Lownes Free Church Sunday Morning – January 13, 2019

**Nurturing God’s Family**

**Planting, Establishing, and Leading Local Churches**

**Practical Principles from The Pastoral Letters**

**“New Church Curriculum: Sound Doctrine Applied”**

**Titus 2:1-15**

 Titus is a church planter, left by Paul to transition newly evangelized believers on the Mediterranean island of Crete into fully-functioning local churches. Paul lays the groundwork in chapter one. . .

✓ Authority: Ministry is rooted in God’s revelation (word). vv. 1-4

✓ Leadership: Church elders/teachers must be carefully appointed based upon simple, but crucial character qualities. vv. 5-9

✓ Battleground: Leaders face false teachers, errant culture. vv. 10-16

 But how are folks taught and error challenged? Titus will carefully but authoritatively instruct these new converts in their respective life-situations with specific, practical guidelines for applying their faith. Think of this chapter as a syllabus for the discipleship course, Jesus 101.

**What are Paul’s key points?**  Titus 2:1-15 “Sound doctrine implies. . .”

✓ Elders, act your age! vv. 1, 2

✓ Ladies, be good role models, mentor the next generation. vv. 3-5

✓ Young men, model self-control, watch your tongue, grow up! vv. 6-8

✓ Employees, do your best work. vv. 9, 10

✓ The principle: Let grace rule us in deed and destiny. vv. 11-14

✓ Let God’s Word be the guide and the teacher’s authority. v. 15

***What is the Big Idea?***

 *A church is planted through life-specific, practical instruction for all*

*in how to live grace-motivated, self-controlled, counter-cultural lives as God’s redeemed people awaiting Christ’s return.*

***How do we apply these principles?***

**1. Where’s the doctrine?** Paul assumes that these converts know the basics of the faith, and tells Titus to teach them “what accords with sound doctrine.” That means faith must be practical. It also means God does not ask for blind obedience, but rather the thoughtful choices to follow Jesus and righteousness rather than our own way. Can you think of how these doctrines should influence our lives: Jesus died for our sins. God is holy. We are made in God’s image. God is just. Romans 8:9-14; James 3:7-10; 1 Peter 1:13-19

***2. Who’s in control?***  These instructions include four references to “self control” (vv. 2, 5, 6, 12). Given Titus’ location (1:12, 13), why would this be key? Christian self-control is the fruit of God’s Spirit, not stoicism or legalism. Why is that important? We often speak of emotions carrying us away, and we praise those who ignore any barrier to desire. How do we cultivate this spiritual discipline instead? Galatians 5:22-26

***3. What motivates you?*** How does the grace of salvation teach us to say “No!” to evil and “Yes!” to God’s will? Why do we assume it is Law that forces us rather than grace that draws us? How does believing in the return of Jesus helps us to obey as well?

***4. They’re watching!***  Can you find the three times Paul refers to outside onlookers? Why does he do that? 1 Peter 2:12; 3:16