Dear Sisters,

Do you ever feel like you live an ordinary life? And that in your ordinary life, there’s just not that much to do to shine for the Lord? How do you think the bondservants referred to in Titus 2:9-10 felt? A bondservant was the lowest of the lowly in social status. In Christ, there is no social status. A servant would go to church with his master. Perhaps the servant would be in leadership over his master. It is to the bondservant the instruction to “adorn the gospel” is given, not to the elders, not to the older men or older women. Not even to the younger ones developing into future leaders. Just as God esteemed the simplicity of children and the foolish over the wise in their own eyes, God is choosing the obedience of the bondservant to make the gospel look beautiful to a watching world.

The Christian slave (bondservant) wasn’t changing his home here on earth, but he was changing his master. His new Master was offering a new home if he faithfully believed and as a result practiced his belief. He was to obey cheerfully and willingly and be trustworthy with the possessions and trade the master put him in charge of. A cheerful, hardworking, trustworthy slave would be a testimony of Christian doctrines. And don’t we have the same responsibility today, in our dark culture, to take the truth of what we learn, apply it to our lives, and go shine for Jesus in a dark, cold, confused world?

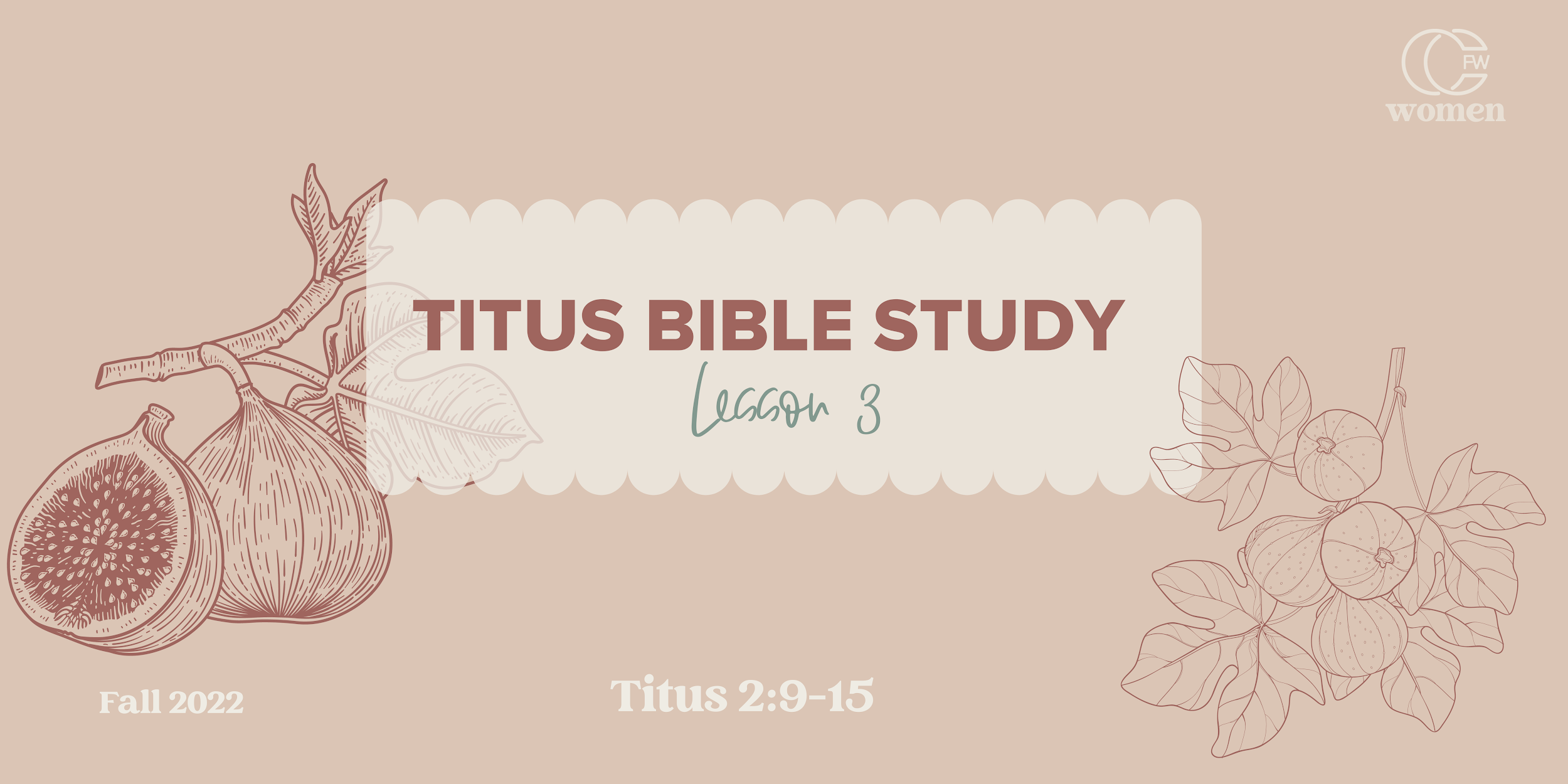
When we serve others according to the commands of Christ, we are truly serving Christ. We are silently preaching Christ, as did the cheerful slave trying hard to please his master. And in that, we are adding beauty to the already beautiful gospel of Jesus Christ. Our Christianity is of little use in sharing the gospel if others only hear it from us, but don’t see it in us. And this is where the ordinary comes in. It doesn’t have to be big things that we do. The lowliest slave was called to be cheerful. Can the tired homemaker do the same? The woman hoping to find a mate? The slave is called to be trustworthy. Can the worker in the marketplace do the same? The wife with her budget? The ordinary things we do, the small things we do, the righteous things we do, adorn the gospel.

The gospel is a gift of grace that brings salvation to all. No one is so low that the gospel is not for them. Not the slave on the island of Crete, not the homeless man or woman on the corner of 320th. When we live in grace, we deny ourselves, we live for Christ, and we look for His return. God bought us out of slavery (redeemed us). He freely gave Himself, and He gave Himself for us. He is our substitute for the punishment of our sin. He calls us special. We use the word “special” to mean something is better than usual. The people listening to this letter would understand the meaning intended. “Special” referred to the spoils of battle that the king set aside for himself. Selected, fought for. A prized treasure. We are that kind of special. Doesn’t that motivate you to serve our King wholeheartedly? The Scripture uses the word “zealous” for good works. We are redeemed and purchased to live with zeal. Not to just learn about and read about our Savior, but to serve Him actively according to His Word so that others can know about His gift of grace.

The church is where we go to get trained. The world is where we live out our training. A strong, doctrinally sound church will cultivate a strong doctrinally sound believer. One who will not speak one way and live another, causing others to disregard (or despise) you.

Shining a light with you,

Kim & Your Titus Leaders



**REVIEW**: In our last lesson we began a 3-part study on “Godly Living.” We talked about putting off sinful habits with repentance and replacing those sinful habits with a new habit that pleases and glorifies God. Were you able to identify one habit in your life that related to God’s intentional design for a Christian older woman or younger woman that you needed to put off and change? Would you be willing to share your story with the group (optional)?

**READ: Titus 2:9–15** Please read or listen to the verses throughout the week, record your observations, and answer the questions in sections two and three the first two days. Answer the questions in sections four and five over the remainder of the week. The bulk of our discussion will be on these last two sections.

**Summary of Passage—Godly Living, Part 2**:

Last week our primary focus was on “Godly Living” as it relates to God’s intentional design for older and younger women. In this lesson, we will continue to focus on “Godly Living” and how that looks in someone who has true saving faith.

Review the Handout “5 Questions to Help You Understand the Bible.”

1. **Your Approach**: “How should I prepare to receive God’s Word?” Pray that God would help you understand and apply His Word before you read. Pray for a high respect for God and His Word and a humble readiness to be judged and transformed by it.
2. **Your Observation**: Read the Scripture slowly, repeatedly, and carefully to answer the question, “What does the Bible say?”
   1. **List** the character traits slaves (or bondslaves) are to have or not have as they relate to their masters. Also, list the purpose for those character traits.
   2. Titus 2:1–10 instructs different groups of people how to live godly lives. We come across the **connecting word** “for” at the beginning of verse 11. What is the reason for living godly lives that Paul gives in verse 11?
   3. We often think of instructing (v. 12) as communicating instructions. The definition of instruction used here includes application and correction also. Think for example of a parent teaching a child to learn something new. **List** the instructions, **commands**, training, or teaching that the grace of God has given (verses 12-13).
   4. For **what** reasons did Jesus give Himself for us (verse 14)?
   5. Remember that this epistle (or letter) is from Paul to the elders on the island of Crete. **What** is Paul instructing or **commanding** the elders to do in verse 15? If the elders preach one thing and do another, how might the people respond?
3. **Your Interpretation**: The goal of interpretation is not to understand what the Bible means to us but to understand the one meaning the original author intended. Dig deeper into your observation by researching inside and outside the Word of God to answer the question, “What does the Bible mean?”

Sanctification means to be set apart, to be holy. Progressive sanctification relates to godly living. Progressive sanctification is the middle phase of our overall sanctification. It comes after the first phase, which is the moment a person is justified by grace alone through faith (a gift from God; not by works) and freed from the penalty of sin. It comes before the moment a believer is glorified and taken into heaven at which time the believer will be freed from the presence of sin. Progressive sanctification is continuous. Unlike the other two phases of sanctification, progressive sanctification is a cooperative effort between God and the believer. God frees us from the power of sin so that we can say “no” to sin with the help of the Holy Spirit as we are transformed into the image of Christ by practicing godly living. To practice godly living, we need to know what godly living looks like by studying God’s Word rather than being deceived by the current cultural worldviews.

1. In our day and age in our country, we do not have slaves; however, what is listed in this section of Scripture can be applied to the workplace. Every believer that is employed by or volunteers for someone else should submit to that authority unless that authority is asking them to do something that is against God’s will. What else do we learn from Titus 2:9–10, 1 Peter 2:18–19, and Ephesians 6:5–7 regarding how and why we should submit?
2. What does it mean to “adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect”? Use various Bible translations or a Bible dictionary or English dictionary to help you answer this question. What character traits would we see in someone who adorns the gospel? What impact might this type of behavior have on an unbeliever? For further study, you can read the following short article by Ligonier Ministries: <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/adorning-the-doctrine-of-god>
3. We read that the grace of God brings salvation and that we are to deny ungodliness. Read Ephesians 2:1–10 to learn more about salvation. How are we saved and what are we saved for? Read 1 Timothy 4:6–8. How can we deny ungodliness and how can we discipline ourselves for godliness or godly living? (Hint–review our last lesson and the handout that went with it)
4. Look up the definitions of the words listed in verse 12. In the New American Standard translation, these words include ungodliness, worldly desires, sensibly, righteously, and godly. Use other Bible translations or a Bible or English dictionary to define these words.
5. We are to live godly lives as we look for the blessed hope and the appearing of our great God and Savior. What point will we be in our sanctification when we see our great God and Savior face to face? (Refer back to question 3 and the sanctification journey chart). What does “blessed” mean and what does the word “hope” mean? Use a Bible dictionary to look up these meanings. Also, review 1 Peter 1:3 and Hebrews 11:1–2. How is “hope” used in the Bible compared to how it’s used in casual conversation today?
6. In the NASB translation, Paul is instructing Titus to exhort and rebuke with all authority. What does he mean when he uses the words exhort and rebuke? Find some different words used in place of “exhort” found in other translations. To what authority is Paul referring? Where are we to go to find the truth? Look up 2 Corinthians 10:5 and 2 Timothy 3:16–17.
7. Summarize this section of Scripture in a sentence to include what authority we must follow to live godly lives and how we need to link sound doctrine with our obedience to God’s Word.

4. **Your Application**: God’s Word is written to change your life personally and specifically in how you think, believe, emote, speak, and do. Careful observation and interpretation lead to the question, “How does the Bible apply to my life?”

1. How could you obey someone in authority over you (including church elders) more from the heart rather than by outward appearance only?
   1. What is your goal in obeying? Is it to please man or God? Rather than complaining openly or in your heart, how could you be grateful instead?
2. In our last lesson, we began to look at the practice of putting off sin, being renewed in our minds, and replacing sin with a new habit that pleases God. (*put on /put off chart*) We focused on our intentional design as women. The world tells women to have confidence in themselves, and our culture looks down on submission and authority. How has cultural thinking crept into your life? What do you need to put off and replace? How will that change better link sound doctrine and obedience to God’s Word in your life, so that godliness stands out to those who are watching?
3. Like bondslaves, we can adorn the gospel by living godly lives. What characteristics do you have that beautify the gospel? Based on what we have studied today, what character traits in your life need refining? How will you go about making those changes?

We grow in the grace of God when we utilize the tools (means) He has provided for us. Theologians refer to these as “means of grace.” Means of grace include such things as Bible study, attending church and listening to sound teaching, having fellowship with other believers, praying, and getting involved in serving others. What means of grace could help you right now?

1. Do you have the blessed hope in the Lord’s appearing? Do you ever doubt? What are some things about God that you need to remember so that your hope includes blessed assurance rather than wishful thinking? Do you think having hope is based on feelings or on an act of the will to trust God?

5. **Your Communication**: “Who should I share this truth with?” Remember that God’s Word comes with a privilege and obligation to understand, believe, and proclaim it to yourself before others.

1. How have you adorned the doctrine (or gospel) of God? Give an example.

Where have you dishonored the doctrine (or gospel) of God with your words or deeds?

What might you need to change in your heart’s desires, thoughts, words, and deeds to honor and glorify God and to be an attractive witness to unbelievers?

B. How would you explain the three phases of sanctification to a new believing sister in Christ? Use the sanctification chart to help you.

How would you encourage her regarding the need to practice godly living (the need to link sound doctrine and obedience to God’s Word)?

What means of grace could you tell her about so that she could grow in her new life in Christ?

C. How can you share with a sister who might be living a lifestyle contrary to what she is learning in Church? What Bible verses might you share with her to demonstrate God’s Word has authority over all?

What steps can you take to lovingly instruct your sister to learn sound doctrine, not just in thought, but in deed?

Notes: