

THE BOOK OF TITUS - (Section 3 - Titus 2:1-14)

EVANGELISM THROUGH HOLY LIVING

Important Information

LEADERS ARE TO BE COMMITTED TO TEACHING TRUTH (v. 1)

Paul's focus shifts in the first verse of chapter two, falling on Titus. The dynamic shift from Paul's disapproval of the false teachers to his approval of Titus' leadership is made clear by the words, "But as for you." However, the fact that Titus is a good leader does not exempt him from the Apostle's admonition, which instructs him to "teach what accords with sound doctrine." Paul is being clear! Titus is not to deviate from the truth no matter what pressure the false teachers or the congregation put on him. As the leader of the church, Titus is responsible before God for teaching unwavering truth.

SOUND DOCTRINE IS ROOTED IN THE SCRIPTURES

While not written here, the driving power behind Paul's admonition to Titus is found in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Paul understands that his admonition to Titus carries the weight of expectation that Titus will be grounded in the Scriptures and the collective teaching of the Apostles. In other words, Titus is not to drift away into his own interpretations and philosophies but is to be tethered to the Scriptures. Only in this way will his doctrine remain sound.

SOCIETAL RELEVANCY

From verse two to verse ten, Paul launches into the behavior that is to govern the members of the church. The purpose of Paul's instruction in this area is so that the church will have a visible

testimony in the community. Paul is not admonishing the church to cloister itself away from the world; in fact, quite the opposite. Paul desires the church to impact the community through righteous and holy living.

In doing so, Paul builds on the Greco-Roman household code of conduct. This social code of “high morality,” though flawed, is not shunned by Paul but elevated and refocused. Righteous and pious living is not something to be pursued without purpose, nor is this standard generated by men out of the goodness of human hearts. Paul refocuses the church to understand that their relationship with Jesus Christ calls them to a higher standard of morality. In fact, the life they live should be that of exemplary citizens. If the world has a set of ideals that they pursue to be “good,” then the believer must exceed the purest form of these ideals by living a life that pursues all goodness, righteousness, and holiness.

This derives from Paul’s understanding that the moral law has been written on the heart of every human by God (Romans 1:18-32). As a result, Paul sees within society's moral code an opportunity for Christians to exceed and excel in the fulfillment of moral living and, in so doing, create an opportunity for God’s name to be glorified and God’s Kingdom to be expanded.

ANCHORS OF THE BODY (v. 2)

Paul calls on the older men of the church to be strong. This creates an interesting dichotomy because it is natural to associate age with frailty; however, Paul looks beyond physical strength. Older men are to be anchored by their age. The power of their body has waned, but the power of their mind, soul, and will has been increased through the years of success and failure, joy and suffering, trial and accomplishment. They are harder to deceive, less susceptible to the physical temptations of youth, and able to stand firm within the community.

Paul calls on these men to be the anchors of the church by being strong in their minds, faith, and convictions. They are to be masters of self, controlling their urges and desires and shunning sin. They are to be filled with love for the body and stand firm on their knowledge of the Word. They must be committed to truth, not wavering back and forth with every new whim and untested doctrine that comes along.

NOURISHERS OF THE BODY (v. 3)

Paul calls on the older women of the church to nourish the church through reverent behavior. These women bear a critical responsibility and function within the body. Their behavior undergirds the work of the church leaders. Their work and role within the church can never be null and void; it will either build up the church or tear down the church.

Through reverence, they will empower and support those whom God has called to lead. Through irreverence, they will throw the church into rebellion and render the leadership ineffective by vilifying those in leadership positions.

By controlling their speech, they will build up the Body. Through slander and gossip, they will create strife and animosity among the family of God.

Through sobriety, they will set an example for those who look up to them; however, drunkenness will ruin their example and remove their platform for teaching and instructing those under their charge.

A POWERFUL POSITION OF INSTRUCTION (v. 3b)

It has been said that “the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.” The truth of this statement is brought to light by the intense responsibility that Paul lays on the older women of the church

to “teach what is good.” The teaching ministry of the women of Christ’s Family does not end when their children enter adulthood; it simply moves from the home to the church. The end purpose of their instruction is to bring glory and honor to the Word of God.

The church’s future is entrusted to the women of the family, the ones who raise and train the generations to come. Fulfill this responsibility, and the church will flourish. Reject this responsibility, and the church will falter. Far from marginalizing the women of the church, Paul entrusts them with a critical task, one without which the church cannot endure.

A SPHERE OF GREAT INFLUENCE (v. 3-5)

Paul understood something that continues to be evidenced by modern statistics. The family, as God has set it up, is the core foundation of all human society. Without the family, society will inevitably crumble. While the family’s leadership falls to husbands, who have been charged with that position by God, the central core of the family has been entrusted to wives. The family home is the domain of women. God has given them this great responsibility, and its impact infiltrates every fiber of society. Through the fulfillment of God’s calling on their lives, godly women empower their husbands to fulfill God’s calling, raise godly posterity, and shape the world and the church through their obedience to this high calling. How the women of God’s church respond to God’s calling for their lives dramatically impacts the effectiveness of the church’s witness. In short, women, in their role, have the power to build the church or tear it down through their obedience or disobedience within the role that God has called them to.

A MINISTRY OF BUILDING UP (v. 4-5)

Paul points out that the ministry of young women is that of building up; they are to build up their homes, support their husbands, and raise their children. To do these things effectively, they

must control their desires, pursue purity in their living, focus their efforts on their sphere of responsibility, and be organizationally aligned with God's design for the family.

Paul is not saying that women have no voice; in fact, he is saying the exact opposite. He is pointing out that the sphere of influence borne by the women of God's family is so extensive that they must tenaciously pursue holiness, or they will fail in their role. Paul continually elevates the role of women by pointing out the vast reach of their actions and giving them a road map for success in their God-given calling. Paul's admonishments are not restrictive, i.e., for example, he is not telling women that they cannot have any involvement outside of the home; instead, his admonishments are priority-focused. In other words, a godly woman will step forward and take on any responsibility that prioritizes the ministry of building up her family. We will cover this in more depth in the audio discussion.

A HIGH STANDARD (v. 6-8)

Do not be fooled when reading verse six to think that Paul's instructions to young men are shorter and easier than the other three groups. The instructions to young men carry over into Paul's admonitions to Titus, who was also a young man. Paul demonstrated this by combining his instructions to young men in the congregation with his instructions to his young pastoral protege. While not all men are called to pastoral leadership, the standards for leaders within the church are also the standards for which all men should strive, regardless of their calling within the church. The undertone of this is that every man in the church should live in such a way that they meet the qualifications for leadership, with the only distinction between those who lead and those who do not being the call of the Holy Spirit.

THE WEIGHT OF MATURITY (v. 6-8)

While Paul calls on older men to be steadfast and help anchor the church to solid doctrine, he calls on the younger men to put off the folly of youth. His instruction for them to be self-controlled flies in the face of the general expectations of youthful behavior. Paul is not deriding the energy and vivacity of youth. Instead, he is showing that the energy and drive possessed by those who are young is only valuable and useful if it is properly channeled. Young men are called to be mature in their way of living, channeling the passion of youth for the defense of the gospel. The passion and power of youth can bring a strong offensive force to the church in its war with satanic forces, but it will be wasted, undermined, and rendered useless if left to the wiles of youthful foolishness. The greatest challenge for young men is wrestling with the passionate desires of the flesh while their physical power is at its peak. The desire for personal satisfaction, wealth, happiness, physical pleasure, and the like will ruin the young believer if they are not mastered through Holy Spirit-driven self-control.

A ROLE AND A PURPOSE

Paul is showing that every member within the church has a role and a purpose. Like any organization, when the members function effectively within their roles, the organization flourishes; when the members reject their roles, the organization crumbles.

Older men are to be strong and immovable in the faith and prevent the church from being deceived by false doctrines. Heresy creeps into the church when they fail by choosing ease and self-centered pursuits.

Older women are to give reverent support to the leadership of the older men and instruct the younger women in raising godly generations to carry on the work of the gospel. When they

choose idleness, distraction, and addiction, younger women are led away by their poor example, and the next generation is lost.

Younger women are to build up the domain of the family unit, which God has put under their charge to nurture. Rather than leading, they are to be builders and caretakers of their household, giving of themselves to safeguard the future through raising godly children. When they reject their role in favor of “cultural empowerment,” the future of the church is cut off.

Younger men are to be on the front lines of ministry, restricting their passions through godly self-control and pursuing a life that is defined by the qualifications for leaders in the church. In doing so, they will be effective husbands, fathers, leaders, and disciple-makers for the Kingdom of God. When they choose youthful folly over self-control, they devote their strength to satan’s purpose, and the strength of the church for evangelism is diminished.

The church is at its pinnacle of strength when its members obediently fill their roles.

RIGHTEOUS LIVING COVERS ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE (v. 9-10)

Paul makes it clear that believers are called to live lives of righteousness in every aspect. In other words, Christian living is to be a lifestyle, not a behavioral cloak. Believers are to be genuine in their faith in public and in private, with their families and within the church, in their community, and in their careers. It does not matter if they are rich or poor, of high position or low position, free or a servant. Position, wealth, status, and the like have no bearing on how believers are to live their lives because they are all part of the family of God.

Bondservants (or, in the modern day where slavery is no longer practiced, employees) must govern their conduct in such a way that they obey their masters (employers) with righteous

conduct and holy motives. Paul instructs bondservants to be good employees, trustworthy, obedient, submissive, humble, seeking the good of their employer with a genuine heart. Why? So that “they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.” In Paul’s estimation, career work is merely another form of ministry in which believers showcase the gospel through their work ethic and righteous morality before their employers. No doubt, he understood that such conduct would lead to opportunities to share the gospel with unbelieving employees and so be obedient to God and expand the church.

SO, WHAT’S THE POINT OF ALL THIS (v. 11-14)

The driving force behind all of this instruction from Paul is the enhancement of the Church’s witness to spread the gospel. Paul breaks the purpose of righteous living down into two main purposes, which are driven by the two main goals of Christ’s work. First, believers, those who are saved by Jesus, are to “renounce ungodliness and selfish passions” because Jesus “gave Himself to redeem us.” Second, believers are to live “self-controlled, upright, and godly lives” because Jesus purified “for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” Paul is instructing the church so that they will understand that this is their responsibility as Christ’s image bearers. This way of living is not optional but is owed to Jesus Christ by the church in thankful recompense for His lavish and undeserved gift of salvation.

Key Verses

The Defense Against Heresy is Sound Doctrine

Titus 2:1 - The weapon in the hands of those charged with shepherding the church is sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is derived directly from the diligent study, valid interpretation, and appropriate application of God’s Word. Paul’s charge to the leaders of the church to teach “what

accords with sound doctrine” is a formal charge of responsibility to the leadership of the church to be steeped in the study of the Scriptures.

Leaders Lead by Example

Titus 2:7-8 - Paul makes it extremely clear that words will not be enough to lead the church and protect it from sinful false teachers. The leaders of the church will have to live lives that exemplify their teaching because the conduct in every aspect of their lives, whether public or private, must match their teaching. Any discrepancy between their words and their actions will discredit them and damage the church.

Living in a State of Preparation

Titus 2:13 - What is the purpose for godly leaders to lead a church of obedient and passionate Christ-followers? It is for the purpose of prepared waiting! The church is supposed to live in the active tension of obediently waiting for the return of their Savior and King, Jesus Christ. Living as a Christ-follower is more than just living a good life, telling others about Jesus, and reading the Bible. Living as a Christ-follower means living in an ever-present expectation of God’s return and using every moment of His delay to continue to prepare for His coming. This preparation is achieved through obedience to Him in every aspect of life.

Key Words

Sound (*hygiainō*) Titus 2:1

The word “sound” in this context translates to the idea of healthy, in good health, and safe. This conveys the concept to the reader that Paul is drawing a line between healthy teaching and unhealthy or sick teaching. Healthy teaching leads to relationship with God and life. Sick teaching leads to estrangement from God, sin, and death. Paul is charging the leaders of the

church to teach doctrine that is true, right, and in accordance with the Scriptures so that their congregation will be spiritually healthy.

Self-Control (*sōphrōn*) Titus 2:2, 5, 6, 12

Meaning to be of sane mind. In control of one's thoughts, mind, and actions. Having the power to control one's desires and impulses. This word is used four times in this brief chapter. Paul is driving home the point that all believers are called to have dominating control over their sinful hearts and sinful bodies so as to prevent sin from being able to lay hold of them through a fit of uncontrollable emotion. The self-controlled person is someone who is able to remain unmoved by the earthquakes of emotion because they are sober-minded and capable of retraining their action and their words.

Submitting (*hypotassō*) Titus 2:5, 9

A military term for being lower in rank. The key to understanding this word in the context in which it is used is that it is purely organizational in its nature. In no way do the Scriptures suggest that any one person is of greater or lesser value than another person. All are created by God and as such, are all equal before the Creator and of equal value and importance to Him. The concept of submission hangs on this point, that all created beings must submit to God and that God, through His sovereignty, has elevated certain people to positions of authority. Those who occupy these positions must be submitted to with humility, regardless of their worthiness as leaders, simply because God has put them in that position. In other words, Paul is not commanding the Christians to submit only to those in organizational authority over them (i.e. a wife to a husband or an employee to an employer), but to God through submission to the person that God has placed in authority over them. Believers with humble hearts must recognize that all authority comes from God. This reality will allow them to submit to authority figures with joy,

knowing that even bad authority figures derive their power from God and will answer to Him for their misuse of it.

Zealous (*zēlōtēs*) Titus 2:15

The equivalent of being filled with passion for something, whether it is to possess or defend.

The word in context works both ways. Believers must be zealous to “possess” good works, i.e. filled with passion to do good works for the Kingdom, to take ownership of doing good works for the Kingdom. It also works in the negative sense in that believers need to be passionate about defending the hope upon which their faith rests, not for the sake of argument but so that those who challenge them would know the reason why believers hold so passionately to their hope in Jesus.

Cross-References

1 Timothy 1:8-11 (v. 1-2)

“Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.”

1 Timothy 2:9-15 (v. 3)

“...likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather,

she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve, and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.”

Genesis 3:16 (v. 5)

“To the woman, he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.”

1 Peter 3:1-2 (v. 5)

“Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives when they see your respectful and pure conduct.”

1 Timothy 5:1-2 (v. 6)

“Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.”

2 Corinthians 11:2-3 (v. 7)

“For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”

1 Timothy 2:1-2 (v. 7)

“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.”

Nehemiah 5:6-9 (v. 8)

"I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. I took counsel with myself, and I brought charges against the nobles and the officials. I said to them, "You are exacting interest, each from his brother." And I held a great assembly against them and said to them, "We, as far as we are able, have bought back our Jewish brothers who have been sold to the nations, but you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us!" They were silent and could not find a word to say. So I said, "The thing that you are doing is not good. Ought you not to walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies?"

1 Timothy 6:3-5 (v. 8)

"Teach and urge these things. If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain."

1 Peter 2:12 (v. 8)

"Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation."

1 Peter 3:13-17 (v. 8)

"Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who

asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil."

Colosians 3:22-25 (v. 9)

"Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality."

1 Peter 2:18-21 (v. 9)

"Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps."

Matthew 5:16 (v. 10)

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Psalm 67:1-2 (v. 11)

“May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, Selah that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.”

1 Timothy 2:4 (v. 11)

“This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Titus 3:3-7 (v. 11)

“For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

1 Timothy 6:17-19 (v. 12)

“As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.”

1 Peter 4:1-2 (v. 12)

“Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.”

1 John 2:16-17 (v. 12)

“For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.”

2 Peter 3:11-13 (v. 13)

“Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”

Psalms 130:7-8 (v. 14)

“O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption. And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.”

Ezekiel 37:21-23 (v. 14)

“Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land. And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms.

They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”

1 Peter 1:14-19 (v. 14)

“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.”

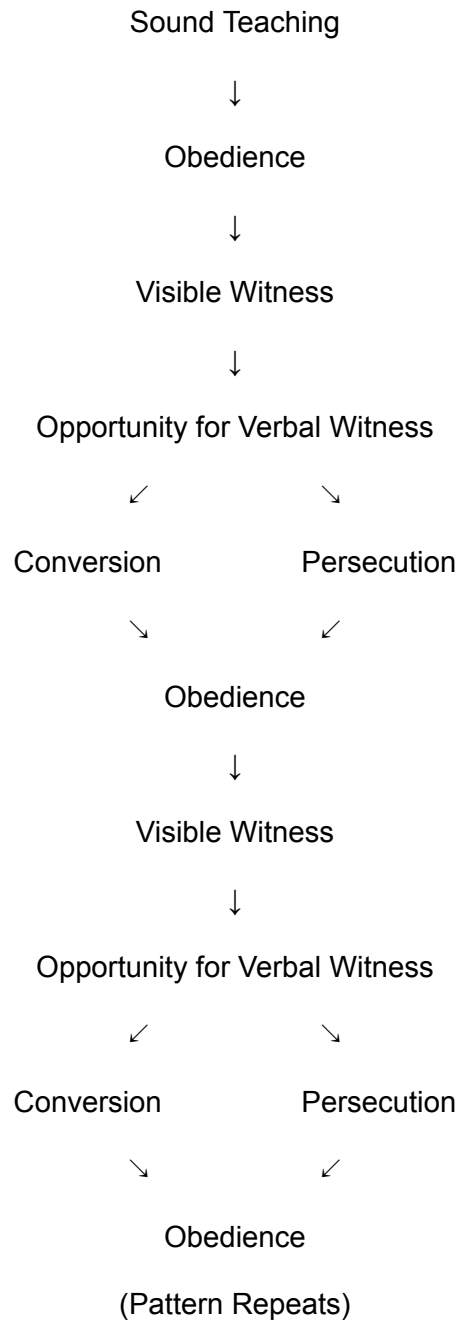
Application

Sound Doctrine Leads to Obedience

When church leadership teaches sound doctrine directly from the Scriptures, the result is a congregation that is motivated to righteous living.

Obedience Leads to Effective Outreach

When the church is filled with Kingdom-followers who are obedient, reaching the lost people that surround the local church becomes a natural byproduct of righteous living. Obedience begins a cycle of outreach that looks something like this.



Active Waiting Equals Obedient Waiting

While it is true Kingdom followers are waiting for the return of Jesus, their waiting must not be idle or in vain. There is much to do in the time spent waiting for the return of the King, and it was His command before He left that his followers be continually engaged in active waiting.

Discussion Questions

Do you exhibit the qualities that Paul lays out in this chapter?

Are you being challenged by the leadership in your church to develop these qualities?

Is your life a visible testimony of the faith you claim to have in Jesus?

The words “self-controlled” appear four times in this chapter and apply to every group. Are you self-controlled?

Would you consider yourself “zealous for good works?”