

**“Sound Doctrine”**  
**By General Pastor Peter F. Paine**  
**Sunday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014**

I’m so glad to be here; I can’t tell you how happy I am. I’m thrilled, I’m excited to see my friend Preacher Howard his daughter, Glenda. Is it all right if I talk about my good friend, Preacher Howard, before I get into the message today? This room is filled with people that I call brothers and sisters and friends and I’m thankful. I remember Preacher Howard, he came to me and he said, “I heard that you have an interest in becoming a pilot.” I said, “I used to have that interest.” He said, “What do you mean you *used* to have that interest?” I said, “Well, you know, it’s not in my budget to become a pilot.” He said, “Somebody told me your dad owned an airplane.” I said, “That’s true.” He said, “Somebody told me that you said one day you were going to fly a plane.” I said, “That’s true.” He said, “What made you change your mind?” Well, now he had my attention. So he took me to the airport, and he showed me his airplane, and he took me for a ride. A week went by, and a month went by, and he said, “Are you ready to start your lessons to become a pilot?” but it wasn’t in my budget. A month went by, and, Glenda, one day your father walked into church carrying a big stack of books—I never read so many books in my life as that stack he was carrying. He had a leather-bound portfolio that had—it was red leather. Do you remember that, Preacher? It was stitched in yellow; it said, “Peter F. Paine” on it. There was a key on top of the pile of books and this leather portfolio, and it was to his Cessna. He said, “I want you to get over to the airport and start getting your lessons to become a pilot.” Preacher Howard and I flew that plane all over the country. We got to meet some great people. I don’t know if you know this about Preacher Howard, but he’s an honorary Tuskegee Airman. He got that because of what he did and how he treated folks. We went to see Nelson Mandela together. We sat with the president of the NAACP, Mr. Ben Chavis. We travelled the country in that plane, didn’t we Preacher? We met some dignitaries. We had some good times. I remember one time we were flying over Rock Springs, Wyoming, and the ice in the cloud said, “You’re going to land.” For just a minute or two, we thought we might not do that, but then the ice won the argument, and we landed in Rock Springs, Wyoming and waited until the storms passed. We had some great times together, Preacher. None of them are going to compare, though, none of them are going to compare to what it’s going to be like to land in Heaven. Nothing like what it’s going to be to hear, “Welcome, faithful servant. Enter into the joy of the Lord.”

I want to thank you for being y brothers and sisters, here today. I want to thank you for your love. I want to thank you for your faithfulness. In this month, you’ve been studying on Sound Doctrine. Just a show of hands right now—I’m not going to ask you up to share—but I want to ask you if you could just show me by a show of hands, how many of you have been blessed by this study this month, the sermons and the teachings and the testimonies on sound doctrine? Around the room, hands are up, and I’m thankful for that. When Parrish shared with me that that was your theme this month, it excited me and when I realized that I was going to be here with you today, I was excited, because I knew I was going to have the privilege to be part of this, and sound doctrine is near and dear to my heart. So, I went on-line and did some research on sound doctrine, and I have to tell you, because it wouldn’t be fair—the Bible says give honor where honor is due (Romans 13:7)—it wouldn’t be fair not to acknowledge the fact that I stole some of my ideas today for this teaching from John MacArthur, a pastor. He had some teachings on-line about how that sound doctrine is very much the theme of 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy, and Titus, when Paul’s writing those pastoral epistles. As I was praying about what I should teach, I couldn’t help but go back to that thought over and over again, so I wanted to acknowledge that before I begin to share with you today.

I love that sound doctrine is something that we are talking about sound doctrine today, because it's something that's not as popular as it used to be. You know what? I'm glad that I'm well over being popular. I'm not here to be politically correct. I'm not looking to please a big crowd; I'm looking to please an audience of One. I want to hear, "Well done." It's nice to have all the accolades of the world, but they won't get you to Heaven. You see, you can have everybody in the world—there was a man, Pastor Davis told us about a man that ran a hardware store, and he was so popular. Everybody in town liked him, you see. There was an upcoming election for mayor, and they were looking for people in this city to represent the city as mayor, and somebody said, "Why don't you run for mayor? Everybody likes you." He said, "If I ran for mayor, only half the people would like me." You see, when you make a stand for something, you make a stand against something. You see, our goal as Christians isn't to have everybody like us; our goal as Christians is to have the Lord love us, and to love the Lord in a way that others see Him in our lives.

I need to get on with my teaching. Our lead verse today is Titus 2:1. We're going to spend most of our time today in Titus chapter 2. I'm going to be making some other references, but that's where we're going to spend most of our time today. Of course, the Apostle Paul is writing to Titus, and Titus is fulfilling his ministerial calling on the island of Crete. There are churches established there, but, these churches, they have some great needs. So, Paul is writing to Titus, and he's saying, you're going to have to be the one to set the church in order. You're going to have to be the one to address these needs. They had needs for spiritual leadership, and they had needs for spiritual maturity in the congregation. And so Titus has been given the assignment to accomplish these things. In Titus chapter one and verse five—for those of you who think I've forgotten verse one, I'm coming back to it, just keep it where it is in your notes...

**Titus 1:5** *For this cause left I thee in Crete...*

"For this cause left I thee in Crete..." You see there was a reason why Titus was where he was. There was reason why Paul asked him to be where he was. He had a job to do. It's interesting; it goes on to say:

**Titus 1:5** *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:*

So Paul writes this letter to Titus (this is the instructor talking to the student) to strengthen the hand of Titus and to encourage Titus in the task that is set before him. This letter that Paul writes to Titus is not intended solely for Titus, but for the congregations, so that they will understand why Titus is doing what Titus is doing. So, when Paul's writing to Titus, he wants, not only Titus, to know what his instruction is, what his direction must be, but he wants those that Titus is leading to understand, "Hey, Titus isn't—this isn't Titus' idea; this is what he's instructed to do." You know, all of us, as Christians, are instructed to be about something. We're supposed to be about something. We're supposed to make a difference. We're supposed to matter. We're called to be a peculiar people; we're not called to blend in, that's not what we're supposed to do. We're called to make a difference.

So, chapter 1 of Titus deals with the leadership of the church. The church has to be set in order with regard to its leaders. There are some careful details given to the kind of men and the duty of those men that are to be pastors and that are to be elders in the church.

Then, in Titus chapter 2, the focus shifts from pastors to the people, from the elders to the everybody. Chapter 2 is about the character of a healthy church. What's our topic this month? Sound doctrine. Titus chapter 2 is about the character of a healthy church. Sound doctrine and the character of a healthy are the same thing. We're going to see that more and more clearly today as we look

through the Word. We will see in our study today the fact that sound doctrine is essential to a healthy church and a healthy church is essential to sound doctrine. More to the point, we will see that they are essentially the same thing. Sound doctrine and a healthy church really are two ways of saying the same thing. If you don't think sound doctrine is important, I hope that by the end of the message today, you will have changed your mind and you will believe that sound doctrine is very important. Scripture is clear that God is concerned about the health of His body, the church. God is very concerned about the church's spiritual health.

Those of you who know me well, you know that I would rather preach than teach. I guess it's because I believe that education without emotion won't move us to action. But, it is equally true that emotion without education, or without understanding, can move us in the wrong direction. So, today is more teaching than preaching, but, I ask you to be patient with me, and I ask you to please lend me your energy. For those of you who prefer more preaching than teaching, I'll be back! Today, let me teach.

We are talking about sound doctrine, today. The word 'Sound' in Greek ([hygiainō](#)), basically gives us our word, 'hygiene,' it means to be healthy. It is used [nine](#) times in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy, and in Titus. In those three books, Paul directs Titus' attention to the need for spiritual health. If anything is clear in Paul's writings in these three books, it is that the Lord is concerned about healthy doctrine and healthy living. Sound doctrine is sound living. To borrow Dr. King's phrase, they are inextricably tied.

Let me make my case:

**Titus 1:9** *Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*

What will be able to convince the gainsayers? What will we use to exhort those? Sound doctrine. Now look with me please at verse 13:

**Titus 1:13** *This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;*

Back to front: If people in the ministry are going to be sound in faith, it's going to be because they were rebuked sharply with what? sound doctrine. When we hear 'rebuke sharply' in today's vernacular, you might think that's somebody yelling at somebody. I don't think that's the context that Paul is speaking in here at all, I think it's him speaking—say, listen, when we see a red light, what does it mean? stop. Yeah, it doesn't mean, "I'd like to suggest that it might be a good idea to slow down at this intersection and look for traffic." When you see a red light, it means 'Stop.' If you've ever been first at a red light when it turns green and someone behind you has their finger on the horn, you know that a green light means, 'Go.' Right? And that's the way sound doctrine is. It's crystal clear. It means what it means; it says what it says. Living sound doctrine so that others may be "sound in faith." He talks again about sound doctrine and living it out by being sound in faith in:

**Titus 2:7** *In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,*

Now look at verse 8:

**Titus 2:8** *Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.*

...having no evil thing to say about you. Saints, let me remind you today that this idea of sound doctrine is something that we have to take very seriously, because there will be people who will oppose us as we share the Gospel, and if we give them occasion to have an evil thing to say about us—Hello?—then they can dismiss this Gospel message because of our lack of character. That's why it's essential that we understand sound doctrine and that we live sound doctrine. The theme throughout the pastoral epistles, 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus, is clear: It is the teaching of sound doctrine, followed by sound living. Healthy doctrine produces healthy living. All this is in perfect contrast to the teaching in these same three books of unsound doctrine which produces unsound living. If sound doctrine produces sound living, if healthy doctrine produces healthy living, then it's equally true that unsound doctrine produces unsound living, or unhealthy living. Look at Titus chapter one verse ten and eleven now. This is still Apostle Paul writing, the teacher to his student.

**Titus 1:10-11** *For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.*

How can you recognize if somebody is teaching something they ought not if you don't have sound doctrine. How can you recognize if someone isn't teaching the truth if you don't know the truth. Someone said, "Stop teaching, Pastor, just preach." I know you can tell that I'm reading from notes today, but, you see, I'm teaching today. Please let me teach today, because this idea of sound doctrine is important, and we can't take it lightly. I didn't come here today to entertain you; I didn't come here to make you laugh. I came to teach something that we've got to get and get right.

In verse 16, the Apostle Paul says:

**Titus 1:16** *They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*

Look at Titus three now, in verse nine:

**Titus 3:9** *But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.*

You see, you can make some flowery speeches, but you'd better have some profit your speeches, right? Warren Buffett was asked one time, what was the most important part about making money, and he said, "profit." He said every dollar that you have has to show a profit or a return on investment, or else it failed to do his job. We have to give a return on our investment, of the blood of Christ in our lives. Amen? Paul is saying in verse nine this stuff is unhealthy and it's unsound. What stuff? What we just read here: foolish questions, genealogies, contentions, strivings about the law. He said it's unprofitable and vain, it's unsound, it's unhealthy. Unhealthy learning leads to unhealthy living, that's why sound doctrine is important. Unsound doctrine is unhealthy and leads to spiritual death. It's clear that sound doctrine matters. If a church is to be spiritually healthy, if it is to be sound, whole, if it is to have strength, power, and well-being, it must have sound doctrine!!!

So, Paul says to Titus these words:

**Titus 2:1** *But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:*

Now it's interesting here in chapter 2, verse one, he didn't say preach, he said speak. It's interesting because this isn't just sound doctrine from the pulpit, it's sound doctrine on the job, it's

sound doctrine at the gas station, It's sound doctrine when you're out with your friends, it's sound doctrine wherever you go. Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine. Remember the preceding verse, Titus 1:16 I just read chapter 2 verse 1, the preceding verse is chapter 1 verse 16. Let me remind you what Paul said again: Paul said to Titus, "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." What was the first appreciated it chapter 1 verse 16: "There are those that profess to know God but deny Him..." People profess to know God but they deny him? Boy, oh boy! If we don't speak the things which become sound doctrine, We compound the problem, because they're saying something that isn't true, and we don't know how to respond to it. Titus 2:1 addresses that problem with the solution, and the solution is speaking those things which become sound doctrine. This is how good overcomes evil; this is how sound doctrine overcomes false doctrine. When false doctrine is not defeated by sound doctrine, the church becomes unhealthy. If left without resolve, the church dies. In Titus 2:1, Paul was saying to Titus, "Know the truth; speak the truth." Then in verses 2 through 10 Paul teaches references to confirm that sound doctrine is resulting in sound living. Titus chapter 2 verses two through ten—I want to suggest some things to you. I'd like to read verses two through ten of Titus chapter 2. I want to suggest some things to you: I'd like to read verses two through 10 of Titus chapter 2, and what I'd like to ask you to think about as I read this, and I'm going to take a little time to do this without editorial. Please turn in your Bibles to Titus chapter 2, and it's verses two through 10. I want to ask you to think of someone you know who lives this, or maybe somebody from Scripture who exemplifies this that would stand up and speak this to us, by way of their testimony.

**Titus 2:2-10** *That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*

This is where preaching sound doctrine leaves the pulpit and is lived in the people in everyday life. The first eleven chapters of Romans are filled with teaching on doctrine, then in Romans chapter 12, we leap from the learning to the living of sound doctrine.

**Romans 12:1-2** *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

That's action. In verses 4 through 8—I'm going to skip through, those of you who are taking notes, and are in the very good habit of reviewing your notes, because I cannot possibly touched it all in service today. Even with this whole month of teaching on sound doctrine, we can't cover it all in the preaching, we have to take some time to learn it on our own. If you'll take some time and study these verses, you will learn, you will grow, you will see where you can do better. I've shared this particular testimony before, so those of you who have heard it, please indulge me while I share it again for those of you who haven't. I remember when I hit a particularly rough spot in my life, and by rough spot I simply mean it was dry, I wasn't growing; I wasn't feeling that I could nourish anyone else because I

wasn't feeling nourished myself. I had been in ministry for several years at that time, but somehow, somehow, maybe somebody here can relate to what I'm saying, I had hit a place where I felt like it was just going through the motions. I think athletes might call it, "I was just phoning it in." I was just going through the motions, and the motions were right, but really it was more rote than heart. Does that make sense? I sat down one night I can picture exactly the chair I was in, and where I was at, I said, "Lord, I'm going to read your word until I get answer. I know you answer me, God, but I just can't take another day of feeling this way. I feel disconnected, I feel disoriented, I just feel that I have to reconnect with you." Hello? And so I began reading, and I don't remember where I started, but I remember when I came to the eighth verse of the first chapter of James, I read, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." It was as if the Holy Spirit drew a circle around it, and said, "Stop right there; there's your answer." The brilliant man that I am, I started to explain to the Lord I am not double minded; in fact, I am the very model of single-mindedness. Oh God, you can't mean that's my answer, because I live for you every day, I tithe, I fast—uh oh. You see, I had become busy about the busyness of life, as Pastor Davis would say, "I became busy with church work and not the work of the church." I was crossing T's and dotting the I's, and I forgot about the souls that were important to God. I was like those who were standing by the woman caught in the act of adultery, and wanting to see how Jesus would handle it by the law instead of by the understanding which was that there was a soul weighing in the balance. He called me back to single-mindedness, and he said, "See it the way I see it, do it the way I do it, live it the way I live it. You've become more concerned with the letter of the law." The Bible said-Parrish and I were having dinner last night, I think our waiter must have wondered about us, Parrish. There we were, two grown men, so happy and loving the Lord; we were so happy at one point we both had tears of joy running down our faces. Two guys who have known each other for more than 20 years, and loving the Lord, making mistakes together, and learning together, and just getting up one more time after getting knocked down again, and saying today could be the day. And I said, "Let it be today, Lord, I'm ready." Parrish and I were just having great fellowship, and our waiter kept coming back, and he kept looking at us. I think he wanted to sit down and join us, it was such a great blessing. I probably said that for a reason, I just forgot what it was. I don't know why I said that, but it was fun saying it. You see, we have to live this thing that we're learning about. We've got to live it every day. When he said, "prove what is that good..."-Oh, I know what I was doing, I was telling you about my testimony. James one and eight. For those of you that were making fun of me for forgetting where I was at, live long enough, and you'll do it too. It beats the alternative. "Pete was a good guy, he never forgot anything, but he died young." So, James one and eight says, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." If you'll study-Here's the point I was trying to make there-if you will study these Scriptures that we're going over today, right now I would suggest, read Romans chapter 12, all of it, and think about it, "Lord, where's my answer, in here, for how I should be living sound doctrine every day of my life?" Because, when I got that answer that night-and I'm going back to make reference to the testimony- when I got that answer that night, it was like someone turned on a light in a dark room for me. I could see clearly where I was wrong, and how to make it right. It wasn't that I was living in sin, it was that I had lost the focal point on my priorities. Amen? Sound doctrine is all about priorities. So in Romans chapter 12 verse two, this is prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. In verses four through eight, we are reminded that we are part of a body, and every part of that body is needed. All of us, in that body, must be doing our part.

In verses nine through twenty-one-I'm taking a quick breeze through Romans chapter 12, here, but I hope you'll take sometimes-in verses nine through twenty-one, we are exhorted to overcome evil with good, and that's sound doctrine. Good doctrine must lead to good living if we are to have a testimony that will cause others to take note of God in us. In Colossians, the first two chapters highlight sound doctrine, and then in chapter 3, Paul says, "...Seek those things which are above..." So, in the first two chapters he's talking about what it is, and in chapter 3 he's talking about how to do it. And make no mistake, in Titus 2:15, the authority that Paul is referring to is not the authority of an office or a position, it is the authority of the Word of God; it is the authority of sound doctrine.

**Titus 2:15**      *These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.*

You have that authority if you have sound doctrine. With sound doctrine we have the tool to live a life in word and deed that will help those who will receive it, and take away the excuse of those who will not. Sound doctrine is a big deal. By the way, it's not our doctrine, it's God's.

**Luke 10:16** *He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and He that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me.*

In other words, how you live will directly determine how people feel about the Word of God. I want to say that again: how I live, how we live will directly determine how people feel about the Word of God. People judge the validity of Scripture by those of us claim to believe it, live our lives. I'm teaching today, but let me meddle a little bit. Let me see if I can't step on some toes; let me see if I can't just get in your business a little bit. Me see if I can't bother you a little bit, bother you enough to where you go to God and say, "Is that right, Lord? Does that possibly apply to me?" You see, we invite people to church, and we want them to come, but then, when they get here, what do they find us doing? Are we doing what the world is doing? Are we spending more time with the pretty ones than the ugly ones? I heard a preacher say one time, "You've got to have some ugly friends." I don't know how to say this but just to say it, because I feel like I should say it: See, what a pretty girl comes to church, a lot of you guys want to give her a lot of attention; when her mother comes to church, you don't want to know her name. What a pretty girl comes to church, you want to help her to her seat; what her fiancé comes to church want to help him to the door. Some of you guys are saying, "I treat all women the same." Tell that to someone else. I'm not lying, I know a pretty woman when I see one. You say, "But, you're married, pastor, it's easy for you." That's right. Not only am I married, I'm married to the prettiest girl in the world, and that makes it even easier. But we're still called to live right. So, don't let your excuse help you to do something that isn't right. Why did I say all of that? Not to put you in your place, but to make sure that there is a place for those who, do come, and they know they're not being treated like objects, they're being treated like souls.

I walked into a room full of people; I had a \$1000 suit on-thank you, preacher Howard; I've only had one, and you bought it for me. You remember that suit, Preacher? It was green. I wore that suit until it literally wore out. Let me tell you about the last day I wore that suit. The last day-Preacher Howard said to me, "You need a nice suit." Now I had fine clothes-well, they were okay that's what I mean when I say fine. But he said, "No, no, you need a nice suit." He took me to a store in Chicago; I never saw clothes like this for a man. I mean, it was sometimes find silk. I'd like to meet the worms that made that silk. I put that suit on-I'm 5 foot 10, and I weigh-anyway, I put that suit on and I'm 6 foot three and I was thin. That suit did things for me that no mirror could do. I want that CL. Anyway I could walk into a room with that suit on-the tie cost more than any suit I'd ever owned. Creature probably that suit and a shirt and that tie, and would I ever feel special when I wore it. I walk into a room, people would see me wearing a nice suit, and they'd invite me upfront. If I walked in the room wearing a T-shirt... You shouldn't be treated differently because of what you're wearing or how you look. I told you I told you about the last day I wore the suit, so I'll tell you that and then I will get back to the message. I was preaching in our building on Belvidere Street. You might remember that the way we had the seats arranged for the pastors in the sanctuary, we were facing the congregation, and our backs were to stained-glass window behind the pulpit. So, I was seated in my seat behind the pulpit, facing the congregation, and we had finished our worship time, and it was time for me to get up and bring the message. It's my habit to carry a pocket comb in my back pocket; it's just my habit, it's what I do, I have one in my pocket today. Well, somehow, that comb had come partly out of my pocket, and it caught on the seam of the chair, and when I stood up, it didn't just rip the pocket-that was a beautiful suit you bought me, preacher. Man, I miss that suit. Anyway, it ripped the back of those trousers. I could feel-it was amazing. It ripped below the belt line across both pockets and it went all the way down to my knees. Yeah, it did, and I apologize if you're a visual person, I really do. So, I stood up, and the orchestra was over to the right; we had an orchestra pit there. I said, "You know what? Before I mount the pulpit today, I am going to ask all the musicians to go be seated." Because they would've been behind me. So they left their seats, and kind of looked at me funny, "That's strange. Usually we stay here while he preaches." But not today. So, they left their seats, and I went out and I grabbed the pulpit like this: (grabs the pulpit with both hands on either side) both hands. I preach the whole sermon with both hands on the pulpit. It was winter; I preached the whole

server with both hands on the whole, I never moved. Those of you that know me, know that's not easy for me to do; I move in my sleep. I preach the whole sermon, and then I said, "you know what? Usually I come out to the hallway and greet everybody, but not today. I think you've got to meditate on this message. I'm just going to stand here-in fact, I'll tell you what I'm going to do. Debbie, you would get my winter coat, we're going to go out the side door, and let y'all think about this thing." I had this long, green winter coat; it came down between my knees and my ankles. I was really glad I had that this day. So then Debbie comes up with my coat, and she's looking at me all strange. I said, "Help me on with my coat, Debbie." I put my arms back, and she helped me, and she said, "augggh." So I got my coat on, and she said, "I'm glad you had on good underwear today, Pete." I went out the side door, and I went home. That was the last day I wore that suit, Preacher. I took it to the tailor, and he said, "It just can't be fixed. You have worn this out." I apologize, that was my interruption for this message.

So, when Paul says to Titus, "Here are the standards..." Paul is saying to Titus, "here's the deal, older men are to live like this (remember what we just read?); older women like this; younger women like this; younger men like this; and everyone in the workplace like this..." Here is the reason: When we don't live lives based on the Word of God, God is mocked and disregarded. Our understanding of sound doctrine is essential to our being able to live it, and our living it is essential to others being able to accept it.

**Titus 2:8** *Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.*

Non-believers love it when Christians mess up. Non-believers love it when Christians fail. It's an easy excuse to disregard God's Word, to disregard sound doctrine. Listen to this: when we learn it, when we live it, they don't have an excuse, they just have a choice. You know what? When you say truth, and it's crystal clear that it's the truth, they can't find fault with you, they can't find fault with how you live, they can't find fault with where you worship, they can't find fault with anything else, then it's just a choice: Are you going to accept this truth I've presented to you, or not? If it's based in sound doctrine, it's *not* an opinion.

Let's wrap up this morning this way; sound doctrine comes down to this:

**Titus 2:10** *Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*

Listen, Saints, we can't adorn (or beautify) or (draw attention to) the doctrine of God if we don't look like we are saved and we don't live like we are saved.

It really boils down to how sound doctrine is lived.

**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.*

We spent the month looking at sound doctrine, here. I pray that you will continue to study it, and you will continue to live it. In areas where you find you're judging yourself on a scale of 1 to 10; areas where you find you're not living sound doctrine at a 10, that you will move in that direction. Maybe you won't get to 10 in a day, but examine yourself. Look at sound doctrine as a way of learning, as a way of living. In areas where you find yourself at a two, or a three, or a four, or a five, move it up a notch, and then another, and then another. The reason I say that as I close today, is that sometimes the devil will tell us, you know, I can't make that big of a change in my life. But you can make a change. You can make a change. I remember a day-I have to share this, because somebody isn't quite willing to make a change yet. I remember the day that Debbie said she felt like she had to compete for my attention. I was pastoring, I was leading a busy life, I was fulfilling a lot of responsibilities, and yet, at home, I have a



wife and three children. My wife said to me, "I feel like I'm competing for your attention." Hello? This is the woman that I stood at the altar and said "For better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, until death us do part." She says, "I feel like I'm competing for your attention." She says, "I feel like I have to make an appointment just to talk to you." I could have said, "I've got a lot going on. I'm a busy man. If you don't like it..." I could've said, "You know, there's other women that would be happy to be married to me," but I'm not that stupid. I thought, "How can I change it?" I prayed. God blessed me, because I heard something that very next day. I happened to be listening to 90.1 on the FM radio. I don't know if that's still the same station it was when I-90.1. A preacher came on, and he said, "Hey, husbands, let me tell you something: if your wife feels neglected, let me give you a tip: when you walk in your house, make sure that for the first 10 minutes the church in that house, *nothing* has your attention, but your wife and your children. If the house is on fire, let it be on fire, until you say hello to your wife and your children. If your wife wants to tell you how her day was, you listen. If your wife wants to tell you how the children did in school, you listen. You give them your undivided attention for the first 10 minutes that you're in that house." I thought, "That's got to be very simple. 10 minutes? I mean, there's 24 hours in a day. 10 minutes? That can't be a big task." So, me, Mr. Big Shot, with a pager; people call me because they can't live without me. I walk in the house, only to realize that my pager beeps, and I have to return a call, and it hit me, my wife is neglected. We're talking about sound doctrine, but I'm trying to get your attention that it's time for a change. Will you let me say this, so that you can get the point? Will you let me show you my flaw so that I can help you see yours? I thought, "Oh my goodness. Thank you, Lord, you just answered my prayer. You just showed me what I can do different. In 10 minutes a day, I can make a difference. that will be a starting point to make the next step, and the next step, and the next step." Hello? I remember the next day, I walked in the house; I said, "Hi, Debbie." She said, "Hi, Pete." My pager went off. I didn't even look at it. I just hit the off button-this was before cellular phones. I just hit the off button. She said, "Aren't you going to look at that?" I said, "Not until I talk to you." How are you doing with sound doctrine? Are you willing to make a change so that it has the priority in your life it's supposed to? I want to reach in the text that Debbie sent me. I'm going home tomorrow. She's going to pick me up at the airport. She texted me, "I love you more today than yesterday. I will love you more tomorrow than today. I can't wait to see you tomorrow." What if I hadn't made that little change? What if I hadn't made that change? What if you don't make that change? I picked an example where I was the failure and I had to get it right, so that I could help somebody today as I close this message, say, "Yeah, there is something I'm doing wrong. There is something I can change. I might not be able to get it all done in a day, but I can make a step in the right direction to get sound doctrine as the centerpiece of my life where it belongs. That wasn't the only change I had to make to make sure Debbie didn't feel like she had to compete for my attention, but it was a big step in the right direction. I made many more steps. How are you doing with sound doctrine? I was talking about my wife because I think that's something that we can all relate to. She's the love of my life. What about the love of your life in a spiritual context? Are you willing to do what it takes to change? Take a step in the right direction today, and another tomorrow, and another tomorrow, and another tomorrow until you've got the relationship you longed for the Lord Jesus Christ? Until sound doctrine is what people see when they look at you? I love you, Saints. I love you too much to try to make you laugh. I love you too much to try to make you feel good. I came here today with a message, and I hope you're willing to let it help you see the woman, the man, the boy, the girl, the person that God would have you to be. God bless you.