

Who Are The Mentors? They Are Us! ***A Titus 2 Bible study for "older" women***

Dear God,

You know us better than we know ourselves. You know our failures and weaknesses, doubts and fears. You know our need of a Savior. Because of what Jesus Christ has done for us, we can be vessels of hope in Your hands. Help us to see ourselves as You see us. Help us to put our trust in You and resist the deception of this world. Give us courage to use our own life experiences—the good and the bad—to help younger women avoid the pitfalls and more safely navigate the journey to their heavenly home. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Living in this world, it is easy to forget who and Whose we are. And when we forget, then we cannot mentor others to be godly women.

Identity matters. It matters now and for eternity. The world identifies us in the wrong way. The world tells us we are "sexual beings", but God tells us we are so much more than that. The world tells us that we have to be young and beautiful in order to be valuable, but that is not the voice of God.

God made us to be spiritual beings: body, mind and soul. With our Baptism, we became daughters—heirs—of God in Christ Jesus. Satan despises the daughters that God so loves. So we are in spiritual warfare every day of our lives. Satan first came to the first woman, Eve, with a tempting question: "Did God really say . . .?" That is the same question that Satan asks us today. "Did God really say that you can't take control of your own life?" "Did God really say that you can't trust your feelings and emotions?" "Did God really say that you should put away pride and serve with humility?" Eve forgot who and Whose she was. She forgot to fear and love God. She fell into sin.

Today, we not only battle Satan and the world, but—perhaps most of all—we battle our own sinful nature. Satan comes prowling around, seeking to stir up doubt, fear and self-centered pride. When we doubt God and think first of ourselves, we fail to act in ways that glorify God. Women who fear and love God are needed in a society that embraces immorality and is, therefore, sick and suffering.

Titus was a young pastor in the midst of a similar immoral society. He was in need of a model for use in his congregation so that they could build strong families and resist the sinful world. St. Paul was inspired to give Titus a model that is specific to men and to women. Here is God's Word to older women:

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 (Titus 2:3-5).

This passage is one of the most despised and rejected passages in Scripture, even by Christian women. **Why do you think that might be? What is so “unpopular” in these verses?**

How do these verses speak to us as women in our own families and congregational family?

An older Christian woman once said, “I can’t mentor!” But, wait a minute! We are mentoring all the time by the words we choose to say and the way we choose to act. We are mentoring with our tone of voice, our willingness to listen, or our particular way of helping. The truth is, we can’t help but help! A woman’s first and foremost vocation is to be a helper. God created woman to be a helper—to be a co-steward with man over all of creation, to help man defend life and to remember God’s Word and use it. We are helping all the time either to build up... or tear down. **Read Proverbs 14:1.**

When we are not self-controlled with our words or actions, then we help make things worse. But when we are self-controlled with our words and actions; when we stop to think: How can I glorify God and help someone else—then we will almost certainly help in a good and positive way.

We need to remember who we are and Whose we are! *Our identity matters!* We need to remember our Baptism which makes us different from the world. We need to remember that we are daughters of God in Jesus Christ. We need to remember that Jesus made us to be “holy ones”. Holy is the opposite of common. We are uncommon! To be uncommon means we are useable not just in any random or meaningless way, but by God in a noble and purposeful way. We are treasures for whom Jesus died! **Read Matthew 13:44.** The price Jesus paid for our lives makes us valuable beyond measure. What a difference it makes when we remember this! It helps us treat the younger women in our lives, our friends, the men in our lives, our children, the people with whom we work, and our neighbors as uncommonly valuable, too!

Jesus is coming again. And, when He comes, what will we be doing? Will we be struggling against our sinful nature and holding tightly to Jesus’ robe of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10), or will we have stopped struggling against our own selfishness and put faith in our own way of thinking?

What does God’s Word tell us in Ephesians 4:20-24? In Ephesians 2:8-10? What are these “good works”?

Because of who and Whose we are, we can take the baggage of our sin—our doubt, poor choices and lack of self-control—to the foot of the Cross where Jesus has

already forgiven them. We can confess our sins, fears and failures, then start fresh and new each day. **Read Lamentations 3:23-24.**

Who better to mentor this confession and newness of life than an older woman in the faith? In **1 Timothy 5:9-14**, we learn that the Body of Christ is to distinguish the older widows from the younger. Let's read this, then answer: **What is the significance of this passage? What does it say to us?**

Where are the mentors? They are us! Unfortunately, we fear. Mentoring biblical womanhood is not popular. It is, in fact, counter-cultural. It is resisted. Obstacles stand in way. There are two obstacles: the younger *and* older woman.

Believing they are more progressive, younger women naturally resist mentoring. Even when willing to learn from an older woman, they may say, "But the culture is different than it was when you were my age." That may be, *but Truth never changes.*

The greater obstacle to mentoring biblical womanhood is the older woman. It is the older woman—in age, experience or spiritual maturity—who resists the opportunity to mentor. Why? Because she is:

- Afraid.
- Untrained.
- Has forgotten or doubted her identity.

It's true. We can't mentor when we're afraid to act our age. We can't mentor if we don't want to accept where we're at in life. We can't mentor if we're afraid to re-visit our past and acknowledge our failures. We can't mentor if we're afraid of rejection. We can't mentor if we're impatient or uncontrolled. We can't mentor if we're afraid we'll be considered irrelevant. *In other words, we can't mentor if "it's all about me"!*

It's true! *We can't mentor if "it's all about me"—my fears, my inabilities, my past, my age, my desires.* We can't help younger women, or the men in our lives, or our neighbors if "it's all about me". We can, however, make a life-changing difference if we're all about God... God's Word in Jesus Christ. It is God's Word that tells us who we are and why we exist. Trusting the Word, we need not fear the world or ourselves.

Does God want us to accept our age? Experiences? Failures?

Disappointments? Yes! And, making use of all of that, He wants us to warn, train and equip the younger women He places in our lives. There is only one thing necessary for us to mentor: God's Word. *Trusting God's Word makes us wise, willing, confident and less focused on self and more focused on others.*

Who are the mentors? They are us!

Older women make the best mentors because we've learned from experience (often the hard way). We've also learned that trying to navigate life by ourselves we are weak, foolish and without wisdom. **Can you give some examples of what happens when we fear:**

- **Being in control or in charge?**
- **Our age?**
- **Our circumstances in life (health, family issues, where I'm at in life)?**
- **Disappointments and failures?**
- **Unconfessed sins?**

Who are the mentors? They are us!

We mentor best by remembering who and Whose we are:

- **Genesis 1:27**
- **Genesis 2:18**
- **Isaiah 43:1, 6-7**
- **1 Peter 1:15-16**
- **1 John 2:28 - 3:1**

We mentor best by bearing fruits of the Spirit. **Read Galatians 5:22-23.**

What examples from everyday life can you give of:

- **Patience?**
- **Kindness?**
- **Faithfulness in all things (including circumstances)?**
- **Self-control?**

Our identity as baptized daughters of God in Christ Jesus is a holy identity. To be holy means to be "set apart" as uncommon, not common. The world may act in a common way. It may be captive to immorality and sensuality. It may be captive to lies and deception. It may be loud, rude and selfish. It may seek after its own way. But Baptized believers in Jesus Christ are not common; we are uncommon. We are called to be different. We are called to be holy. We are called by God, not by our own reason or strength.

Our families and neighbors are tempted by the common world; by this sensual, sinful and deceptive world. They are in need of light and hope and something different from the world. They look at people who call themselves Christian to see if we are any different; if we, in fact, have light to shine and hope to share.

Through an older and more seasoned St. Paul, God gave young pastor Titus a model that would help his congregation make a positive difference in the midst of an immoral culture. That model was for older men to mentor younger men and for older women to mentor younger women. This is how believers in Jesus Christ—male and female—would help their families resist evil and, at the same time, have a positive impact on children, friends and neighbors.

The model for mentoring given to Titus is the same model given to us for use in the midst of today's immoral culture. It is God's Word and not our own opinion or trendy thought that equips older women to mentor younger women. God's Word works through the life experiences of an older woman to give her what is needed to lead younger women toward hope and away from despair.

Faithful use of the model in Titus 2:3-5 bears good fruit. The promise is real.

Jesus is coming again. **While we anticipate His coming, how shall we live? And why does it matter?**

Read Titus 2:11-14.

