



mothers
of adults
Lesson 11

Sensible

by Katie Leedy

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age.

Titus 2:11-12

Introduction – Titus 2:1-12

What Is “Sensible”?

Word Study

- Greek word is *σφηρις*.
- Family of words used 16x in the NT (5x in Titus 2 passage)
- From 2 parts: “‘sound, safe’ and ‘inner outlook’ which regulates outward behavior—properly, safe (sound)

because *moderated*, referring to what is prudent because correctly (divinely) balanced” (HELPS Word-studies)

- 1 of 4 great virtues highlighted by philosophers in NT times
- Translated various ways in English versions

| NAS | KJV | ESV |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| sensible | sober | self-controlled |
| prudent | temperate | rational words |
| discipline | discreet | in his right mind |
| sober | sound mind | self-control |
| discreetly | sobriety | sober judgment |
| self-restraint | soberness | |
| in his right mind | in his right mind | |
| sound judgment | soberly | |
| sound mind | to be sober | |
| may encourage | | |

- Passages where it is used [See enclosed handout.]
- Has to do with our **minds**
 - Demon-possessed man: clothed and in his **right mind** (contrasted to how he was before)

“An inward change with externally observable effects.”
Timothy Hughes

- Romans 12:3—to **think** so as to have sound judgment

“A process of right thinking, not driven by personal pride but by truth, that makes it possible for the believer to”
have sound judgment.” Timothy Hughes

- 2 Corinthians 5:13—*sound mind*—contrasted with *not thinking right—beside ourselves*
- I Peter 4:7—*be of sound judgment*
- Acts 26:25—*not out of my mind . . . but I utter words of sober truth.*

- Has to do with the way we **live**
 - 1 Timothy 3:2—an elder’s life is supposed to be characterized by this virtue
 - Titus
 - all groups and ages of Christian people’s lives are to be characterized by this
 - older women are to “sensible-ize” (teach, encourage, admonish, recall to their senses) the younger women
 - grace teaches us “to live sensibly” Titus 2:12
 - 1 Timothy 2:9—Christian women are to be this when considering their adorning
 - 2 Timothy 1:7—It is God-given and should characterize a Christian’s life

- Conclusions
 - “It is impossible to find any single English equivalent sufficient to convey the full range of meaning of this word family.” Timothy Hughes

 - “It is no minor thing when it comes to right living. Your best idea for this word is self-controlled, restrained by self-discipline. At its roots is the idea of our minds where all this begins—minds that think wisely and prudently. This shows itself out in our behavior in a self-controlled fashion—we live in that way.”
Pastor Mark Minnick

 - “a word that denotes soundness of mind or sound judgment. . . . This word conveys the idea of allowing sound judgment to control our desires and appetites, our thoughts, emotions, and actions.” Jerry Bridges

 - “prudent; or, as the word also implies, one who governs well his passions, and whose mind is well regulated. He must be lively and zealous, yet calm and wise.”
Joseph Benson

- “The man of God is to exercise a steady-minded self-control that results in right living. . . . [It] can mean much more than mere sanity. It can refer to prudence, or a wise and reasonable analysis leading to the right course of action in the face of circumstances that, if mishandled, could turn out badly. . . . Sometimes it refers to restraint based on reason or principle. In these contexts, it is appropriate to translate the word as *moderation*. Regularly the need of restraint of the passions is in view; a [sensible] person acts based on what he knows rather than how he feels, enabling him to take the right course of action. . . . [This word] **communicates an inner rule of wisdom resulting in self-control that enables right action, even in difficult or tempting circumstances. It especially refers to an individual’s ability to rise above the passions to act in the best way possible in any given situation and as a way of life.**” Timothy Hughes

How Do We Grow in Being “Sensible”?

God’s Grace Teaches Us

*For the **grace of God** has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, **instructing us** to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to **live sensibly**, righteously and godly in the present age.*

Titus 2:11-12

- **God’s Grace Teaches Us Right Thinking**

- **Fearing of the Lord**

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7

“More particularly, let your souls be still possessed with **the fear of God**, and live as in his family, under his eye and government, that his authority may be more powerful than temptations, and your holy converse with him may make him still more regarded by you than

men or any creatures. And then this sun will put out the lesser lights, and the thunder of his voice will drown the whisperers that would provoke you, and the humming of those wasps which make you so impatient. God would make the creature nothing, and then it would do nothing to disturb you, or carry you into sin.”
Richard Baxter

➤ **Renewing our minds**

Ephesians 4:23
Romans 12:2

➤ **Learning from others** who exhibit these characteristics
Hebrews 12:1-2

● **God’s Grace Teaches Us Right Living**

Self-control vs. Self-indulgence

Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit. Proverbs 25:28

“Trust not to any present actual resistance, without any due, **habitual mortification** of passions, and fortification of the soul against them. **Look most to the holy constitution of your mind and life**, and then sinful passions will fall off, like scabs from a healthful body when the blood is purified.”

“Dwell in the delightful love of God, and in the sweet contemplation of his love in Christ, and roll over his tender mercies in your thoughts, and let your conversation be with the holy ones in heaven, and your work be thanksgivings and praise to God: and this will **habituate your souls to such a sweetness, and mellowness, and stability, as will resist sinful passion** even as heat resisteth cold.

Richard Baxter

➤ **Self-Control of our Body**

Everything is permissible for me—but I will not be mastered by anything. 1 Corinthians 6:12.
(Berean Study Bible)

“The moderation resulting from self-control keeps permissible things from becoming masters of our bodies.” Jerry Bridges

- Bridges looks at 3 areas of physical temptation:
 - ◆ gluttony (food/drink) – *Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.* 1 Corinthians 10:31
 - ◆ laziness – Proverbs 6:6-11
 - ◆ moral impurity

➤ **Self-Control of our Feelings/Emotions**

- anger, bitterness, self-pity, fear
- praying the psalms—coming to right conclusions like the psalmists did.

➤ **Self-Control of our Minds**

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.
2 Corinthians 10:5

“Self-control of our thoughts means entertaining in our minds only those thoughts that are acceptable to God.”
Jerry Bridges

Philippians 4:8

Bringing Right Thinking & Right Living Together

“The beginning of self-mastery is to be **mastered by Christ**, to yield to his lordship. ‘Wouldst thou have thy flesh obey thy spirit?’ Augustine asked. “Then let thy spirit obey thy God. Thou must be governed, that thou may’st govern.” D. G. Kehl

... If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. Luke 9:23

“What is my cross? Whatever **death to self** it takes for **me** to follow Jesus.” Pastor Mark Minnick

For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Philippians 2:13

*But I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. Galatians 5:16*

Biblical Examples

- **The Proverbs 31 Example**
 - Right thinking controlled her behavior—she **feared the Lord**, did her husband good and not evil
 - Physically self-controlled: strengthened her arms, not lazy, got up early, worked hard to provide for family and poor
 - Emotionally self-controlled: worked with delight, sensed her gain was good, strength and dignity were her clothing, smiled at the future
 - Mentally self-controlled: opened her mouth in kindness and wisdom, feared the Lord, was alert (bought a field, planted a vineyard)

- **Abigail (I Samuel 25)**
 - Right thinking controlled her behavior
 - Quickly assessed situation and saw what was needed.
 - Quickly prepared what was needed
 - Was respectful and took the blame for the situation.
 - Showed wisdom in her advice to David
 - David praised her—“Blessed be your discernment . . .”

- **Mary**
 - Right thinking controlled her behavior
 - Asked questions—but not unbelievably
 - Knew God’s Word—her mind controlled by those thoughts shows in the Magnificat
 - Restraint—pondered all these things in her heart.

. ***I press on . . .***
Philippians 3:12

Resources

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Bridges, Jerry. *The Practice of Godliness*

Hendriksen, William. *New Testament Commentary*

Hughes, Timothy. (Word Study)

Knight, George W. III. *The New International Greek Commentary*

Minnick, Mark. Sermon, *The Discipleship of Grace*, 9/1/2013

Towner, Philip H. *New International Commentary on the New Testament*