kept going.

And this is what he said. Most people give up just when they're about to achieve success. They quit on the one-yard line. I'm going to just put it in different football terms because you see this too often.

Of, so there's the, there's the guy, the defender, the wide receiver, or whatever. He, a player makes an interception. He recovers a fumble. He catches a pass.

He, whatever, he returns a kickoff and he's running, he's almost to the end zone and just right before, just, just like a half a yard line before he gets to the end zone, he starts to celebrate and he drops the football and the other team recovers.

[36 : 19] It has to be absolutely infuriating if you're the coach. Right? Well, that's, they start celebrating too soon.

Older men, don't do that. Don't let that happen. Don't drop the ball before you get into the end zone.

So, you can read Hebrews. That's what it's a lot about. You know, he says, pay more careful attention that we don't drift away. We have to do this. Who's the we? How, how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?

Again, who's the we? He isn't writing to unbelievers there. He's, it's written to believers who are in danger of ignoring of the things that, ignoring the things that they know.

Ignoring and getting off and forgetting and quitting what was so important to them to begin with. Hebrews is full of these stern, dire, doom, gloom, warnings.

[37 : 27] And let me ask you, are those just theoretical? like, oh, we're talking about theory? No.

Are they contradicting what Jesus talks about and what Paul talks about and God's preserving grace that, is it contradicting that?

No. Hebrews' perspective has a, is a slightly different perspective. Hebrews' perspective is our perspective. It's not looking at this, so to speak, from the God's eye view.

It's from our perspective. Here and now in the middle of it. And what he's saying is, is you just don't make it to the end.

It's not an automatic. It's not over until it's over. You haven't finished until you have finished. And so watch out. Make sure that you finish.

[38 : 31] So older men, there is, there's grace. There's grace to finish. There's grace to keep on. And it can be hard.

Your body is, is falling more and more apart. And death is starting to creep closer and closer. And so it's, it's starting to take people that you know more and more. And life's joys are starting to wilt at the edges.

And, and your faith might be getting tired. You might be getting tired. But, there is grace. And you, and you just see it here where, Paul says, be, being sound in faith and love and endurance. It can be hard and you can yet still be healthy in these things. It can still, it can be hard and yet you can be healthy.

So, outside we're wearing away, but inside we're being renewed day by day. So, your God is the same. Your God is the same as he was 25 years ago.

[39 : 42] Jesus Christ is as full now as he was then. The same spirit is in you. And so, I just remember the psalm, even down to old age they will bear fruit.

Old age is not, does not stop God from producing new fruit, new love, new faith, new hope in us. And so, there is grace.

And so, press on, brothers. Be in serious. Press on. Finish the race. Win the fight. Set the pace. Show us how to do it.

Hebrews 13, 5. Looking to those who went before you, those who are older, remembering what they taught you. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Set the pace. Show us the way. And for the rest of us, let's say you're not an older man, and that's actually most of you. What's our part? Well, let's pray for our older men.

[40 : 45] You know, we pray for our younger men, we pray for our mothers, we should be praying for our older men too. Let's pray that they might be men of grace, respectable, reverent, temperate, healthy in love, healthy in faith, keeping on.

Let's pray for them. And say, so that they can be men that we can look up to and say, see how they're doing it? See how they're doing it?

Let's follow. Let's walk where they're going. Let's pray for them. You know, we pray for younger men to be raised up. Raised up to be elders.

Raised up to be leaders. Let's pray for our older men that they don't fall down. Let's pray for our older men. Let's pray for them too. Well, may God bless his word.

Let's pray. Our great God and Father, we do pray for our older men. They know the challenges.

[41 : 51] They know the difficulties. They know the weariness and the temptations that face them. They know the dangers. And we want them to be men of grace who are level-headed and reverent, holy men and men of self-control.

They've learned to say no to their worldly desires and passions. Make them to be men like that. And give them that endurance and that healthy faith and healthy love that I've just been talking about. That they might not wander off the race right before the end, but that they might run through through the line.

Run through the tape. Finish well. And that is a challenge. Give them grace upon grace.

Persevering, preserving grace.

And I pray for all of us. I pray even for the younger men. We need to be growing in these things. We need to not waste our lives.

[43 : 14] So make us to be men like this. And all of us, help us to live lives that harmonize with the gospel. That shows and reflects the beauty and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ who came for us.

He came with salvation to rescue us. And he is coming again. And that is our blessed hope. Help us to live in light of that.

In Jesus' wonderful, precious name. Amen.