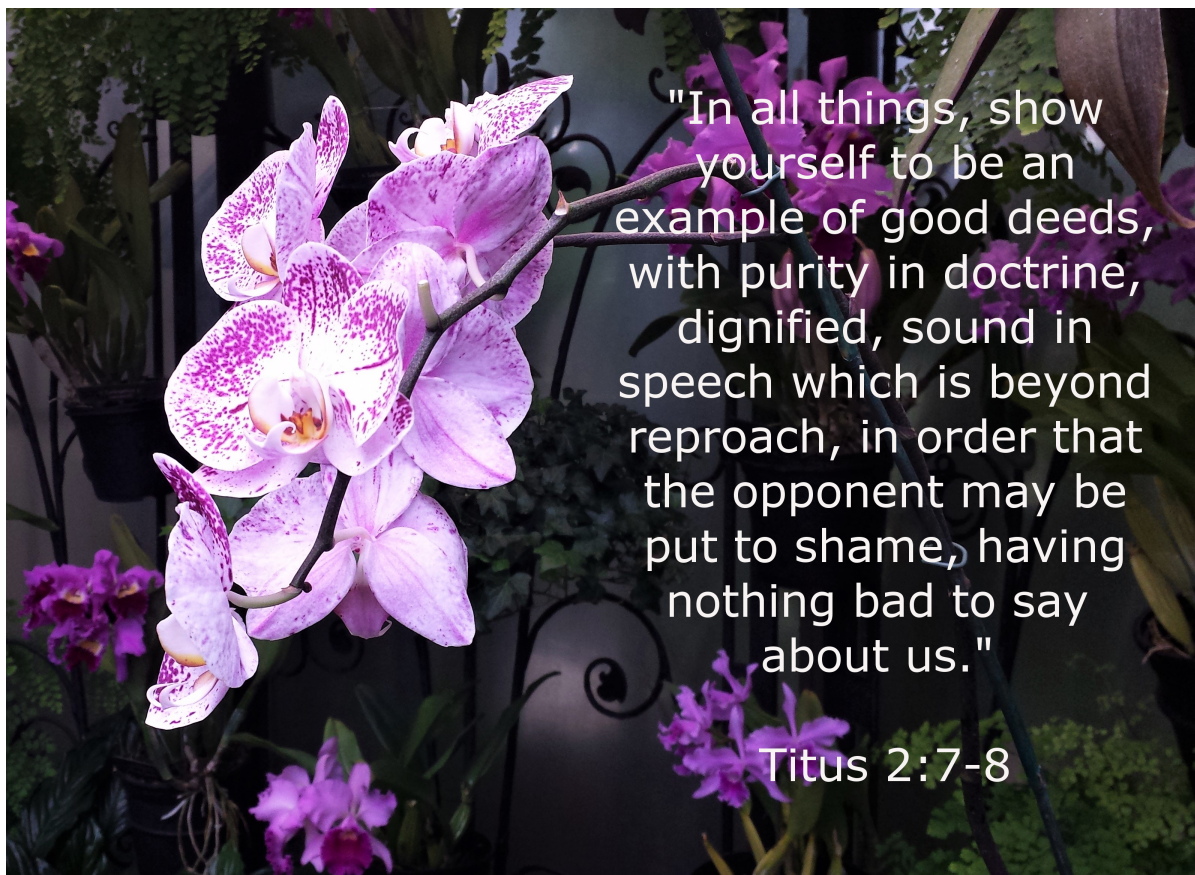


“Biblical Principles of Sound Speech – Be a Good Example”

Original 4 November 2018, updated 14 February 2023

by Whitney V. Myers



Orchid at Longwood Gardens - Titus 2:7-8 - Photo by Whitney V. Myers

"In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."
(Titus 2:7-8)

This lesson is the first in a series on "Biblical Principles of Sound Speech" and focuses on Paul's instructions to Titus in Titus 2:7-8.

Consider. Why is it important that we as Christians be examples of good deeds and sound speech? How does the "soundness" of our speech affect our witness for Christ?

1. Who was Titus?

Titus was one of the Apostle Paul's converts to the Christian faith. Paul refers to Titus as "my true child in a common faith" (Titus 1:4). However, Titus was not a new convert. Titus had accompanied Paul to the Council at Jerusalem described in Galatians 2:1. When Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, he said, "As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you" (2 Corinthians 8:23). Titus was a godly, Christian teacher (Titus 2:1-8). Paul also commissioned Titus to appoint elders in each city in Crete (Titus 1:5).

"Considering the assignments given him, he (Titus) obviously was a capable and resourceful leader" (Ref. 1).

2. Be a good example

In Titus 2:7, Paul instructs Titus, "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds ..." The Greek word for the English word, "example," is *typos* (pronounced *too'-pos*) and means *a proper pattern or model for others to follow* (Ref. 2). As Christian teachers and leaders, we are to lead and inspire others by being a good example -- a good pattern -- for others to follow. We should reflect the light of Christ and point people towards Christ rather than to ourselves. Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

3. With purity in teaching

In Titus 2:7 in the New American Standard Bible, the English translation uses the words "with purity in doctrine." The Greek word for "doctrine" is *didaskalia* (pronounced *did-as-kal-ee'-ah*) and means *instruction and teaching* (Ref. 3).

The Greek word for "purity" is *aphtharsia* (pronounced *af-thar-see'-ah*)

which means *incorruptibility* and *genuineness* (Strong's Exhaustive Concordance - Ref. 4).

As teachers, we are to be free from lower motives such as seeking popular applause (Ref. 5). Our behavior as teachers and leaders must be pure [*incorruptible*].

4. Sound in speech which is beyond reproach

In Titus 2:8, Paul continues his instruction to Titus and to us by extension. As part of our good example to others, Paul instructs Titus and us to be "sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us." The definition of "sound" in "sound speech" is *healthy, pure, wholesome, and not deviating from the truth* (Ref. 6). When we present God's truth to others, our speech (as well as what we write) is to be truthful, accurate, pure, healthy, edifying, graceful, timely, and presented in a loving manner that enhances the reputation of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:15, Ephesians 4:29).

Summary of the principles in this lesson.

1. As Christian teachers and leaders, we are to be good examples -- good patterns -- for others to follow, reflecting the light of Christ, and pointing people to Christ, not to ourselves.
2. Our motives must be pure [*incorruptible*], not seeking the applause of others.
3. Our speech is to be sound -- healthy, pure, wholesome, and true -- speech that is timely and graceful -- speech that is presented in a loving manner that enhances the reputation of Jesus Christ.

Apply. Be a good example to others of good deeds and sound speech. Reflect the light of Jesus Christ, drawing people to him rather than gaining applause for yourself.

(continued next page)

Related Lessons

"Biblical Characteristics of Sound Speech" (Ephesians 4:29)

"Biblical Principles of Sound Speech - Our Heart and Our Mouth" (Matthew 15:18)

"Biblical Principles of Sound Speech - A Time to Be Silent" (Ecclesiastes 3:7)

References

1. <https://www.biblestudytools.com/titus/>
2. <https://biblehub.com/greek/5179.htm>
3. <https://biblehub.com/greek/1319.htm>
4. <https://biblehub.com/greek/861.htm>
5. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ellicott/titus/2.htm>
Ellicott's Commentary on Titus 2:7
6. <https://biblehub.com/greek/5199.htm>