



If you go to a football game at McMahon stadium, some time during the game you will be encouraged to stand up and sing the YMCA song using all the actions. We decided to not do that to you today because it would come very close to either raising your hands or dancing in church. It is amazing how this song from 1979 by the Village People has continued to be sung over the years (sold 10 millions copies). This song is a thinly veiled description about how the YMCA had become a popular cruising spot for the gay community. However, the history of the YMCA is that it began as the Young Men's Christian Association. It was designed to help young men find faith. I know this is true because following the second world war my dad decided to immigrate to Canada (where he had completed his RAF training) to begin a new life. He needed a place to stay and ended up like so many other young men finding his accommodation at the YMCA. It was there he began to attend a Bible Study for the first time and it was there that he found faith and a new passion for his life.

While he was there he decided to attend Winnipeg Bible School where he found his calling to be a Pastor and the love of his life, our mom. The founders of the YMCA took very seriously the passage we will be looking at today. They felt their call was to train young men how to live a life full of faith and passion so they could have a profound impact on their generation. Turn to Titus 2 in our series on "Living Life Together" as we look at God's model of a multi-generational ministry happening in each church. We have seen how the older women and older men have a crucial role to play in mentoring and modeling faith and how the young women are called to live keeping in mind that what you do in the present will have a profound impact on your future. Now, Paul turns to the young men and as he does remember that two of his key leaders/Pastors are young men. Timothy is probably in his early 30's and Titus the pastor at the church in Crete is in his late 20's. There seems to have been an influx of young men who had found faith and with their passion and new found faith they had this goal to see the message of Jesus transform their Island. This would be a church like Brentview with some deep Godly older saints who had a profound faith that was worth copying and then this young passionate crowd whose faith calls them to risk it all for the sake of Christ. Listen to his advice to young men.

*Titus 2:6-8, "Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us."*

### **I. Our Job (older folk)**

Nothing gets me more excited than looking around on a Sunday morning or sneaking into Hub on Sunday evening and seeing how many passionate people there are in our church under the age of 35. You are at this profound time in your lives when the sky is the limit, your faith is fresh and worth giving your life for. I see a passion to pour out your lives to change our world. You indeed are a profound gift to Brentview, you are our present future. You are also at a very hard time in your lives. This is the time when what you do today will have a profound impact on your future. You are at a time when you are solidifying your faith, determining the priorities of your life, and a time

when your confidence is large but your experience is still growing. It is a time when friendship, sex, getting stuff and getting ahead seems to be at a dull roar in your heads. It is a time when you will decide what you will give your life for. What is interesting in this is that as Paul views with excitement the young passionate men in this church, his first words are not to them but to the other men and women in this multi-generational church! Look at vs.6, *“Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled.”* His first comments were to the older saints in the church to say that they were to ‘encourage the young men’. Some times older people within the church look at the energy and dynamic passion of the younger men/women in their churches and say, “the last thing I want to do is encourage them”. They are already pushing, prodding, and changing everything from the music to the style of dress in our churches. If we encourage them it could really get scary around here. Often older folk sideline the younger believers, keeping them out of the decision making process and trying to keep younger folk in their place. And the result has been:

- the church gets grayer
- the most energetic and passionate youth become disillusioned and leave the church.
- Our kids fall away from faith
- The church begins to die and it ends up with a great future behind it.

Let me make 3 simple comments to those of us who are older:

1. be honest with were we are at! I heard a pastor say something that really put a few things in perspective for me. He said, “Here is the deal, if you are an older member of our church (I include myself here) and you can promise me that in fifteen years from now you will still be around and not spending extended periods away in Florida. I will make sure that things don’t change around here. But if you can’t promise me that in fifteen years you will still be here and not spending extended periods away in Florida, then I need to say that a crucial part of our mandate as a church needs to be together (you and I) to pour our resources, our passion, our lives into those who are younger than we are; so that they can establish a deep abiding passion for Jesus and that the church will become increasingly a place relevant enough to reach the next generation and the next generation for Jesus. I say that as a guy who not that long ago was one of those ‘young guns’ who was always ahead of the pack when it came to change. I was one of the first folk in my last denomination leading the charge for the change of music.

We had the first worship band in the province, in that denomination, which would then travel to different churches teaching them how to reach a larger demographic in their music. I had hair before I tried to see those changes happen. And I know that each generation in this church can tell us of how they fought similar battles to make some of the changes we now take for granted. Here is the weird thing! Despite the fact that I have always been that young guy who was leading the charge for positive change, one day, somehow I became one of the ‘older guys’ on the staff. I had a choice to make; I could keep maintaining things which made me feel the most comfortable or I could attempt to keep balancing the needs for relevant ministry to our existing congregation with a determination to be a church which will continually be in flux. In this way, we will always have places where the next generation can find a relevant place to meet the Jesus who wants to keep meeting each generation in new and relevant ways. Don’t

miss that while Jesus worked within the church of his day he always pushed the envelope so that those outside the faith would be grabbed by the relevance and power of the gospel. Just like Paul, Jesus made sure he was training a group of young men to be the leaders of tomorrow's ministry.

The wonder of this church is that I have never met a church whose senior members were more passionate for the care of those younger than them. At the same time, I am hearing a clear call from the younger crowd that they desire to honor those older in the faith and ask that by their life and words they would be open to mentor them as they live out their faith. The weird thing about life is given time we all get older. That means all of us will eventually have to struggle with change and all of us will have to determine to be change agents for the gospel sake and the next generations sake. Hopefully, someone did that for us and we need to keep doing that for others.

2. Be obedient to Gods command. Notice again how verse 6 begins, we are called to encourage those younger than ourselves in their walk of faith. What was it about Wally Fus that you loved the most? He was an encourager; he encouraged us to never stop telling others about Jesus. If we disagreed during a staff meeting I could always guarantee within minutes after the meeting he would be knocking on my door making sure that I knew what he was thinking and that he was supportive of me. Wally always had a heart for those in need and those younger than himself. He was an encourager. Even during his tough chemo therapy he made sure he encouraged those around him. Wally knew that life wasn't always easy. He knew that the word of an old man (a father & grandfather type) had a way of encouraging the heart of those around him and helping them rise to a new level. Encouragement takes work! It means getting to know others so you can tell when they need encouragement. Henry Hilderbrand (founder of Briercrest Bible College) used to say, "when I was a young man I needed older men around me to give me wisdom and experience and when I became older I needed young men around me; men of passion, strength and courage". God has placed us together so that at different times in our lives we can pour our voice and our heart into the lives of others. As Kathy said a couple weeks ago, no matter what age you are at, look at those who are younger than you are and ask how I can be an encourager, a big sister or brother, a father or mother in the faith around me. Being a mentor and encourager can be one of the most profound ministries you will ever have in your life.

## **II. Your Job**

Paul then lays out what you as young men need to work on. Titus 2:6-8. If you think back through scripture you will find that some of the biblical characters made their most profound impact when they were in their 20's or early 30's. It was during that time when Daniel and his friends walked through the fiery furnace full of faith; it was the time David killed Goliath and changed the future of Israel; it was the time when Gideon lead an army to an amazing victory; it was the time when Timothy and Titus planted thriving churches; it was the time when the disciples left all to follow Jesus and transform their world. That is why I Tim. 4:12 says '*Don't let anyone look down on you because of your youth, but set and example for the believers in speech, in love, in faith and in purity*'. This is that time in your life that you can put in place ideas and patterns that will change how you will live the next 60+ years of your life. But more than that, it is the time of your life when you can make a profound impact on your world. You have an energy that

seems unstoppable. You have a confidence that seems unbreakable. You have a wonderful unstoppable belief that sees possibilities first and problems second. Go for it, step out and go make a difference. Pour out your life into those things which Jesus has been stirring in your heart. Do it now, for as you do, great things are possible.

Now look back to Titus again and you will find that the same challenge that Paul places at the end of I Tim. 4:12 to be examples in how you speak, how you love, how you live by faith and the purity of your life are repeated here in Titus 2:6-8. He calls you to be self-controlled, live with integrity, with seriousness and with sound speech. In both cases he calls them to do the same thing. Why? Because he knows that when your younger these are things you may struggle with. The first thing he mentions is being self-controlled for he knows the temptations to party hardy and to let your sexual passion which seems to pound through your brain and body life be your #1 need, which is so strong. To be honest, the last thing you want to be at times is self-controlled especially because our culture lives like what you do today has no impact on your future (by the way that is a lie). What you do today will become your future very quickly. The call for integrity is the call to not live like a hypocrite. It is the idea of what you say and what you do will be the same.

What I find amazing is that nothing is more repulsive to those in their mid 20's than hypocrisy but often those same people will give themselves permission to live a life on the weekend different than what they say all week long. That is a lack of integrity, it is playing with hypocrisy. Then it mentioned soundness of speech, why? Because what we say influences what people think of us and our faith. More than that, what we say actually comes from down deep inside us. A friend used to say what is down in the well comes up in the bucket. Sometimes especially when your younger it is so easy to say all kinds of things and we pass them off as just the things we say. Can I encourage you to listen to what you say, what you talk about, the stories you tell. They will give you an insight into what is down deep in your heart, who you really are. You see the idea is that we need to get intentional in becoming who we need to become. You don't just wake up one day and become a godly man, a man of integrity, a man who is worth marrying or worth following; it is learned slowly over time.

Now just for a couple minutes let me take you to a passage you know very well and place a few practical ideas concerning how you as young men become men of integrity. Let's do that by looking at how you treat those you date (by the way if you are married, this is for you as well). Paul speaks about self-control, purity, living right and no where does the reality become more necessary than in this area; I Cor. 13, the Love passage.

1. Love is patient: (pause, love is patient). That means that love never pressures the other person. Love creates as much space, time, and margins as the other person needs. It is the exact opposite of 'if you love me you will let me'. This means if you are in a relationship where the other person is pushing you to, why don't you, and why can't we you know that person isn't loving you, they are trying to use you. The reason this is listed here is that patience doesn't automatically happen when you marry someone. The kind of patience that gives a person the kind of room to love you and grow as a person takes time to develop in you. As you date with patience you will develop the patience (self control) you need for marriage and life.

2. Love is kind: you are considerate of the others needs. You take into consideration how the other person feels all the time. This sounds so simple. But we need to mention this because we have the idea that when we meet the right person they will be so perfect that it will be easy to be kind and considerate to them. Then you get married and find the other person didn't work on this either, because they thought you would be the perfect one. Paul is saying that as you become kind you will be putting in place what you need to have a great relationship.

3. Love doesn't Envy: Some of your parents split over this issue. Envy is, 'I don't feel good about me so I can't let you feel good about you'. You will see the root of it when you are on the date and she tells you a story and you have to tell a bigger and better one. What happens then is that later in life when she has a better job, a bit more going on, instead of celebrating how wonderful it is for her, you keep trying to compete with her. And before long you will destroy your intimacy! So sit, listen and shut up and enjoy her stories and joy.

4. It does not boast and is not proud: this is the pride stuff where the person can't admit they could ever be wrong. That pattern will eventually kill a relationship because we all mess up at times. When you mess up, fess up! It builds trust and love.

5. Love isn't rude or self-seeking (does not dishonor others): Here is the juicy one. **It means that when you date you will never create regret.** You will never be part of someone's regret story. Where they say I wish I hadn't gone out with them, I wish I hadn't said yes to that. It is making the promise that you will never do anything which will create regret for someone else. In other words, you will not behave disgracefully, dishonorably or indecently. When you hear that some of you (if you are honest) would say, 'that was kind of my goal to behave that way that is why I date'. Disgracefully – check -- Dishonorably – you bet – indecently -- if possible. Can I just say from hearing far too many sad stories what may seem to serve you well when you are 'living large' will destroy what you value later in life. I am not saying that to be mean, I am saying that because I want you to have a life that is filled with no regret and a marriage which is not just ok but great.

What 1 Cor. 13 is saying is that if you begin to love (date: do marriage like this) in the right way where you never pressure the other person, treat them with kindness, determine to never cause them regret and you will become someone worth loving and a person who will experience love in a deeper more profound way. Isn't that what you want? Does this come naturally? No! Then practice what is right, today, so tomorrow you can live with a deeper passion and be a great lover.

Now flip down to the last couple verses in this passage. I Cor. 13:10, 11. After what Paul said to Timothy and Titus about how to live as young men of God and after explaining how to grow that kind of character in our lives as we have just seen in I Cor. 13: so you become a great lover. He adds this simple comment; don't act as children during this crucial time of your life. If you want to be a man who makes a difference, who lives with passion and love for others, understand you can't get there by acting like a child. By pretending you can live anyway you want through your 20's and still become

a man of influence and depth. You need to set aside childish things and childish ways of living and instead decide that you will do what you need to do to become the person your future spouse will fall in love. Your friends will trust you with their lives and God can use to make a great impact on those you love.

My belief is that in this room we have young men who will be world changers, men of integrity and passion and men who will help the cause of Christ to go forward in profound ways. For this to happen, we as older believers need to encourage them with our words and care. As younger men are called to live as a growing, hand chosen man of God that understands what they do today will have a profound impact on who they will be and what they will do in the future.

For information about Brentview Baptist Church and its ministries,  
please contact the church office at:  
3512 Charleswood Dr NW, Calgary, AB T2L 2C3  
Phone: 403-284-4691 Fax: 403-284-0132 email: [mail@brentviewbaptist.com](mailto:mail@brentviewbaptist.com)  
Website: [www.brentviewbaptist.com](http://www.brentviewbaptist.com)