

THE REFORMED PERSPECTIVE

A NEW YEAR'S EXHORTATION TO YOUNG MEN: BE SOBER MINDED

BY REV. NATHAN J. LANGERAK, PASTOR OF SOUTH HOLLAND PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH

Titus 2:6

Sobriety of mind is a virtue that the Scripture exhorts upon all believers. In the book of Titus the Scriptures say, to young and old, to office bearer and layman, to male and female, "be sober minded." Titus 1:8 says that a bishop must be "sober." Titus 2:2 exhorts the aged men to be "sober." Titus 2:4 instructs the aged women to "teach the young women to be sober," and thus implies that it is a duty of both the aged and the young women.

Here in Titus 2:6, however, the Apostle addresses himself to the young men specifically and of all the possible and weighty instruction that he could give to young men he simply says, "Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded." You might be inclined to say that the young men must also hear the instruction to office-bearers for some of them will one day be office-bearers in the church. You might be tempted to say that the young men must also hear the instruction to the old men because they must mature to be old men. But before all that they must hear this exhortation: be sober minded. Young men who are not sober minded usually grow up to be foolish old men.

The young men, likewise, exhort to be sober minded.

The corrupt society in which we live, a society that falls under the con-

(Continued on page 2)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A New Year's Exhortation Page 1

To Young Men:

Be Sober Minded

Rev. Nathan J. Langerak

ORDER SERMON Page 6

TAPES ON TITUS

"DOCTRINE

ACCORDING

TO GODLINESS"

Rev. Nathan J. Langerak

Evangelism Committee South Holland Protestant Reformed Church

Rev. Nathan Langerak PO Box 478 South Holland, IL 60473

Phone: 708.333.1314 Fax: 708.333.4017 Email: Shevangelism@juno.com www.southhollandprc.org

THE SOUTH HOLLAND PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH NOW MEETS AT: THE SERBIAN SOCIAL CENTER 18550 STONY ISLAND AVE. LANSING IL 60438

SEE SOUTHHOLLANDPRC.ORG FOR DIRECTIONS

*("A New Year's Exhortation to Young Men: Be Sober Minded": Continued from page 1)*

demnation of Scripture in Titus 2:12 as godless and full of worldly lusts, vigorously promotes the idea that the young men must indulge themselves in the all pleasures that this culture has to offer, whether that be the excesses of entertainment, the excesses of promiscuity, the excesses of alcohol, and the list could go on.

The culture tells young men that they must be everything but sober minded.

Especially during the holidays when the world is busy with their parties and consumed by their eating and drinking does the message come to young men that they must join with the world in their drunken revelry. There are the work parties, Christmas parties, the New Year's parties, the football parties. Perhaps, and God forbid that this is the case, there are even those in the church that behave like the world and think nothing of having a drunken party at their own house to bring in the New Year.

The world's message for the holidays is clear, "Young men need not be sober minded."

This situation is not new for the young men of the church. In fact, it is in view of temptations that faced the young men of the churches of Crete that the Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, instructs Titus to exhort, to speak, to exhort again, and to rebuke the young men of the churches to be sober minded.

The churches of Crete were located on the island of Crete in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea just south of the peninsula of Greece. It was one of the many provinces in the massive Roman Empire that ruled the civilized world of that day from Britain to North Africa and from Spain to Palestine. It was an Empire that offered all the worldly delights that one could imagine. Rome conquered, and in her conquering Rome absorbed not only land and people, but also all the vices and abominations of those lands and people. In Rome and in her provinces was everything that delighted the eyes, inflamed the heart, and stirred up the lusts.

It was an empire full of ungodliness and worldly lusts.

It was a world that was remarkably similar to our own in its godlessness and wickedness.

In the sharpest contrast to that world's and to our own world's fundamental message to the young men, the gospel teaches sobriety.

The Spirit has an exhortation here for young men, a New Year's exhortation for young men: be sober minded.

A sober mind is a fundamental principle of a young man's life in the world, a principle out of which flows the godly life of that young man. A sober mind is the fruit of the regenerated heart—a spiritual virtue—and thus it is a peculiarly Christian, I say, a Reformed, Christian, virtue. The Apostle says of himself and to Titus, and of all believers that they were sometimes, foolish, disobedient, and deceived. They were unregenerate. They were of an unsound mind (Titus 3:3). But now we are saved by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost (Titus 3:5). The sober mind, therefore, is the gift of the Holy Ghost by regeneration. It is the mind that is alive to spiritual realities and understands spiritual things spiritually.

*(Continued on page 3)*

(“A New Year’s Exhortation to Young Men: Be Sober Minded”: Continued from page 2)

The sober mind has sound knowledge of the Scriptures. A sober mind has a right knowledge that at its very heart is the knowledge of God as he is revealed in Jesus Christ in the Scriptures. Is this not what the Apostle himself indicates when he says of himself in Titus 1:1 that his very commission was to preach the word of God? He was a sober minded man. Was this not the fountain of the sound speech and sound mind of the young minister Titus? As to his doctrine he was “uncorrupt.” Is this not what explains the sober minded elder in the church who, according to Titus 1:9, “holds fast the faithful word as he hath been taught?” Is this not the explanation of the sound mind of the aged man? He is first sound in faith (Titus 2:2). And does not this fact—the sound knowledge of the Word of God—explain the sound mind of the aged women who with all diligence teach the young women godly sobriety? Those women have a deep knowledge of and love for the Word of God (Titus 2:5).

Young men *likewise* exhort to be sober minded. Let them have a sound knowledge of the sacred Scriptures.

To be sober minded is to be a young man of knowledge, the knowledge of the Scriptures, and particularly as those Scriptures are rightly interpreted by the Reformed Confessions. Young men who would be sober minded must be young men who are readers and studiers of the Scriptures. Read and study the Scripture for society life. This New Year begins a new half of the society season after the Christmas break. If we have not devoted ourselves diligently in the past half of the year to the study of the word of God, then let us be resolved as sober minded young men to study the word of God. Read and study the Scriptures for Catechism. Study the word of God as that is explained by faithful servants of God in the good books, and in the good Reformed magazines.

Be sober minded. Let the young men study the Word of God.

It is out of his sound knowledge of the word of God that the sober minded young man assesses himself honestly and faithfully with regard to his spiritual condition in the light of the Word of God. What am I? I am a totally depraved sinner who, outside of God’s grace, is totally incapable of any good and inclined to all evil. That is the sobering reality for every young man. It puts all the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life into perspective, the sobering perspective of sin and the judgment of God on that sin. The sober minded young man recognizes the power of sin, the power of sin in his own life, and the danger of being drawn into spiritual foolishness.

Young men, be sober minded. Know your sin.

The young man’s sober assessment of himself in the light of the Word of God, however, does not end with the realization and confession of his own sinfulness. Totally depraved is not the only description of what he is. He is also regenerated by the grace of God through the operation of the Holy Spirit that flows from God’s eternal decree of election, and is performed on the basis of and in the power of Christ’s death. He has been chosen; he has been justified; he has been sanctified; he is an heir of eternal life. Do not forget that this exhortation to sobriety comes in the book of Titus that also teaches of “God’s elect” (Titus 1:1), of Jesus Christ who “gave himself for us” to redeem us (Titus 2:14), of our “washing of regeneration” (Titus 3:5), of our justification (Titus 3:7), and of the “hope of eternal life” (Titus 1:2; 3:7). This is the sobering truth of the marvelous wonder of our salvation in Jesus Christ, the Christ whose birth we just celebrated re-

(Continued on page 4)

(“A New Year’s Exhortation to Young Men: Be Sober Minded”: Continued from page 3)

cently, and whose birth the world and the ungodly mock by their intoxication with wickedness.

Be sober minded. Know your salvation. Knowing this he constantly flees to the Christ he knows from the Scriptures for forgiveness and deliverance. And he is a young man who knowing his precious deliverance is zealous of all good works.

The sober minded young man, one who knows the truth of the word of God and in the light of that truth knows his own sin and his own salvation, is a young man who has his eye firmly fixed in all of his life on the end, or the goal.

That goal may be the end of this earthly life when one is yet a young man. Jesus Christ comes for each one of us personally in our deaths. The Lord in his goodness and infinite wisdom takes young people to glory. There is a plaque that hangs in the entranceway of Covenant Christian High School in Michigan where I attended high school. That plaque hangs in memory of several students of that high school that were taken to glory in their youth. On that plaque is aptly quoted from Ecclesiastes 12:1 “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.” That was a sobering reality that we had to walk past every day when we entered the school. The sober young man is clear in his thinking regarding the end, even the end of his own earthly life, in view of the reality of God, of sin, of salvation, and of the goal. There is not time, as the world tells us, to live it up. Our thoughts as young men ought not to be: “we can live it up a little bit while we are young and in a little while, after we are older, we will be sober-minded. To be sober minded is the virtue of old men and old women.”

“Exhort to be *sober minded*,” says the Apostle.

Exhort *young men* to be sober minded.

Exhort young men to be sober minded as young men.

The ultimate goal of all things, however, is the coming of Jesus Christ and the glorification of God in the new heavens and new earth. We look, says the Apostle, for the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, “that blessed hope.” The ultimate reality, the reality that the world shutters to consider, is the reality of the end of this present world and the coming of the new and glorious world where only righteousness and peace shall dwell. This earth and heaven where we now live is the present world. This is a world fallen in sin and cursed by God. There is another world coming. It is the world to which all the elect are heirs. It is the world of sober minded young men. It is the world where there will be not excess, wickedness, or unsound minds. It is the world of the new heaven and the new earth. To be sober minded is to live in this present ungodly world with a view to and in hope of the world to come.

That is the glorious—sobering—reality among the frivolity and excess of the world’s celebrations.

Be sober minded. Look for the coming of Jesus Christ.

The sober minded young man shows his sober mind in sober conduct.

Soberness of mind should not be confused with the extreme of asceticism. Asceticism is an evil doctrine that teaches that there is sin in things and that we may not enjoy the good gifts that God has given to

(Continued on page 5)

*("A New Year's Exhortation to Young Men: Be Sober Minded": Continued from page 4)*

us in his providence. It is called elsewhere in Scripture a doctrine of devils. There were those who taught this in the church at that time. They forbade men and women to marry and taught that the people of God had to keep themselves from certain foods (1 Tim. 4:3). You might say that Asceticism teaches that in order to be true Christian we must live apart from society like monks and hermits, and eat only the barest essentials, and live in poverty. We can enjoy the good gifts that God gives to us by receiving them with thanksgiving and praise to God.

Sober behavior, sober behavior for the young man, is not asceticism.

On the other extreme, the sober mind is contrasted in Scripture with the drunken mind. Sobriety is not being drunk with wine. It is an evidence of the world's philosophy of life—eat, drink, and be merry—that the standard of a successful party is how drunk they got.

Sober conduct is not drunkenness.

In contrast to these two extremes, a sober mind evidences itself in self-control and restraint—restraint from sin, evil, and evil associates with godlessness and ungodly people, even those who perhaps claim to be Christian and Reformed but evidence by their conduct that they are those whom the Apostle describes in Titus 1:16, "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

We run not with the world in their "lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries" (1 Peter 4:3).

They will think it strange. Do not be surprised when you turn down the invitations to their parties that the world thinks it very strange and they speak evil of you. That, too, the sober minded young man realizes: "and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). This belongs to the lot of those who have been separated from the world, have been called to Jesus Christ, and who are taught by the grace of God "that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:12, 13).

—NJL

**Do You Desire Sound Reformed, Biblical Books?**

*Click on [RFPA.ORG](http://RFPA.ORG)*

*The Reformed Free Publishing Association*

# Sermons on Titus!

Order Today from a Sermon Series Entitled

**“Doctrine According to Godliness”**

**By Rev. Nathan J. Langerak**

	<b>CD #</b>	<b>Sermon Title</b>
SET 1	1811 A	“The Commission of the Preacher in God's Service”
	1817 A	“Orthodox Elders”
	1819 B	“Opposed by Many Deceivers”
	1822 B	“Speaking the Things that Become Sound Doctrine”
	1833 B	“Exhorting Men”
SET 2	1835 B	“Exhorting Women to Good Things”
	1839 B	“Guarding Against the Opposition”
	1840 B	“The Calling of Slaves to Submit”
	1844 B	“The Teaching of Grace”
	1845 B	“The Purpose of Christ's Death”
SET 3	1846 B	“The Christian's Duty in Society”
	1847 A	“The Washing of Regeneration”
	1848 B	“Heirs According to Hope”
	1851 B	“Affirming the Faithful Word”
	1852 B	“Rejecting Heretics”

**Order Today on Page 7**  
**Each Set is \$6 (Suggested Donation)**

# THE REFORMED PERSPECTIVE

## ORDER FORM

**Pamphlets** (Single Sample Copies are **FREE** - Additional Pamphlets are \$1.00 each suggested donation)

<b>God So Loved The World</b> by H.C.Hoeksema	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>The Church Today And The Reformation</b>	_____		_____.
<b>Church: A Comparison</b> -D.Engelsma	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>Evangelism and The Reformed Faith</b> -D.Engelsma	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>The Antithesis: Godly Living in Ungodly Times</b>	_____	1.00	_____.
<small>D. Kleyn, G. Eriks, and H. Hanko</small>			
<b>The Triple Breach</b> - H. Hoeksema	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>Until Death Us Do Part</b> -D.Engelsma	_____	1.00	_____.
		<small>* NEW *</small>	
<b>Three Forms of Unity</b>	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>Knowing The True God</b> - by S. Houck	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>A Defense of Calvinism As The Gospel</b> -D.Engelsma	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>God's Sovereignty in Salvation</b> by S. Houck	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>Good News For The Afflicted</b> - H. Hoeksema	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>Try The Spirits</b> -D.Engelsma	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>The Reformation: A Return To The Primacy of Preaching</b> - C.F.	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>Modern Bible Versions</b> -D.Engelsma	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>The Covenant of God and The Children of Believers</b> -D.E.	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>Remembering The Lord's Day</b> -D.Engelsma	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>The Sin of Gambling</b> D.J. Kuiper	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>Labor Union Membership</b> D. Engelsma	_____	1.00	_____.
<b>in the light of Scripture</b>			

**CDs** (Each Set is \$6, Suggested Donation)

**Titus Sermons SET #** \_\_\_\_\_ 6.00 \_\_\_\_\_.

Evangelism Committee  
South Holland Protestant  
Reformed Church

Rev. Nathan Langerak  
PO Box 478  
South Holland, IL 60473

Phone: 708.333.1314  
Fax: 708.333.4017  
Email: Shevangelism@juno.com  
www.southhollandprc.org

**Total of Tapes and Pamphlets** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Free Postage & Handling** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Grand Total** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Ordered By:** .....

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_

**State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

# The Reformed Perspective

PO Box 478

South Holland, IL 60473

Non Profit  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Permit No. 635  
South Holland, IL

Address Service Requested

For faster service for our literature, you can use our fax number (708-333-4017), or E-Mail: [Shevangelism@Juno.com](mailto:Shevangelism@Juno.com). Our website is [www.southhollandprc.org](http://www.southhollandprc.org). For those interested in Protestant Reformed materials on the Internet, check out Loveland PRC's homepage at [www.PRCA.org](http://www.PRCA.org). You can find sermons, pamphlets, articles, a directory and pictures of Protestant Reformed churches, links to the *PRC Seminary*, *the Mission Committee*, *the Reformed Witness Hour*, *the RFPA (Reformed Free Publishing Association)*, *The Standard Bearer*, etc.

## Our P. R. "OFFER"

We offer all of our readers a free copy of the, "*Three Forms of Unity*" which includes *The Heidelberg Catechism*, *The Belgic Confession*, and *The Canons of Dordrecht* including its *Rejection of Errors*. Plus, *The Apostles'*, *Athanasian*, and *Chalcedon* creeds!

You can order this free booklet by calling 708-333-1314, mailing the *Order Form*, faxing the *Order Form* to 708-333-4017, or by sending your request to our E-mail address: [shevangelism@Juno.com](mailto:shevangelism@Juno.com).