

Conduct Consistent with Sound Teaching

2:1 But as for you, communicate the behavior that goes with¹ sound teaching. **2:2** Older men are to be temperate, dignified, self-controlled,² sound in faith, in love, and in endurance.³ **2:3** Older women likewise are to exhibit behavior fitting for those who are holy, not slandering, not slaves to excessive drinking, but teaching what is good. **2:4** In this way⁴ they will train⁵ the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, **2:5** to be self-controlled,⁶ pure, fulfilling their duties at home,⁷ kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the message⁸ of God may not be discredited.⁹ **2:6** Encourage younger men likewise to be self-controlled,¹⁰ **2:7** showing yourself to be an example of good works in every way. In your teaching show integrity, dignity, **2:8** and a sound message that cannot be criticized, so that any opponent will be at a loss,¹¹ because he has nothing evil to say about us. **2:9** Slaves¹² are to be subject to their own masters in everything,¹³ to do what is wanted and not talk back, **2:10** not pilfering, but showing all good faith,¹⁴ in order to bring credit to¹⁵ the teaching of God our Savior in everything.

¹ **tn** Grk “say what is fitting for sound teaching” (introducing the behavior called for in this chapter.)

² **tn** Or “sensible.”

³ **sn** *Temperate...in endurance.* See the same cluster of virtues in 1 Thess 1:3 and 1 Cor 13:13.

⁴ **tn** Grk “that they may train” (continuing the sentence of 2:3).

⁵ **tn** This verb, σφραρονίζω (*sōphronizō*), denotes teaching in the sense of bringing people to their senses, showing what sound thinking is.

⁶ **tn** Or “sensible.”

⁷ **tn** Grk “domestic,” “keeping house.”

⁸ **tn** Or “word.”

⁹ **tn** Or “slandered.”

¹⁰ **tn** Or “sensible.”

¹¹ **tn** Or “put to shame.”

¹² **tn** See the note on the word “slave” in 1:1.

¹³ **tn** Or “to be subject to their own masters, to do what is wanted in everything.”

¹⁴ **tn** Or “showing that genuine faith is productive.” At issue between these two translations is the force of ἀγαθὴν (*agathēn*): Is it attributive (as the text has it) or predicate (as in this note)? A number of considerations point in the direction of a predicate ἀγαθὴν (e.g., separation from the noun πίστιν (*pistin*) by the verb, the possibility that the construction is an object-complement, etc.), though is not usually seen as an option in either translations or commentaries. Cf. *ExSyn* 188-89, 312-13, for a discussion. Contextually, it makes an intriguing statement, for it suggests a synthetic or synonymous parallel: “Slaves should be wholly subject to their masters...demonstrating that all [genuine] faith is productive, with the result [εcβατικὶ ἵνα] that they will completely adorn the doctrine of God.” The point of the text, then, if this understanding is correct, is an exhortation to slaves to demonstrate that their faith is sincere and results in holy behavior. If taken this way, the text seems to support the idea that saving faith does not fail, but even results in good works” (*ExSyn* 312-13). The translation of ἀγαθὴν as an attributive adjective, however, also makes good sense.

¹⁵ **tn** Or “adorn,” “show the beauty of.”

2:11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people.¹⁶ **2:12** It trains us¹⁷ to reject godless ways¹⁸ and worldly desires and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, **2:13** as we wait for the happy fulfillment of our hope in the glorious appearing¹⁹ of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.²⁰ **2:14** He²¹ gave himself for us to set us free from every kind of lawlessness and to purify for himself a people who are truly his,²² who are eager to do good.²³ **2:15** So communicate these things with the sort of exhortation or rebuke²⁴ that carries full authority.²⁵ Don’t let anyone look down²⁶ on you.

Conduct Toward Those Outside the Church

3:1 Remind them to be subject to rulers and²⁷ authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work. **3:2** They must not slander²⁸ anyone, but be peaceable, gentle, showing complete

¹⁶ **tn** Grk “all men”; but ἀνθρώποις (*anthrōpōis*) is generic here, referring to both men and women.

¹⁷ **tn** Grk “training us” (as a continuation of the previous clause). Because of the length and complexity of the Greek sentence, a new sentence was started at the beginning of v. 12 by translating the participle παιδεύουσα (*paideuousa*) as a finite verb and supplying the pronoun “it” as subject.

¹⁸ **tn** Grk “ungodliness.”

¹⁹ **tn** Grk “the blessed hope and glorious appearing.”

²⁰ **tn** The terms “God and Savior” both refer to the same person, Jesus Christ. This is one of the clearest statements in the NT concerning the deity of Christ. The construction in Greek is known as the Granville Sharp rule, named after the English philanthropist-linguist who first clearly articulated the rule in 1798. Sharp pointed out that in the construction article-noun-καὶ-noun (where καὶ [*kai*] = “and”), when two nouns are singular, personal, and common (i.e., not proper names), they always had the same referent. Illustrations such as “the friend and brother,” “the God and Father,” etc. abound in the NT to prove Sharp’s point. The only issue is whether terms such as “God” and “Savior” could be considered common nouns as opposed to proper names. Sharp and others who followed (such as T. F. Middleton in his masterful *The Doctrine of the Greek Article*) demonstrated that a proper name in Greek was one that could not be pluralized. Since both “God” (θεός, *theos*) and “savior” (σωτήρ, *sōtēr*) were occasionally found in the plural, they did not constitute proper names, and hence, do fit Sharp’s rule. Although there have been 200 years of attempts to dislodge Sharp’s rule, all attempts have been futile. Sharp’s rule stands vindicated after all the dust has settled. For more information on Sharp’s rule see *ExSyn* 270-78, esp. 276. See also 2 Pet 1:1 and Jude 4.

²¹ **tn** Grk “who” (as a continuation of the previous clause).

²² **tn** Or “a people who are his very own.”

²³ **tn** Grk “for good works.”

²⁴ **tn** Or “reproof,” “censure.” The Greek word ἐλέγχω (*elenchō*) implies exposing someone’s sin in order to bring correction.

²⁵ **tn** Grk “speak these things and exhort and rebuke with all authority.”

²⁶ **tn** Or “let anyone despise you”; or “let anyone disregard you.”

²⁷ **tc** Most later witnesses (D² 0278 ̄̄̄ lat sy) have καὶ (*kai*, “and”) after ἀρχαίς (*archais*, “rulers”), though the earliest and best witnesses (N A C D* F G Ψ 33 104 1739 1881) lack the conjunction. Although the καὶ is most likely not authentic, it has been added in translation due to the requirements of English style. For more discussion, see *TCGNT* 586.

²⁸ **tn** Or “discredit,” “damage the reputation of.”

courtesy to all people. **3:3** For we too were once foolish, disobedient, misled, enslaved to various passions and desires, spending our lives in evil and envy, hateful and hating one another. **3:4**¹ But “when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, **3:5** he saved us not by works of righteousness that we have done but on the basis of his mercy, through the washing of the new birth and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, **3:6** whom he poured out on us in full measure² through Jesus Christ our Savior. **3:7** And so,³ since we have been justified by his grace, we become heirs with the confident expectation of eternal life.”⁴

Summary of the Letter

3:8 This saying⁵ is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on such truths,⁶ so that those who have placed their faith in God may be intent on engaging in good works. These things are good and beneficial for all people. **3:9** But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies,⁷ quarrels, and fights about the law,⁸ because they are useless and empty. **3:10** Reject a divisive person after one or two warnings. **3:11** You know⁹ that such a person is twisted by sin¹⁰ and is conscious of it himself.¹¹

Final Instructions and Greeting

3:12 When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. **3:13** Make every effort to help¹² Zenas the lawyer¹³ and Apollos on their way; make sure they have what they need.¹⁴ **3:14** Here is another way that our people¹⁵ can learn¹⁶ to engage in good works to meet pressing needs and so not be unfruitful. **3:15** Everyone with me greets you. Greet those who love us in the faith.¹⁷ Grace be with you all.¹⁸

¹ **tn** Verses 4-7 are set as poetry in NA²⁶/NA²⁷. These verses probably constitute the referent of the expression “this saying” in v. 8.

² **tn** Or “on us richly.”

³ **tn** This is the conclusion of a single, skillfully composed sentence in Greek encompassing Titus 3:4-7. Showing the goal of God’s merciful salvation, v. 7 begins literally, “in order that, being justified...we might become heirs...”

⁴ **tn** *Grk* “heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

⁵ **sn** *This saying* (*Grk* “the saying”) refers to the preceding citation (Titus 3:4-7). See 1 Tim 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11 for other occurrences of this phrase.

⁶ **tn** *Grk* “concerning these things.”

⁷ **tn** Cf. 1 Tim 1:4.

⁸ **sn** *Fights about the law* were characteristic of the false teachers in Ephesus as well as in Crete (cf. 1 Tim 1:3-7; Titus 1:10, 14).

⁹ **tn** *Grk* “knowing” (as a continuation of the previous clause).

¹⁰ **tn** *Grk* “is perverted and is sinning.”

¹¹ **tn** *Grk* “is sinning, being self-condemned.”

¹² **tn** *Grk* “Eagerly help.”

¹³ **tn** Although it is possible the term νομικός (*nomikos*) indicates an expert in Jewish religious law here, according to L&N 33.338 and 56.37 it is more probable that Zenas was a specialist in civil law.

¹⁴ **tn** *Grk* “that nothing may be lacking for them.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Grk* “that those who are ours” (referring to the Christians).

¹⁶ **tn** *Grk* “and also let our people learn.”

¹⁷ **tn** Or “faithfully.”

¹⁸ **tc** Most witnesses (N² D¹ F G H Ψ 0278 01 lat sy bo) conclude this letter with ἀμήν (*amēn*, “amen”). Such a conclusion is routinely added by scribes to NT books because a few of these books originally had such an ending (cf. Rom 16:27; Gal 6:18; Jude 25). A majority of Greek witnesses have the concluding ἄμήν in every NT book except Acts, James, and 3 John (and even in these books, ἄμήν is found in some witnesses). It is thus a predictable variant. Further, early and excellent witnesses (N* A C D* 048 33 81 1739 1881 sa) lack the particle, rendering the omission the preferred reading.