

BUILDING A MODEL HOME

Titus 1:5-6

EFCA Today summer edition begins with article about why youth leave the church. [In contrast to other popular presentations...]

EFCA ReachStudents Director, Shane Stacey: “Why should young people stand up against cultural pressures and walk with Jesus if believ-ing adults in their lives aren’t modeling those lifestyle choices too?”

Andy Gill: “The problem at hand is our own faith and the lives we’ve modeled as ‘followers of Jesus.’”

People who make a difference model a lifestyle that changes lives!

People want to know if the Christian they work next to is for real...if

her commitment to Jesus keeps her from stealing from company,
if his faith keeps him from cheating on his income tax,

People reject the gospel because they see so many people who claim to be Christians but don’t live like it!

–People who profess one thing, but practice another.

People want to see if faith we profess makes a difference in how we live.

Not new problem, **Ironsides:** “Never was there a time when the necessity of practical piety was so marked as the days in which our lot is cast.”

When Paul writes Titus, situation in Crete was disturbing.

Lots of religion, but profession had little effect on life.

Popular attitude toward religion affected church

Paul calls us be different from world around us—even the religious world!

Our sound doctrine should be accompanied by a sound lifestyle.

How do you get people to live like that?

Solution: Leave Titus to straighten out what's crooked.

Appoint leaders—but only those who are blameless

Leaders we can model our lives after.

Leaders who show us what child of God looks like!

TWO REASONS godly leaders are important:

1. They're models for the rest of church to imitate.

If leaders aren't faithful in their lifestyle, the rest of us will never know what God wants US to look like.

2. Elders have to make hard decisions.

They lead God's people and sometimes have to discipline others.

These responsibilities require **credibility**.

If we don't trust our leaders, we won't follow them

Blamelessness is important for everyone because our kids are watching—the world's watching—to check out validity of our faith.

LEADERS SHOULD BE BLAMELESS

-Not perfect but no basis for accusation

"Above reproach" => Blameless, lit., "without a stain"—no basis for people who oppose truth to accuse us and reject our message.

**** Blameless with respect to home and family life 1:6***

* *Blameless with respect to personal character 1:7-8*

* *Blameless with respect to use of God's Word 1:9*

**GOD'S PEOPLE SHOULD BE ABOVE REPROACH
IN OUR HOME AND FAMILY LIFE 1:6** *"If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination."*

WHAT SHOULD OUR HOMES LOOK LIKE?

[2 areas: 1st:]

RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR SPOUSE

Godly people should be above reproach in our marital relationship

Paul's principle assumes issues related to our spouse not mentioned:

* **Eph. 5:22-33**—*We're to love our wife as Christ loved the church*

* **1 Pet. 3:7**—*We're to live wisely with her*

Only *specific* requirement stated, concerning relationship with spouse:
1:6a *"If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife"*

"HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE—lit., "A ONE WOMAN MAN"

Numerous meanings suggested:

- * You must be married.
- * You can only marry once, even if 1st wife dies.
- * You can't be divorced for any reason.
- * You can't be divorced unless cause is adultery.
- * You can't be divorced unless cause is adultery or desertion.
- * You can't be divorced unless cause is adultery, abuse, or desertion..

- * You can't be divorced unless marriage was before you were saved.
- * You can only have one wife at a time; you can't be polygamist.
- * Marital *history* isn't the issue; you must be *faithful* to wife you have.

We'll never get Bible teachers to agree on meaning.

It's impossible to rule out views of others in defending *MY* view!
I'm not even going to tell you which view I hold!

- * "One woman man" rooted in Gen 1-2; man leaves father & mother; is inseparably "glued" to wife; they become "1 flesh" forever!
- * Christ reconfirms this concept of marriage in Matt 19
- * Divorce leaves scars that affect *everyone* involved.

These effects are *never* completely eliminated.

Our elders have adopted policy that divorced people may serve in leadership under certain conditions. They evaluate *present testimony* of a potential leader on a case-by-case basis.

My personal convictions aren't the only alternative!

Irreducible minimum: absolute moral purity

Leaders leave no reason for *anyone* to question marital *faithfulness*.

Popular philosophy held low view of marriage, & women in general.

Common for man to have more than 1 woman, besides legal wife.

Men visited temple prostitutes in pagan, idolatrous towns.

Mayan ruins in Guate.; similar to modern brothels (El Progreso)

They often set up a second household

They'd seek sexual rendezvous with other women they met.

God's people are to be different!

Christians should live above pagan standards

God's children to be known for moral integrity—loyalty to their wife.

Christian leaders should be example—model for others

Absolute moral integrity required—in actions *and* thoughts.

God's pattern: for Christian husband

—seek wife's satisfaction first—commit self entirely to her

Christian leaders ought to lead the way

Is our relationship with wife or husband an example for others?

Are we “guarding our eyes”?

Temptation to look around is prevalent.

Men who travel face temptation to turn on cable in motel room.

Are we keeping our thought life pure, loyal to one woman?

What about use of Internet in privacy of our home or office?

Ask God to help you become all HE wants us to be, for His glory.

[2nd area of family life in which leader should be above reproach...]

RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR CHILDREN 1:6b *“His children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination.”*

LEADERS SHOULD BE MODEL OF EVERYTHING GOD ASKS OF CHRISTIAN PARENTS—Not perfect, but blameless!

* 1 Tim. 3:4 *Manage your household well.*

Know how to give direction to your children; provide leadership in your home.

This is goal for EVERY home—not just leaders!

Children of leaders shouldn't live in way that negates the doctrine their parents proclaim.

“Children who believe” —Two meanings:

Describes someone who believes => faith, or trust

Describes someone worthy of trust, faithful

1:9 describes Word of God. The Word is **TRUSTWORTHY!
*To decide which, you must examine context.***

Paul's warning: avoid obstacles that might be used to criticize and reject ministry as leaders.

Our children must be *worthy of confidence*.

Lifestyle of kids must uphold what we teach— esp. leaders!

Children may *profess* to be believers but lives don't demonstrate it.

This lifestyle does more harm to cause of Christ than *unbelieving* son respected in neighborhood because of upright lifestyle.

Children must be *worthy of confidence*, not accused of wild lifestyle

Must be worthy of trust—lives must not discredit our ministry.

Children of leaders should be worthy of confidence

“*Not open to charge of being wild and disobedient*”

Some say this standard only applies to children still at home.

Adult children who no longer live at home are affected by influences outside control of parents. Don't reflect what they received at home.

NOT an issue of blame. —It's an issue of *credibility*

We're not saying it's parents' **fault** when a child goes astray.
 When people come to us, they need confidence that our faith works.
 If our kids are out of control, that affects our **credibility**.
 Children bear responsibility for their own choices. I'm not
 responsible for choices my children make, and neither are you!
 I **am** responsible to teach them to love and trust the Lord,
 but I'm **not** responsible for their choices.

I have enough to worry about making *my own* choices.
 Wild lifestyle of child out of control *will* affect credibility—esp.
 leaders.

Three main words in N.T. to describe children:

1. **Legal** word: describes child as heir, legal descendant of
 parents.

We're "*children*" of God, adopted into His family; we're His heirs!
 Our kids are still "sons & daughters"—identified as our
 children.

2. 2nd word focuses on **child's age**.

Root for *pedagogy* or *pediatrician*.

They're no longer "*children*" They've grown up.

3. 3rd word focuses on **descendance**. Root: "*to give birth*."

No reference to age. Deals with *ancestry*.

Focuses on our children as *descendants*.

My children are grown, but they're still descendants—still *my*
 children. They're still a "*chip off the old block*."

Their actions continue to reflect on me.

I've been told our grandson even looks like me!

Poor thing!

His father's still my child—my son—**reminds people of me!**

An adult child who goes astray and harms parent's testimony in community, harms the community's concept of the church.

It's best parent not serve as leader *as long as problem continues.*

We need more godly family models.

We aren't perfect. There's no such thing as a perfect home!

–No such thing as perfect kids!

We are commissioned to *model* what godly home looks like, *warts and all*, so people imitate, model, and follow God's plan for their home.

That's why Paul instructs Titus to "*straighten out what's lacking*", by finding blameless, godly people, to model it for the rest.

How are we to do that?

1. Love our wife: Absolute moral purity

2. Well-ordered home:

Children worthy of confidence.

Christians model for world, parents model for children, same things elders model for church.

Call to moral purity and godly families is as much a call to non-leaders as for leaders.

Answer to **reproducing moral purity: godly leaders**, committed to God's standard of ***absolute moral purity*** ...and godly people, committed to imitate that example and model it for others.

Answer to **transforming families** in our community: **godly families**, committed to modeling what a godly family looks like

Answer to **transforming singles** in our community: **godly single leaders**, committed to modeling what godly single living looks like

When a person's goal in life is to please God above all else...

...when his eyes are fixed on his wife—or her husband—and her alone...

...when youth are committed to waiting for God's choice

...when kids respect parents, and have good reputation in community...

THEN, God's people have something to model before watching world!

Then we'll make an impact on OUR community!