

Titus: 1st Century Wisdom for 21st Century Leaders

Session 2: The "Secret Sauce" of Leadership

Edited Transcript

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Here we go. Hey, good morning, guys. Hey. It's great to see you this morning. Grab your Bibles. Turn to Titus chapter 2, and we're going to continue in our series on 1st Century Wisdom for 21st Century Leaders. If you're looking for Titus, if you didn't mark it from the last time we were there, go to the back of your Bible and go left a little ways. Look for Hebrews and then go a couple pages farther and you'll find the book of Titus.

Now, Titus as we talked about last time, it's a letter. It's a letter from the apostle Paul to a young pastor. He had left Titus on the island of Crete. You've heard the word Cretans, right, or Cretans. What does that usually have, positive or negative connotation? Usually a negative one, right? Well, it comes from this, because Paul in the first chapter reminds Titus of some of the negative things that back in this day and age in the first century that was sort of the reputation of the people that lived on the island of Crete. Even their own philosophers from the island said negative things about the people on the island of Crete. Kind of apparently pretty much a rough place, and I think that's going to figure into some of the things that Paul says to Titus in this letter.

In the first chapter, Paul said to Titus what? "Titus, I left you there so that you could set up the church, you could set up the structure of the church." What was the first thing that Paul gave Titus to do in setting up the structure of the church? What'd he have to appoint? All together now. "Elders." Right.

In Titus chapter one, he gives these qualifications for an elder, and they're pretty specific. They talk about how you love your family, how you live your life, how you live out your faith. These are all important things when you're considering who should be an elder. In these guidelines that he gave for elders are a lot of great leadership principles that we talked about in the last session.

Today, or as the letter goes on, we're going to look at how in chapter two Paul talks about a much broader basis, not just elders, but all of the men and women of the church, what is the Christian ethic. When you think of the word ethics, what do you think of when I say the word ethics?

Morals. Louder. Doing things right, okay. When we talk about the Christian ethic, when we talk about ethics, like I took an ethics class in college. I went to one of the most liberal colleges in the country and we took an ethics class. I took an ethics class, and it was in the philosophy department, which is where most ethics classes are. I'm really glad I took it, because my son just graduated with a degree in philosophy so at least I recognize a couple of things that he's talking about when he talks to me.

When I studied ethics, we look at sort of specific issues and then looked at the ethical approach to those issues, right? Like murder, not ethical. Any questions on that? Lying. Lying, not ethical. Are there exceptions? Yeah, sometimes there are. See, actually this is the key to ethics. The key, ethics is not about morals per se. It's about how you live your life. The ethic that we live our life with is what Paul is talking about here, and the Christian ethic in particular. What do you think is the foundation for the Christian ethic?

The Bible. What in the Bible? *Christ's life. The New Testament.* Nope. Christ used this as the foundation for the Christian ethic. What do you think it was? It's so easy. *The Ten Commandments.* Ten Commandments. Who said it, the Ten Commandments? Raise your hand. You get an extra doughnut, okay? Yes, the Ten Commandments are the basis for the Christian ethic. If you go through the Ten Commandments, you will see the basis for the Christian ethic. You say, "Well, that's law." It's ethic, okay. It's the way to live your life. When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, what he was saying was, "Look, you're going to be wandering around this desert for quite some time. Here's a set of guidelines for how you should function as a people that will enable you to survive the years that you're about to spend walking around this desert. If you do not have a set of guidelines, a structure for how people are supposed to live together, then you're going to just descend into chaos."

The ethic that God gave Moses through the Ten Commandments, the very basis of it was not what the rules were, but who gave them the rules. When they obeyed the Ten Commandments, it wasn't about legalism. It was about honoring God. It was about being obedient to God, not earning righteousness or not earning salvation, but living in such a way that you honor God, you worship God. Because God is good, the ethic that he gave to the Israelites, that he gives to us even today, enables us to live our lives together in the right way.

Paul is continuing that tradition. Keep in mind, Paul is a very, very well trained Jew. He studied under Gamaliel. He grew up. He called himself a Jew of Jews, right? He was a very well-studied scholar in the Old Testament, and he's continuing to teach that ethic to the people in Crete through Titus. He does it all throughout all of his letters, but he's doing it not to be a legalist, but to help people bring glory to God. We'll see that in this passage.

Let's read. We're going to start in chapter 2 verse 1 and I'll kind of stop a couple times along the way. Titus chapter 2, verse 1. But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. I'm going to stop here, because this verse could actually be linked to the last paragraph of the chapter before that we looked at. You remember the chapter before, in the last few verses of this opening part of the letter, Paul talks to Titus about these people that are sort of corrupting the church in Crete. They're empty talkers. They're deceivers. They're Judaizers. They're the circumcision party. These were people that said to become a Christian, you first have to become a Jew, follow all the Jewish laws and traditions, and then you can become a Christian. Paul says, "No, no, no. That's not what it is. It's grace." Paul's all about grace.

He's even saying the problem with that is that if you devote yourself to the law and think that the law saves you, then you buy into the lie that my actions save me. Either I have to be or I get to be good enough so that either God will save me or God has to save me, depending on which angle you want to come at it from. Going into the idea that you have to obey the Jewish customs and traditions was this idea that you're either sort of obligating God or somehow through your own action you're making yourself good enough for God to accept you, and Paul says, "No, that's not right. It doesn't work." As for you, Titus, teach what accords with sound doctrine. That's not sound doctrine. What I'm about to tell you is sound doctrine.

Verse 2, Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching, Titus, show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. Bondservants are to be submissive to their masters in everything. They are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Declare these things. Exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Let's pray and pray that God would show us his wisdom through this passage. Lord God, we come to you this morning, some of us at the end of a week that had great victories, great sales, great decisions at work, great accomplishments by our kids maybe. Maybe the summer vacation has gotten off well and we've enjoyed time with our families. Lord, we also come, some of us, we barely dragged ourselves in here. We've had horrible weeks. We've been frustrated at work. Our family relationships aren't working well. We're irritated our boss and our wives. We've alienated our kids. We've not lived a life that we feel proud of this week, but you brought us here, Lord. We're here in your presence today. We know that you're here with us.

Lord, no matter what kind of week we had, will you quiet our hearts, will you give us the peace of the Holy Spirit and then the understanding of the Holy Spirit as we go through this passage, as we figure out what, Lord, the Christian ethic is, the way that you want us to live our lives so that we can bring you glory, so that we can understand your grace, Lord, and so that we can look expectantly to what you have for us in the future. In Jesus' name, we pray, amen.

All right, what we're going to talk about today then ... Oops, I'll come back to this. What we're going to talk about today is **The "Secret Sauce" of Leadership. The "Secret Sauce" of Leadership.** As we do that, let me give a shout out to this group of guys. This is "Salamanca Men of Christ". There's 20 guys who meet on Saturday mornings at 8:00 using the video Bible study in Salamanca, New York. Reverend Allen Edward leads these guys. Men of all ages, all backgrounds, and all cultures, and they are getting together on Saturday mornings at 8:00 to watch the Bible study and learn with us. Let's give these guys a welcome. All right. Glad to have you guys with us.

We're looking at the secret sauce of leadership, and what we're going to talk about, the very first part about this, we're going to talk about old pros and young guns. Old pros and young guns. Then we'll talk about where we're supposed to start, what Paul says to start, and then we'll talk about the grace of God. Let's look at these old pros and young guns.

OLD PROS AND YOUNG GUNS

In verse 2, you see a very interesting set of characteristics that Paul says that these older men are supposed to have. Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, sound in love, and sound in steadfastness. Here's the interesting thing to me. This is the list for the old guys, all right. Skip down to verse ... Where'd it go? 6. This is the list for the young guys. [1 thing, Self Controlled] Old guys, young guys. Old guys, young guys. What's that about? Here's what that's about. You don't get any of the rest of this if you don't start here, right?

Guys, old guys ... Now, when I say old guys, what I mean is mature Christian men of the faith who have life experience. Gray haired guys, all right. Like if I had hair, okay. Yeah. This is what we want to work towards. Is there anything shocking here? There's nothing here that you're going, "Oh, I didn't know I was supposed to be dignified." Now, not all of you are dignified, but when he's saying dignified he's not talking about like have a handkerchief in your pocket every time you put a jacket on. Like that's not what he means by dignified. He means living a life of dignity, living a life when people look at you and they say, "Oh, that man represents Christ," they go, "Oh, well that man carries himself in a way that I want to do." Like Scott McCurdy barely qualifies here, okay, but he does qualify.

Sober-minded. Sober-minded means exactly what it sounds like. It means be sober. The root of this word is used for not being a drunk, but it's also used for making good decisions, for thinking things through, for not being rash. It has both connotations. If you look at what he says to the women, to the older women, he says it a little bit more clearly. He says not liking too much wine. It's the same idea.

Now, I'm not going to look at the women stuff very much, because there are no women in the room. I'm going to have to say the word submissive, and you guys are all going to go home and tell your wife that I said that they had to be submissive. Not going there, all right. If you are a woman, anybody that's a woman in this room, you need to read verses 3 through 5 carefully. If you are not a woman, let your wife read those, okay. That's not for you. That's for her. We're focusing on 2 and 6.

Now, when we look at a man who's sound in faith, who's sound in love, who's sound in steadfastness, these are great things to really think through. What does the Christian ethic look like for me as a man if this is my goal, if this is who I want to be? In the questions, there's actually a question that I'm going to encourage you guys to go through, because we're going to come back and talk about it at the end. What do each of these concepts mean to you? What does it mean to be sober-minded, to be dignified, to be self-controlled, to be sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness? Then younger guys, what does it really mean to be self-controlled?

Now, here's one thing that I want to point out that's sort of a commonality between all of these things. All of these things have to do with dying to yourself. All of these things have to do with not having to get everything you want when you want it. One of the keys, when we look at the Christian life, when we try to emulate Christ ... Paul said, "Be imitators of me as I imitate Christ." If we're going to imitate Christ, one of the things that we have to recognize in Jesus's life was that he didn't just sacrifice his life at the cross. He sacrificed his life all the way up to the cross. The Son of Man does not have a pillow to lay his head on, right? As a boy, his family were refugees running away from the persecution of Herod. His life was a life of self sacrifice for a greater purpose. If we're going to emulate Christ, if we're going to imitate Christ, then we need to recognize that our lives are lives of sacrifice as well, that when we focus too much on ourselves, this is what leads to things like depression.

Suicide rates have gone up 30% in some states in the last I think it's eight years or 12 years. I'm looking at Pat Leopold, because we were just talking about this and I was hoping he would tell me the number of years. But suicide rates are up 30% in the recent past, 30% in some states. If you've ever talked to somebody that's depressed, I think one of the ways that Satan works on a depressed person is that he turns them in on themselves. Because if you talk to a depressed person, you will hear one word over and over and over and over and over and over again, I. "I don't like my life. I don't like how this is going. I don't like how that's going. I can never succeed. I'm always a victim."

Now, I'm not saying that those things aren't true. They may be very well true, but they're true for all of us. The more you turn your focus in on yourself, the more likely you are to spiral down into darkness and depression, the more likely you are to go to a place of guilt and shame. The Christian ethic calls for us not to be self focused but instead to die to ourselves, to focus outward on building the kingdom of God, on helping other people.

A lot of times, when you have ... I don't know if you have this, but I get in pity parties sometimes. Life's not going the way I want it to go. The shortest antidote I can do is if I can force myself to go help somebody else with something and stop focusing on myself. That's the Christian ethic. You cannot do that if you're not developing these character traits in your life. Here's the great thing, it's a cycle. As you focus outward, as you die to yourself, you become these things. These things are easier to foster in your life and in your heart as you focus outward, as you imitate Christ, as you put away your own self focus.

This is why Paul says these things to these guys. Now, this is interesting. He starts with self-control. Now, here's what I think, and this is me, okay. I don't think self-control is the portal for every guy to all of these things. I think it was the portal for the people that lived on the island of Crete, because we know from the first chapter what the people on the island of Crete were, and this sounds like the biggest issue that they had.

What I think Paul is saying is not like, "Young men, start with being self-controlled." I think he's saying to the guys on the island of Crete, "Guys, develop these character traits, and then for these young guys, you've got to find one place to start. This is a pretty good place to start, because this is the situation that you're in."

This is the old pros and the young guns. I'm reminded, last weekend Pat and I went up to South Carolina and one of our area directors put on a weekend with about 10 guys from around his community, around the community of Augusta. We went to this ranch outside of Augusta actually in South Carolina, and when we got there, one of the first things we did was we shot skeet. Now, I've shot skeet once in my life before this. I had a great time. I went with a group of guys from my church. I learned to shoot a shotgun with guys from my church. Pete Alwinson, who's my pastor, he's the one that taught me how to shoot a pistol, and the guys from my church taught me how to shoot a shotgun.

When the guys took me out to learn how to shoot skeet, I was on a men's adventure trip for my church. They handed me a gun. They told me where to point it. They showed me what the safety was. They showed me how to load it, showed me what the safety was, talked to me about gun safely like always point the barrel down range or straight up, and all the stuff I needed to know. Then I shot skeet. I was terrible. I mean I was like terrible, all right. Everything I hit basically I hit because when I shot the gun, the clay thing went in the way of where I was shooting.

Then the next day, I got up and I had a bruise in the exact shape of the end of a shotgun stock on my upper arm. Now, why? Because I had it in the wrong place, right? Because I was shooting with a bunch of guys my own age and nobody thought to tell me, "No, you're supposed to put it up here." This time when I went, I told the guys this story, and all the guys were very experienced and a couple of them were laughing when I told the story. They're like, "Yeah, that's good. We'll make sure that you have it up in the right place." I was still terrible, but I had a great time.

Now, we had three kinds of shotguns there. We had 12 gauge, 20 gauge, and one guy was shooting a .410. Now, for those of you that don't know the difference, the 12, 20, .410, you would think that would be like smaller, bigger, biggest. It's the exact opposite. 12 gauge shoots the most shot, like an ounce and a half about of shot, and a 20 gauge shoots about an ounce of shot roughly, and then the .410 shoots like less than half an ounce of shot. Less than half an ounce of shot. I want the most shot possible going towards the clay, right? I want a big spray. I want every advantage I can get. I was like, "Can I saw off the barrel a little bit farther back?"

You know who won every time? We did all these different competitions. You know who won every time? The guy shooting the .410. By the way, the oldest guy in the group. He made it look effortless, right? I'm sitting there like, "Pull," and I'm looking all over the place for it. He's sitting there. He's like, "Pull," like it was nothing. Experience. He was the old pro in the group.

There's another guy there who was actually an instructor, same thing. He shot a 20 gauge, but same thing, very relaxed, very confident, very, I don't know, dignified, very self-controlled with his gun, very steady. It's a great metaphor. Skeet shooting is a great metaphor for how we can live our lives, and how we can learn from guys that are more experienced than us, and how practicing makes us calmer. Practicing makes us more accurate. Practicing makes us able to hit the target that we're trying to hit.

Practicing the Christian ethic, practicing these attributes helps you develop them. Now, do these attributes have anything to do with salvation? No, no. Salvation has nothing to do with how you live your life. It has to do with what Jesus did on the cross. But the Christian ethic, this is the Christian ethic that we want to try to practice to live up to so that we can become as accurate and as calm as those two old guys sitting on the skeet range hitting everything that went by. I think I saw them miss like ... There were shotgun shells everywhere. Let me tell you what. There's nothing like the smell of gunpowder, is there? I mean it's about three minutes into it, and I'm just like, "Ah!" It must be something in our DNA or something just to like that. We had such a good time, a group of guys just hanging out.

By the way, totally aside here, we spent that evening, we had dinner together and then we just sat around. We talked for about an hour and a half. Each guy just shared about where they are in their spiritual journey. Our age range was 23 to 70. 23 to 70, and every guy just sharing about his spiritual journey. To see that some of the younger, 23 year old guy, 30 year old guy. The 23 year old guy's engaged. I mean he has no idea what's about to happen to him, does he? 30 year old guy, married for a few years, getting ready to start a family, guys with young kids, guys with teenagers, guys with adult kids, guys with grandkids. This is the picture that Paul's painting here, right, is this multi-generational group of men, the older guys showing the younger guys how to live. That's what he's going for here, all right.

START HERE

What Paul says is for the young guys, we've got to figure out where to have them start. There's actually a leadership lesson here, and the leadership lesson is this, is that when you are mentoring someone, boil it down to the main thing. Older guys, don't sit down with a younger guy and say, "Well, you know I've been watching you lately, and here's 10 things I think we need to work on." It's not going to work. Paul doesn't do that. While gives the older guys the bigger list because they've been around longer and they have more experience, when he's talking about the younger guys, he just boils it down to the main thing, the main place they need to start.

I was in a mentoring relationship with a young leader, a young church leader, a couple years ago. We sat down and he said, "All right, what are we going to read? What are we going to do?" I realized in talking to him that like he was already in a small group. He was already getting good preaching at church. What I said to him was, "Look. We don't need to read anything. You're reading enough. You're studying enough. You're in the Bible a lot. Let's do this. Tell me the one or two things in your life that are frustrating you the most and let's just talk about those two things." Every week, we talked about his marriage and his kids, his marriage and his kids, his marriage and his kids. We just talked through those things every week. We needed to start there. That was the place, that was the sticking point in his life.

Guys, older guys, I really want to encourage you that as you engage with younger men, don't try to fix them. Don't try to make a list of all their character flaws so that you can check them off the list. What's the thing, where do you need to start? Paul says to the older guys, "Figure out where they need to start." For the Cretans, it was self-control. For my friend that I sat down with, it was his household. We started with his household. Maybe it's a guy's finances. His finances are so screwed up, that's where you need to start. Maybe it is self-control. Maybe he's got an addition issue, pornography or alcohol, and that's where you need to start. But don't try to do everything. Just figure out what the main thing is. If you'll mentor a guy in the main thing, then you'll begin to develop his Christian ethic. His walk with God will begin to grow and develop as well.

That's the first half of this passage. Now, there's great stuff in here that we didn't talk really about, great instructions for older women. I want you to notice that Paul says to Titus, "I want you to teach the older men, the older women, and the younger men." Then he says, "Titus, have the older women teach the younger women." Why? Well, Titus is a young pastor. It would not make sense, it would not be prudent, it would put Titus perhaps in an uncomfortable position to be responsible for teaching the younger women, so he said, "Titus, teach the older women. Here's the things that you need to help the older women with. Then let the older women teach the younger women." It's just practical, right? It's not theological. It's practical.

Then he even talks about bondservants, which I think a lot of these things would apply to even us as employees in a company. Don't be argumentative. Don't pilfer. Don't steal from your boss. Show good faith. Do everything as well as you can. Why? Because it's an act of worship to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. When a Christian man in a work environment does work to the best of his ability, is honest, is faithful, that's adorning the doctrine of the Word of God. Why? Because when an employer or other coworkers see you as a Christian man doing your best at work and they know that the reason you're doing your best at work is because you believe in Jesus and you want to reflect well on Jesus, that adorns the doctrine of the Word of God. If you're working for the most unjust, unholy, lousy, horrible, dishonest boss that you've ever worked for, do your best. Do your best and show what it means to imitate Christ even at work, all right?

THE GRACE OF GOD

All right, let's look at these last few verses here, and that is talking about the grace of God." For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Declare these things. Exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you."

If you look at verses 11 through 14, verses 1 through 10 are the what, and verses 11 through 14 are the why. The why is that we're doing this for the grace of God. We're doing this in expectation, verse 13, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. The grace of God, look at verse 12, it trains us first of all to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, so that's sort of looking at where we've come from, and then to live moving forward self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age so that or because we are waiting, and waiting in hope.

In the Bible, when they talk about hope, they're not talking about like, "Gee, I hope something happens." They're talking about expectation like, "I know Brett's going to stop talking soon." You're not hoping I talk ... You would say, "I hope," but you know it's going to happen. You're just hoping it happens soon, right? Same with Jesus coming back, right? We have our hope in Jesus coming back. We don't know when. We just hope it's soon. Live your life in a way as if Jesus is going to appear soon.

By the way, Paul says, when you live like that, when you live understanding the grace of God, when you live understanding that Christ died for you, when you live understanding that he's coming back, living in that expectation actually trains you for godliness. Because who's going to live an ungodly life if Jesus is going to show up in five minutes, right? You're not going to like be doing something you're not supposed to do going, "I hope Jesus shows up while I'm doing this," right? You're going to live a godly life. Living under the understanding of grace is in and of itself a training for godliness. The grace of God motivates us to renounce the world, to renounce a worldly way of living, and to adopt instead the Christian ethic.

This is what Paul is saying to Titus, and then this last verse is just another exhortation to a young leader. Go and teach this with authority. Don't let people talk you out of it. Don't let people pull you away from the gospel. Don't let people pull you away from my teachings. Be strong, Titus. I know these Cretans are tough, but Titus, you're tougher. You got this. That's what Paul's saying. Another great lesson for us as leaders when we're mentoring younger guys, that when they know what they're doing is right to stand up for what they believe, stand up for doing the right thing, and to not be weak, to not be deterred, and to as Paul would say let no one disregard you.

All right, so we've got questions on the tables. Can I have one of these sheets? We've got questions on the tables, and I want you to notice question number two, what are the attributes of the older man in Titus 2:2. Pick two of three of them and discuss what it means specifically. Instead, here's what we're going to do. I'm going to actually assign you so that we can come back. These are that attributes from Titus 2:2, right? These three tables are going to be sober-minded. You were supposed to laugh when I said that. Those three tables are going to be dignified. These three tables are going to be self-controlled. Those two tables are going to be sound in faith. These two tables are going to be sound in love, and those three tables, you're going to be sound in steadfastness.

When you get to question two, talk about what does that attribute look like in the way you live your life today. Then when we come back in about 15 minutes, we'll get your answers on what that might look like today, all right? Don't spend too long on that. Just spend a minute or two or a few minutes on that. We'll break to the tables and we'll gather back here in about 15, 20 minutes.

All right, guys. All right, we're going to do something. I'm going to try something. I have no idea if this will work. The great part is if it doesn't, we'll have it preserved on video for austerity. Here's what I'm going to do. We sort of had assignments for what we were going to say what does this look like in today's day and age. What does it look like to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled in today's day and age. We're actually going to make a list live here. Isn't this exciting? Are you excited? Are you excited?

Yeah. Whoo! Come on. Here's my sober-minded section. You guys look boring.

We're very sober-minded. Yeah, very sober-minded. What are some things that you guys came up with that would be sober-minded in today's day and age? It's like you didn't believe me that I said I was going to come back and ask you.

I think we said being serious but not boring. Serious but not boring. I like that.

Consistency. Consistent. What else? *Responsible.* Not being hot-headed and not engaging in Twitter and Facebook wars. Responsible. Not hot-headed, avoiding social media wars. All right, that's good. All right, dignified. Where's my dignified section? Anyone? Okay, you guys. All right. Tell me what dignified looks like today.

We kind of started with a definition, a man of dignity unbending principles in a composed or serious manner or style. Okay. I'm going to take a couple of those words that you said, composed. What else did you say that you liked? *Composed or serious manner or style.* Is that what you think? *A man of dignity and unbending principles is probably the key there.* Unbending principle, okay.

We kind of said dignity, we have a sense of a persona. How do you know when somebody's dignified? We looked at the other characteristics on the list for the old pros, and we said when we see somebody that's sober-minded, self-controlled, sound in faith, and they live those principles out, then we tend to see that as dignified.

Okay. Living out the principles of faith. How's that? Anybody else in that group? *We came up with the same things.* Good. Nice job. I can't believe they just ripped you guys off. That's not dignified at all. All right, anybody else for dignified? *Being respectful.* Yeah, that's really good. Anything else? All right, how about self-controlled? Here's my self-controlled groups right here, right?

We said control your spending. Say it again. *Spending.* Okay, spending. *We came up with things to be having self-control over.* Okay. *Control your eating. Your tongue. Tongue, yeah. Think before you speak.* Eating, tongue. *Emotional balance.*

Emotional balance, good. Anything else? Okay. Now, let's be honest. The first three of these are easier than the next three, all right. Who had sound in faith? Nobody's raising their hand. You guys did? Who had sound in faith? What'd you have for sound in faith? Anything? Don't blow this up now. We're like

halfway done and it's working. Who had sound in faith? Raise your hand. Be dignified and honest about it. Did nobody have sound in faith?

All right, what'd you come up with? *Well, we talked a lot about legacy and how the one thing is to keep it the main thing.* Okay, what is the main thing? *To have faith, faith in Christ.* Okay, faith in Christ. Good. Anything else?

Remain dedicated to it on a weekly basis and don't just kind of use it situational. That's really good, not situational. Excellent. All right, sound in love. Who had sound in love?

Sacrificing and putting others first. That's good. That's probably it right there, right? Anything else for love?

All right. What about sound in steadfastness, endurance? I know that was like the tables in the back there. *Steady and focused, pragmatic.* Anything else? *Endurance.*

All right. Now, let me tell you the danger with doing this and why I'm not even sure that I wanted to do it, and still I'm not sure that I wanted to do it. Because it's very easy to fall into legalism. Not the legalism that you're thinking of like, "Don't drink, smoke, or chew, or go with girls who do." Not like that kind of obvious legalism, but a much more insidious kind of legalism that says again that sort of goes to, "Well, if I do these things, it will please God and therefore that will save me. No, no, no. God already loves you. He already loves you so much that he died for you, but these are the fruits of fully recognizing what God has done for us.

In other words, you're not doing this stuff so that God will be pleased. Because God is pleased, we want to develop these attributes in our life so that we can proclaim his gospel in an effective way to the world. Living like this is really not inwardly focused. You could do all these things and be inwardly focused, like, "I'm going to be respectful, and responsible, and enduring, and I'm going to put other people first, and yay me!" right? "Boy, God's going to be so happy with me." God's already happy with you. That's done. When he looks at you, the Bible says, he sees Jesus's righteousness. Jesus's ethic covers you. That's what God sees when he sees you. That's done.

But at the same time, we live in a culture that is so undignified, that is so out of control, that is so unsound in its faith, and is flighty, and is hateful, and is not sober-minded that we as Christian men, we need to stand up and live this ethic not so that God will be happy with us, but so the world will know that there's a better way. Old guys, the young guys, they need us. They need us to walk beside them. They need us to encourage them. Not whack them over the head, but to walk beside them, and encourage them, and help them grow, help them become the men that they know they want to be so that they can also proclaim the gospel to a world that desperately needs it.

Father, thank you so much for these guys. I pray, Lord, that you would bless them today, throughout this weekend, and all throughout next week, that you would help us live a life that gives you glory. Lord, not a life of obedience for the sake of making ourselves acceptable. We know that that's done once we follow you, Lord. You've saved us from that. You've saved us from ourselves, but Lord, we want to live that out so that other people would see that, so that they would understand the power of the gospel, the love of God, and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Father, we lift this up to you in Jesus' name, amen. Guys, have a great week. I love you.