Summary

This sermon from Titus 2:1-10 focuses on how Christians are called to live differently than the world around them. Pastor Mike emphasizes that God doesn't expect perfection but expects pursuit of godly character through the power of the Holy Spirit and with the help of other believers. The message breaks down specific behavioral expectations for different groups: older men should be temperate, worthy of respect, and self-controlled; older women should be reverent and teach younger women; younger women should love their families and be pure; and younger men especially need to develop self-control. The pastor stresses that these are learned behaviors that can be developed at any age, challenging the notion that 'you can't teach an old dog new tricks.' The sermon concludes with the sobering reality that if Christians don't live differently than the world, they will drive people away from Jesus rather than draw them to Him.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today grateful for Your Word and the truth it contains. We ask that You would open our hearts and minds to receive what You want to teach us through this time together. Help us to be honest about areas where we need to grow and change, and give us the courage to pursue the godly character You desire for us. Holy Spirit, guide our discussion and help us to encourage one another as we seek to live differently for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What's one skill or habit you learned later in life that you're proud of mastering?

Key Verses

1. Titus 2:1
2. Titus 2:7
3. James 1:19

Questions

1. The pastor mentioned that God doesn't expect perfection but expects pursuit. How does this truth change your perspective on spiritual growth?

2. Looking at the characteristics for your age and gender group from Titus 2, which one do you find most challenging to live out? Why?

3. The sermon emphasized that these godly behaviors are 'learned behaviors.' What role do other Christians play in helping us develop these characteristics?

4. How can we practically 'teach what is in accord with sound doctrine' both through our words and our example?

5. The pastor said 'the standards are high because the stakes are high.' What do you think is at stake when Christians fail to live differently than the world?

6. Young men are specifically called to be self-controlled. Why do you think this is the primary focus for this group, and how does it apply to all of us?

7. What does it mean to 'practice the presence of God' in daily life, as mentioned regarding older women?

8. The quote from Richard Baxter warned against 'unsaying with your lives what you say with your tongues.' Can you think of an example where someone's actions contradicted their words, and what impact did that have?

Life Application

This week, identify one specific behavior from your age/gender category in Titus 2 that you want to work on. Find an accountability partner or mentor who can help you grow in this area. Commit to praying daily for the Holy Spirit's power to develop this godly characteristic, and take one practical step each day to practice this behavior.

Key Takeaways

1. God expects pursuit of godly character, not perfection, and provides His Holy Spirit to empower us

2. Godly behaviors are learned at any age with the help of other believers - you can teach an old dog new tricks

3. Each age and gender group has specific biblical expectations for how to live differently

4. We teach sound doctrine both through our words and our example

5. The stakes are high - if Christians don't live differently than the world, we drive people away from Jesus instead of drawing them to Him

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for calling us to live differently and for providing everything we need through Your Holy Spirit and Your people. Help us to be faithful in pursuing the godly character You've outlined in Your Word. Give us courage to break strongholds of sin and to put on the behaviors that please You. May our lives be such a clear reflection of You that others are drawn to seek You because of our example. Help us to be a learning and teaching community that encourages one another in the faith. We commit to living differently this week, not in our own strength, but in the power of Your Spirit. In Your precious name, Amen.