

**Series:** *Titus: The Gospel for Godly Living*  
**Lesson:** *Godly Garments*  
**Text:** Titus 2:1 – 10 (L4)  
**Date:** Sunday, November 27, 2011

*Colonial Hills  
Baptist Church*

### Key



= Teacher Information



= Discussion Starter

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### INTRODUCTION

What occupations go with the following wardrobes?

- A light brown big coat, big pants with thick boots, thick gloves, a red hat, and a hose? Fireman
- A blue suit with a tie and a gun? Policeman
- A brown pair of shorts and a brown short-sleeved shirt in a brown box van? UPS worker
- A camouflaged outfit? Military man
- A sharp suit, polished shoes, briefcase, etc.? Businessman
- A pinstripe pair of pants and matching shirt, long socks, cleats, a cap, and glove? Baseball player

All of those occupations have a dress attire that fits them. When you see someone in those outfits, you know what their job is. In many instances, companies have a particular dress standard that their employees are required to abide by. This wardrobe is meant to distinguish them from other workers and present a particular corporate image.

This is the idea that Paul turns to in chapter 2. Against the hypocrisy of the deceivers (1:16), true believers adopt a “wardrobe” that fits their testimony of faith in Christ. While some professing believers in the Cretan churches practiced a lifestyle filled with disobedience (1:16), Paul charges Titus to “speak thou the things which become sound doctrine” (2:1). With an emphatic imperative<sup>1</sup> Paul commands Titus to teach those behaviors, thinking patterns, attitudes, and pursuits<sup>2</sup> that “fit” sound doctrine. The word “becoming” or “fitting” is used similarly in Ephesians 5:3 and I Timothy 2:10 and carries the idea of appropriateness and properness.<sup>3</sup> “Sound” doctrine is that correct teaching that that is healthy and beneficial (cf. Titus 1:9, 13; 2:2, 8), contra the deceitful and destructive teaching of 1:10-16. So, Titus is challenged by Paul to teach what outfit is appropriate for Christians—what behavior fits with belief,

<sup>1</sup> Paul uses the singular second person personal pronoun both to contrast Timothy’s ministry (2:1) with that of the false teachers (1:16) and to emphasize the importance of this message.

<sup>2</sup> Literally “the things” or “what things” in the Greek. Paul uses the neuter plural relative pronoun to be purposefully general. He wants Titus to comprehensively instruct in a consistent Christian lifestyle.

<sup>3</sup> The other NT uses of this word are in Matthew 3:15, I Corinthians 11:13, Hebrews 2:10, and Hebrews 7:26.

what practice matches with a Christian profession, what good deeds complement good doctrine.

That the gospel believed produces the gospel practiced is a regular teaching of Paul.<sup>4</sup> That a distinct God requires distinct children is likewise expressed by Peter (cf. I Peter 1:16, quoting Leviticus 11:44). The believer's wardrobe revealed to us here in Titus 2:1-10 is indeed filled with Designer clothes, for each of these godly garments was prepared for us beforehand by God Himself (vv. 11-14; cf. Ephesians 2:10). His intent in the first creation was that people clothe themselves with these distinct and godly garments, and His purpose in His recreation is no different (cf. Ephesians 1:4, 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10), except that this recreation into the image of Christ will succeed eternally! Genuine belief will be authenticated by godly behavior, and Scripture regularly teaches that.<sup>5</sup> The gospel is not sterile or licentious; part-and-parcel with it is a transformation of life and the production of actual godliness. Salvation (including the wholistic aspects of it—i.g., sanctification and glorification) demands by its very definition a separation from sin and a distinct likeness to “the divine nature” (cf. II Peter 1:4; II Corinthians 3:18). Therefore, those who have been truly rescued will continue to demonstrate the separation and distinction that God has already caused in them through His salvation.

This is the message that Titus was being compelled to preach. Moving his attention from the church leaders (1:5-9) to the congregation (2:1-15), Paul burdens Titus to proclaim a foundational message: “Believers, wear an appropriate outfit! Put on godly garments!”

To take the message a bit further, the application for those who are not dressing from that wardrobe is striking: either change your practice or change your profession. From the person who professes to be saved, but lives a lifestyle that doesn't “fit” such a profession, the Bible withholds all assurance of salvation. A true professor will experience the transforming power of the gospel, because it's unavoidable. That's just the nature of the gospel message (cf. II Corinthians 3:18; 5:7). Christ died to secure, not only your salvation from sin's penalty, but also deliverance from sin's power! So, the one who doesn't live a life that is fitting with healthy teaching is admonished to stop deceiving himself and end his hypocrisy—he must either start living a gospel-produced godly life or stop professing that he's personalized Christ's work. “By his works” his failure to “abide by the dress code” has undermined his profession (1:16).

To take this whole “clothing” analogy a bit further, we could summarize the two major sections in chapter 2 as follows:

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Romans 12:1-2, following the doctrine of chapters 1-11; Ephesians 4:1ff, following the doctrine of chapters 1-3; Colossians 3:1ff, following the doctrine of chapters 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> Jesus Christ—Mark 8:34; James—James 1:6-8, 22, 26; 2:2-4, 17; 3:13; Paul—II Corinthians 5:7.

- Vv. 2-10: The admonition to wear an appropriate outfit – behavior that matches belief.
- Vv. 11-14: The explanation on how to get dressed – behavior designed by the gospel.

Looking at just that first section this week (and continuing with our “clothing” illustration), we'll do so as if we were considering a dress guidelines section of our Christian living handbook.

## WHAT SHOULD WE WEAR?

These first 10 verses of chapter 2 are very practical. Paul moves from group to group within the church, delineating for them what particular garments they should be donning from the gospel-wardrobe.

### 1. *General observations about the wardrobe*

#### a. *This wardrobe provides both internal and external garments.*

Anytime a list of behavioral characteristics is provided for believers to consider and practice, the accusation of “legalism” is soon to follow. Such an indictment is quite pejorative, very poorly understood, and completely ungrounded.<sup>6</sup> God's Word often provides a list of characteristics to practice or avoid.<sup>7</sup> Such lists are not given to promote a legalistic<sup>8</sup> conformity, but to flesh-out the gospel in a practical manner so that believers can “do the homework” and exercise themselves unto godliness (I Timothy 4:7).

This list contains many external qualities that believers are simply admonished to practice. We understand that if such qualities are simply performed apart from a personal belief in Christ and His work, they are not only useless and futile, they are also deceptive and condemning. However, when flowing out of one's acceptance of sound doctrine, these attributes please and glorify Christ. In our passage, these external or behavior qualities are:<sup>9</sup> “grave,”

<sup>6</sup> Such an understanding of legalism completely misunderstands true legalism. Legalism is not possessing standards and abiding by a set of protective guidelines; nor is it holding to a “stricter” or “more conservative” standard. Rather, legalism is the attempt to obtain divine favor through self-effort.

<sup>7</sup> E.g., Galatians 19-24; Ephesians 4:24-5:5; Colossians 3:5-14

<sup>8</sup> That is, the earning of God's favor through such adherence.

<sup>9</sup> That Paul does have in mind here specific practices that he wants to see people adopt is further evidenced by his use of the Greek infinitive of *eimi* (“to be”—used of the older men in v. 2, the younger women in v. 5, and servants in v. 9). While he's not advocating a godless conformity to a standard, he is emphasizing practical Christian living, and he's admonishing believers to get active in putting on Christ and putting off the old man. Christians should “be” a certain kind of person, and they will need to work towards that end. Such an external emphasis

“temperate,” “holy behavior,” “not false accusers,” “not given to much wine,” “teachers,” “chaste,” “keepers at home,” “obedient,” “pattern of good works,” “uncorruptable doctrine,” “sound speech,” “not purloining.” That they were never intended to be separated from heart godliness is evident in other internal qualities listed here: “sober,” “sound in faith, charity, and patience,” “holiness,” “good things,” “love,” “discreet,” “sincerity,” “good fidelity.”

b. *This wardrobe emphasizes discernment.*

In verses 2, 5, and 6 Paul emphasizes the need for discernment (cf. 1:18; 2:4, 12).<sup>10</sup> The word here has to do with having “understanding about practical matters and thus be[ing] able to act sensibly—to have sound judgment, to be sensible, to use good sense, sound judgment.”<sup>11</sup> This is a mindset admonished of all believers in Romans 12:3, and is one that is developed only as one practices God’s Word in the daily decisions of life (cf. Hebrews 5:14; Galatians 5:23). Believers “should have the discernment, discretion, and judgment that comes from walking with God for many years.”<sup>12</sup> This wardrobe, then, will become a more consistent dressing pattern as one cultivates his relationship with God and adopts the mind of Christ.



How does one develop discernment? As one gets to know the Standard Himself in God’s Word and through prayer.

Why is discernment so foundational to godly living? It distinguishes truth from error and good from evil

c. *This wardrobe is full of “hand-me-down” garments through teaching.*

Almost everyone has had at some point in their growing-up years “hand-me-down” clothes. This passage demonstrates the importance of handing down these godly garments to the next generation by teaching and modeling (vv. 1 and 15—bookends; also, v. 3, 4, 7, 8). The gospel-wardrobe is full of hand-me down clothes (cf. II Timothy 2:2). It is not enough to merely practice these characteristics oneself; we should also be provoking others to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24-25).

is also evident in Paul’s expectation of “behavior that becomes holiness” (same word as v. 1) for the older women (v. 3) and his charge to the younger men to present themselves as “a pattern of good works” (v. 7).

<sup>10</sup> The Greek word is *sophron* or *sophroneo* and is translated “temperate” in v. 1, “discreet” in v. 5, and “sober-minded” in v. 6.

<sup>11</sup> Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*. Electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996.

<sup>12</sup> MacArthur, John. Titus in *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996. P. 74.

2. *Specific garments in the wardrobe*

While we won’t study in depth every garment offered to the various groups of people, we will provide a summary characteristic for each group to focus on.



Depending on your Particular table and Interests, consider discussing some of these qualities, asking perhaps (1) what does this particular quality mean or look like, and (2) how can we cultivate it in our lives?

• *Older men (v. 2): maturity*

The older men are admonished to provide a bedrock of stability within the local church by their maturity and godliness. These men are exhorted to be self-controlled (*nephalios*), honorable (*semnos*), sensible (*sophron*), sound in faith (*hugiaino...pistis*), love (*agape*), and endurance (*hupomone*).

• *Older women (vv. 3-4a): consistency*

The older women are urged to live consistent lives that complement their male counterparts. They are to have behavior that reflects holiness (*hieroprepes*) and avoids slander (*diabolos*) and enslavement to alcohol (*douloo...polus...oinos*), and then they are instructed to teach what is good (*kalodidaskolos*) and encourage younger women to be sensible and discerning (*sophronidzo*).

• *Younger women (vv. 4-5): love*

The younger women are supposed to be characterized by love, most clearly evidenced at home. Therefore, they should be husband-lovers (*philandros*) and children-lovers (*philoteknos*), submissive to their husbands (*hupotasso*) and known for purity (*hagnos*) and kindness (*agathos*) in their homemaking (*oikourgos*).

• *Younger men (vv. 6-8): example*

Interestingly, the only group explicitly admonished to be examples is the younger men (cf. I Timothy 4:12). Specifically, they are to be a pattern, mark, model, or example “in all things” of “good works.” Young men can be some of the most self-centered, self-serving, and immature people in the local church. Here, they are point-blank called upon to lead the church of Christ in good works (*kalos...ergon*) and in the teaching of God’s Word. Their teaching should be characterized by accuracy and benefit (*hugies*), integrity (*agthoria*), dignity (*semnotes*), and irreproachability (*akatagnostos*).

• *Slaves (vv. 9-10): submission*

Slaves were those under authority who served a particular master. Our closest parallel would be the employer-employee relationship.

Slaves and employees should primarily be characterized by submission (*hupotasso*), pleasing (*euarestos*) their supervisors, not speaking against (*antilego*) them. In their subordinated role, they must not pilfer (*nosphidzo*), but rather demonstrate faithfulness (*agathos...pistis*).

**Application:** How's your dress? Does it fit with your profession? Is it merely external, or is your heart clothed in godliness, as well? Are you practicing a discernment that will cause other godly garments to be second nature? Are you passing on this wardrobe for others to wear? How about the overarching characteristic for your particular group—are you putting on those godly garments? What do you need to work on “being” this week with the help of God's grace?

**Transition:** Having considered what outfit is appropriate for us to wear as professing believers, we now ask the important follow-up question.

### WHY SHOULD WE WEAR IT?

Paul provides three phrases that answer this question. Each phrase starts with the Greek word *hina*, which can be translated “so that” or “in order that,” indicating a reason or purpose. Together, these reasons demonstrate the sobering importance of these godly garments—not only does a failure to dress in this way undermine one's own profession of faith, but it also hinders the church's evangelistic mission.

#### 1. *So God's Word won't be discredited (v. 5)*

Paul first states a reason for this gospel-wardrobe in verse 5—“[so] that the Word of God be not blasphemed.” That word *blasphemeo* means “to speak in a disrespectful way that demeans, denigrates, maligns.”<sup>13</sup> When we fail to practice the gospel that we profess to believe, we undermine its truth and power and turn people away from its message. This was Paul's concern in Philippians 2:15-16.

#### 2. *So God's opponents will be silenced (v. 8)*

Paul had earnestly warned the church about deceptive teachers in 1:10-16, explaining that their “mouths must be stopped” (1:11). Now, he demonstrates that in addition to rebuking them, we can muzzle their voices through a godly lifestyle. Paul reasons in verse 8 that godly dressing will cause “he that is of the contrary part [to] be ashamed, having no evil

thing to say of you.” The testimony of believers should be so sterling that those who are against (lit.) God will be ashamed when their accusations are shown to be unfounded and inaccurate.

#### 3. *So God's gospel will be adorned (v. 10)*

Finally, Paul states in verse 10 that our godly wardrobe is intended to “adorn the [teaching] of God our Saviour in all things.” “Adorn” translates the Greek word from which we get our word “cosmetics,” and means to make beautiful or attractive. When people see the power of our Savior to save, transform, and satisfy, the message that He “is not willing that any should perish” becomes refreshing, attractive, and desirable.

**Application:** Sometimes when you wear an article of clothing that people like, they'll ask you, “Hey, I really like your \_\_\_\_\_...where did you get it? I think I might like to go shopping there.” When Paul answers the “why” question with these three points, he really demonstrates the built-in marketing strategy of the gospel. Wear these godly, gospel-produced garments, and unbelievers may ask, “Hey I really like your \_\_\_\_\_...where did you get it?” When we then have the opportunity to introduce them to Christ and share the glories of the gospel, they may be drawn to Him and eventually come to know Him as their own personal Savior.



Ask how people have experienced or witnessed this reality positively (people attracted to Christ because of someone's godly living) or negatively (people turned away from Christ and His word because of someone's hypocrisy and ungodliness)?

Perhaps people aren't attracted to our message and aren't compelled to visit our churches, because they don't see “clothes” that they particularly like. Godly garments (2:2-10), flowing out of a gospel-wardrobe (2:11-14—next week's emphasis), are a compelling testimony to the grace and power of God. Put on the garments, and attract people to Christ!

### CONCLUSION

The world needs light (chapter 1) and our professions are not enough. Your most powerful light is your godly lifestyle.

*Matthew 5:16—“Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”*

*Philippians 2:15—“That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”*

Believer, open the gospel-wardrobe daily and put on the godly garments that “God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

<sup>13</sup> Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. P. 178.