

Women and Titus 2 Cross Generational Women's Ministry

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“In the same way, older women are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not addicted to much wine. [They are] to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands and children, to be sensible, pure, good homemakers, and submissive to their husbands, so that God's message will not be slandered.” [Titus 2:3-5](#), HCSB

This familiar command has been plastered on many women's ministry bulletins, served as the core verse for many women's ministry programs, and provided clear focus for those who desire to minister to women in the local church, and rightly so. Whether this passage is etched in our memory or highlighted in our Bible or sitting on our desk, we would largely agree that the doing of Titus 2 is a great deal more difficult than knowing it. It seems that there are two primary challenges women's ministry leaders face when they attempt to apply this text.

THE FIRST CHALLENGE is that the older women in the local church need to be adequately discipled and equipped to fulfill the command and many do not feel so equipped. At one season in my life I served on staff as a leader of the women in my local church. This was an unusual position for someone in their early twenties to find themselves in, yet it taught me immensely about the struggles that all women's leaders face. I recall encountering women who felt inadequate and ill equipped to fulfill this command in Titus. I discovered through my experience what many women's leaders have also found: that it is difficult to create a culture in which older women are pouring into younger women if the older women still feel or view themselves as the ones that need to be taught. Truly we are all in need of teaching, but there comes a point when we are the older ones and need to take on the responsibility of teaching young women how to be wives, mothers, homemakers, and simply God honoring women according to Titus 2.

THE SECOND CHALLENGE I've witnessed in the local church is the struggle of many traditional women's ministry programs (think video study, the annual tea or luncheon, a group consisting of mostly 35-85 year olds) to reach and retain young women in their ministry programs. Even if the older women are equipped to teach and ready to reach out, it can seem impossible to draw younger women into participating, serving, and leading in the ministry.

These are challenges must be overcome. As a young woman yet in my twenties, today we will focus our concern on tackling the latter challenge, as it may prove to be the greater of the two challenges.

Sadly there is no magical formula. There is not a quick fix and no program exists that will immediately fill your women's ministry with the young women in your local church.

Unfortunately, “If you build it (a ministry for young women)” there is a good chance they still won't come. However, my encouragement to you today is this...if they (young women) build it with you they might come. In my local church I have been privileged to help build and lead a ministry geared toward young women in their twenties and thirties. It started in much the same fashion as any ministry team. With a couple of passionate young women and an experienced Women's Minister who possessed a heart for Titus 2, despite the extra time, possible

inconvenience, and cost. Here are a few things our women's minister did that I believe had a direct impact on our endeavor's success:

1. She listened to us.
2. She allowed us to implement our ideas and did not even offer her ideas.
3. She gave us room to "fail" or "succeed."
4. She let us use her funds to do something "small" at a large church.
5. She loved us, empowered us, and gave us what we needed.

It can prove to be a challenge to release any portion of your ministry into the hands of someone else, especially when that someone is younger and has ideas that differ from your own. However, if a women's ministry leader would prayerfully take this step of faith in selecting and investing in younger women and allow them to lead I highly doubt she would be disappointed with the result.

As a result of our women's ministry leaders willingness to believe that God could work through the leadership of young women here are a few blessings that our local church received:

1. 100, maybe more, young women were in Bible study this summer/fall, some studying a book of the Bible for the first time.
2. Young women were discipled and were delighted to have "a place!"
3. 100 young women (NEW FACES) got together for a social event where the young women's ministry called MESH was introduced.
4. 63 young women have expressed interest in a spiritual growth type retreat which we hope to provide some time in 2011.
5. Young women who may have never attended a traditional women's ministry event were introduced through MESH to all that our women's ministry has to offer. The gap has been bridged.

Every women's ministry has a different set of challenges. However, this one challenge stands as one we must all face or else we risk God's message being slandered according to Titus 2. I encourage you to pray and ask the Lord what He requires of you. Also, consider meeting with some key young women in your church and listen to them as they aid your ministry in fulfilling this command.