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Titus 2:1-10: Trait Theory of Followership

Sarah Rolle

The purpose of this paper is to understand followership as it relates to Titus 2:1-10 through the framework of a genre analysis. A genre analysis is an exegetical tool that allows researchers to study ancient texts through the lens of the literary genre. Titus is a pastoral epistle, and as such, was examined through form and authorship. In light of form and authorship, the text was further analyzed for supracultural principles for modern followership application. This analysis utilized Osborne's hermeneutical model of identifying supracultural indicators, ancient cultural practices, and distance. Several supracultural principles were identified and are applicable to modern followership. The first supracultural principle discovered was that individuals can be trained to be followers. The second supracultural principle was the specific traits of followers. This aligns with trait theory in that certain traits are applicable across time. Although there is robust research on traits of leaders, there is no Trait Theory of Followership. Titus 2:1-10 establishes the foundation of a Trait Theory of Followership through the supracultural principles and descriptions of traits. This is the first genre analysis to examine Titus 2:1-10 and the first paper to find supracultural principles in Titus 2:1-10 that relates to modern followership.

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of a text's genre reveals the meaning and intent of the author and the passage. A genre analysis, as an exegetical tool, is uniquely apt at revealing a deeper understanding of an ancient text and is therefore useful for relating the ancient text for

modern application.¹ The genre of the book of Titus is a pastoral epistle.² As such, a genre analysis examines a pastoral epistle through form and authorship.³ Historical intertexture also enhances the understanding of the text's authorship. In light of the form and authorship, supracultural principles were extracted from Titus 2:1-10. The supracultural principles apply directly to followership, explicitly to traits of followers.

There has been previous research regarding specific traits of followers, but no universal followership traits have emerged. Further, researchers have examined Paul's letters for leadership principles, and appropriately so, as many of Paul's works discuss the leadership of the early Christian church. However, previous research has paid very little attention to Paul and followership. This informs the research question which states: What does Titus 2:1-10 suggest about followership and follower traits?

This paper first conducted a genre analysis of Titus through the investigation of form and authorship. The paper then presented the exegesis of Titus 2:1-10 through the examination of supracultural principles. Finally, the paper applied the findings to followership.

II. GENRE ANALYSIS

A genre analysis is a hermeneutical tool for examining the genre of a passage. Through a genre analysis, the passage is classified by distinct characteristics, which allows the reader to understand the meaning better. Different genres cannot be understood in the same way. For example, Old Testament law cannot be interpreted in the same way as a parable. Therefore, it is important to know and understand the genre of a passage in order to comprehend the meaning. Titus is a pastoral epistle and hence, belongs to the epistle genre.⁴ To understand the epistle genre, the text must be examined through the characteristics of an epistle genre, which are form and authorship.

Form

Titus was written as a letter. This is determined by the use of an opening and a closing as seen in Titus 1:1-4 and Titus 3:12-15 respectively. A Biblical letter contains a general opening of a greeting from one person to another person.⁵ Titus 1:1-4 opens with a greeting from "Paul" "to Titus."⁶ A letter closes with a salutation⁷ as demonstrated in Titus 3:15 which states, "Everyone with me sends you greetings. Greet those who

¹ S. Rolle, "A Genre Analysis of the Parable of the Pounds as it Relates to Kelley's Followership Types," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 7, no. 1 (2017): 179-180.

² B. Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles: First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus*, (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1991), 5.

³ G. R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 315-319.

⁴ Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles: First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus*, 5.

⁵ H. J. Cadbury, "The New Testament and Early Christian Literature," in *The Interpreters Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, ed. by George Arthur Buttrick, 32-42. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1951), 35.

⁶ New International Version (NIV).

⁷ Cadbury, "New Testament and Early Christian Literature," 35.

love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.” The opening and closing used in Titus clearly demonstrates a letter form. Osborne states that there were three types of letters which are private letters, public epistles, and treatise.⁸ Knight argues that the pastoral epistles are private letters to a specific person.⁹ For example, the book of Titus is addressed to an individual, in this case Titus, whereas other Pauline epistles are addressed to churches.

The pastoral epistles are longer and more complex than other Greek letters at the time.¹⁰ Titus 2:1-10 deals with teaching church followers and discussing the traits of followers. The author wrote the pastoral epistles in the literary style of a diatribe, which is when the author inserts questions or objections and then responds with the corresponding answers.¹¹ This type of written and oral communication was popular during the Hellenistic period.¹² Titus 1:6-7 demonstrates the diatribe tradition of providing additional evidence once an argument was made. Titus 1:6 states that “an elder must be blameless” and then the author continues to list how blamelessness appears in a leader. Titus 1:7 goes back to defend the idea of blamelessness by stating, “Since an overseer manages God’s household, he must be blameless.” This form of writing is evident in Titus and is popular in the other Pauline epistles; however, there is a contention of authorship.

Authorship

Metzger argues that the pastoral epistles were not written by Paul because there are differences in style, diction, and vocabulary between the pastoral epistles and the undisputed Pauline epistles.¹³ Therefore, Metzger concludes that the pastoral epistles were likely written by an admirer of Paul using a pseudonym between AD 64 and AD 100 after Paul was dead.¹⁴ One argument against Paul’s authorship of Titus is that the verbs and nouns contained therein are observably different than the books written by Paul.¹⁵ Also, the grammar and word choice used in Titus is different than the other undisputed Pauline epistles.¹⁶ For example, Paul often used words such as “since, therefore, but now, it is not” to connect two thoughts; however, these words are absent in Titus.¹⁷ Therefore, some scholars speculate that Paul is not the author of Titus.

Nevertheless, there may be mundane reasons for the differences between Titus and the Pauline epistles. First, the nature of the letter of Titus varies from the Pauline epistles. The author of Titus was writing to establish the foundation of the church, to

⁸ Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*, 315.

⁹ George Knight III, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: The Paternoster Press, 1992), 281, 359.

¹⁰ Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*, 316.

¹¹ Cadbury, “New Testament and Early Christian Literature,” 35.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ B. M. Metzger, “The Language of the New Testament,” in *The Interpreters Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, ed. by George Arthur Buttrick, 43-59. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1951), 52.

¹⁴ P. Walker, “Revisiting the Pastoral Epistles Part 1,” *European Journal of Theology* 21, no. 1 (2012): 5.

¹⁵ Metzger, “The Language of the New Testament,” 52.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ D. A. DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods, & Ministry Formation* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2004), 737.

choose leaders, and teach appropriate doctrine. The author of Titus was not attempting to correct church behavior but to outline and structure it. Therefore, the goal of writing the book of Titus differs from the Pauline epistles and the change in the subject matter may account for the differences in terminology or word choice.¹⁸ DeSilva argues that the target audience can also account for the differences between the Pauline epistles and Titus.¹⁹ The author of Titus is writing a personal letter to a coworker, not to a church congregation or large group (as was discussed in the Form section).²⁰ The change in topic and target audience can account for the differences in the style of writing. Finally, the use of a scribe could attribute to the differences between the Pauline epistles and the pastoral epistles. Osborne categorizes three types of scribal involvement: “no scribal involvement,” “moderate scribal involvement,” and “nearly total scribal involvement.”²¹ Witherington argues that Luke was the transcriber for the pastoral epistles using moderate scribal involvement, which could be the explanation for the change in linguistics in Titus.²² The use of a scribe also supports Paul’s authorship as Paul used scribes in other Pauline epistles such as Sosthenes for 1 Corinthians; Timothy for 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon; Tertius for Romans; and Timothy and Silas for 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

Titus can also be analyzed through historical intertexture, which investigates an event or period of time.²³ Specifically, the authorship of the book of Titus can be examined using historical intertexture. Titus 1:5 states, “the reason I left you in Crete,” which indicates that the author of Titus spent time in Crete. Paul’s journey and missionary works are outlined in Acts, yet there is no mention of a mission to Crete written by Luke. The original Greek word used in Titus 1:5 is “*apelipon*,” which was translated “left.”²⁴ However, Walker argues that *apelipon* could mean appoint or assign meaning that the author of Titus may have never been to Crete.²⁵ Nevertheless, during Paul’s mission to Ephesus in AD 52 to AD 56, it is possible that Paul traveled to Crete as Crete was geographically close to Ephesus.²⁶ It is not problematic that Luke never mentioned this in Acts as Luke omits certain details about Paul’s missions.²⁷ Johnson argues that the account of Paul’s missions in Acts are so vague that only a few lines in Acts explain eight out of twelve years of Paul’s ministry.²⁸

Further evidence that Paul is the author of Titus is found in Titus 3:12, which states “As soon as I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, because I have decided to winter there.” Nicopolis was a suitable meeting

¹⁸ Metzger, “The Language of the New Testament,” 52.

¹⁹ DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 737.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*, 318.

²² B. Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians: A socio-rhetorical commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy, and 1-3 John*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 60.

²³ V. K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society, and Ideology*, (New York: Routledge, 1996), 118.

²⁴ Walker. “Revisiting the Pastoral Epistles Part 1,” 9.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid, 10.

²⁷ Ibid, 11.

²⁸ L. T. Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 2000), 61-62.

point between Crete and Macedonia; therefore, Paul could have written the book of Titus while on a missionary trip to Macedonia in AD 56.²⁹

There are many arguments for and against Paul as the author of Titus. The introduction of the letter in Titus 1:1 does state, "Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ." The author of Titus is declaring that he is Paul. Further, Titus contains many topics that are similar to the other Pauline epistles such as vice and virtues lists and household codes. Vice and virtues lists are seen in Titus 1:6-9, Titus 2:1-10, and Titus 3:1-3 similarly to Romans 1:29-31,³⁰ Colossians 3,³¹ 1 Corinthians 6:9-10,³² 2 Corinthians 12:20,³³ and Galatians 5:19-23³⁴. Household codes are presented in Titus 2:1-10 similarly to Colossians 3-4 and Ephesians 5-6.³⁵ There is enough evidence to support Paul as the author of Titus.³⁶ Authorship is a contentious issue as the Letter to the Laodiceans and the Letter to the Alexandrians were both denied from the Canon as authorship could not be verified.³⁷ Nevertheless, DeSilva states that authorship is not related to authority and Titus has all the authority of the entire Canon.³⁸

III. EXEGESIS OF TITUS 2:1-10

Since form and authorship are now understood through the genre analysis, this illuminates the setting and context of Titus 2:1-10. Titus 2:1-10 is about follower's traits and different groups within the church. Titus 2:1-10 encompasses the groups of older men, older women, younger women, younger men, Titus' teaching, and slaves. Paul creates a vice and virtues list for each category as seen in Table 1.

²⁹ Walker, "Revisiting the Pastoral Epistles Part 1," 11.

³⁰ J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 663.

³¹ H. Van Broekhoven, "The Social Profiles in the Colossian Debate," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 19, no. 66 (1997).

³² Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 663.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ W. A. Richards, "The Irony of Galatians: Paul's Letter in First-Century Context," *Anglican Theological Review* 85, no. 2 (2003): 397.

³⁵ B. G. Wold, "Family Ethics in 4QInstruction and the New Testament," *Novum Testamentum* 50, no. 3 (2008): 286.

³⁶ J. Henson, "An Examination of the Role of Spirituality in the Development of the Moral Component of Authentic Leadership Through a Sociorhetorical Analysis of Paul's Letter to Titus," (doctoral dissertation, Regent University, 2015), 73-74. For further treatment of this topic, see B. Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians: A Sociorhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy, and 1-3 John* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

³⁷ J. W. Marshall, "'I left you in Crete': Narrative description and social hierarchy in the letter to Titus," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127, no. 4 (2008): 786.

³⁸ DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 736-743.

Table 1:

<i>Traits by Group</i>					
Older Men	Older Women	Younger Women	Younger Men	Titus' Teaching	Slaves
temperate	reverent	love their husbands and children	self-control	integrity	subject to their masters
worthy of respect	avoid slander	self-control		seriousness	not to talk back to masters
self-controlled	avoid wine	pure		soundness of speech	do not steal from masters
sound in faith	teach what is good	busy at home			
sound in love		kind			
sound in endurance		subject to their husbands			

The vice and virtues list serves as a guideline for teaching as Titus 2:1-10 was written to establish a contrast between the false teachers in Titus 1:10-16.

It is apparent that Titus 2:1-10 is a vice and virtues list.³⁹ A vice and virtues list is a list of immoralities and righteous attributes; and in this case, the vice and virtues are based on cultural expectations. Therefore, Paul extrapolated the vices and virtues listed in Titus 2:1-10 from the Greco-Roman culture.⁴⁰ An analysis of this passage must be conducted to determine whether it is cultural or supracultural.

To determine if a text is supracultural, several factors that must be analyzed. First, is to determine if the passage has supracultural indicators.⁴¹ Second, is to determine if the passage contains cultural practices that are not present in modern society.⁴² Third, is to examine the distance between the cultural and supracultural.⁴³

Supracultural Indicators

Several aspects of the passage and the culture must be scrutinized to determine if there are supracultural indicators. Osborne states that to find cultural content, the

³⁹ D. Mappes, "Moral Virtues Associated with Eldership," *Bibliotheca sacra* 160, no. 638 (2003): 205.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 203.

⁴¹ Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*, 422.

⁴² *Ibid*, 423.

⁴³ *Ibid*.

teaching will conform to cultural bias.⁴⁴ For example, cultural bias is demonstrated in Titus 2:9-10 when Paul discusses the duties of a slave.⁴⁵ Paul does not condemn the idea or practice of slavery but rather accepts it by providing a list of responsibilities for the slave. There is no other option for the slave because the Greco-Roman culture accepted slavery.⁴⁶ Therefore, Titus 2:9-10 fails to find supracultural indicators in the cultural bias regarding the practice of slavery.

Next, Osborne states that to find supracultural principles, the reader must look for a “theological principle that dominates the surface application.”⁴⁷ An example of this is teaching or instruction. The theme of teaching is mentioned seven times in this pericope, in verses 1, 2, 3, 7, and 9. Specifically, Paul is instructing church leaders to teach church followers. Teaching is a reoccurring theme for this passage because positive teaching is in direct opposition to the false teachers in Titus 1:10-16. The theological principle of teaching followers has supracultural indicators and applicability.

Additionally, Osborne states that a passage is cultural if the text addresses a specific cultural problem.⁴⁸ Mappes argues that the Greco-Roman culture completely informed this vice and virtues list.⁴⁹ The author of Titus “borrowed” a list of vices and virtues based on Greco-Roman culture and adapted them to fit into the text.⁵⁰ Mappes states, “these lists are simply statements adopted from Hellenistic philosophy and are not always related to the New Testament authors' theological convictions.”⁵¹ Merkle discovered further evidence of this when comparing the list in Titus 2:1-10 to the virtues of a military general during the Hellenistic timeframe.⁵² Merkle found that some words used in the virtues of a military general list were identical, similar, or overlapping to the list found in Titus 2:1-10.⁵³ Merkle argues that Titus 2:1-10 delineates the vice and virtues list in order to get the newly established Christian church to fit into the Greco-Roman society's gender and age based profiles. Thus, the vice and virtues list in Titus 2:1-10 is attempting to solve a specific cultural gender, age, and societal role problem and is, therefore cultural, not supracultural.⁵⁴ Further, other researchers have found that the vice and virtues lists and household codes, as seen in Titus 2:1-10, were adapted from the Hellenistic culture and minimally transformed to influence the early Christian

⁴⁴ Ibid, 424.

⁴⁵ NIV.

⁴⁶ Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*, 425.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 424.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Mappes, “Moral Virtues Associated with Eldership,” 203.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 205.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² B. L. Merkel, “Are the Qualifications for Elders and Overseers Negotiable?” *Bibliotheca sacra* 171, no. 682 (2014): 173.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 174.

church.⁵⁵ Henson argues that Paul sought to cautiously conform the early Christian church with the surrounding culture so as not to be viewed as “subversive.”⁵⁶

Finally, to determine if there are supracultural indicators, the reader must seek moral or theological principles because these principles will be divinely inspired to transcend time.⁵⁷ The moral principles found in Titus 2:1-10 are temperance, worthy of respect, self-control, sound in faith, sound in love, sound in endurance, reverence, teaching what is good, loving husbands and children, pure, busy at home, kind, subject to husbands, integrity, seriousness, soundness of speech, subject to a master, and trustworthy. Also, there are morals listed of what not to do which are not to be slanderers or addicted to wine, not to talk back to masters, and not to steal from masters. Peterson and Seligman found that some moral virtues transcend time and culture⁵⁸ therefore, the moral principles in Titus 2:1-10 are extrapolated regardless of their gender, age, or societal assigned role.

There are supracultural indicators within the text as determined by analyzing the text through cultural bias, surface application, specific cultural problems, and moral or theological principles. The supracultural indicators pronouncedly being the teaching of followers and the specific practical traits of followers.

Cultural Practices

The second step in analyzing a passage is to determine whether there are cultural practices in the text that are not present in modern society. The antiquated cultural practice most easily distinguished is that of slavery. Byron examined different research on Greco-Roman slavery and found various definitions ranging from benevolent, relationship like behaviors to harsh, ownership extremes.⁵⁹ Regardless of the actuality of the ancient cultural practice as Byron described, it is no longer practiced in most modern societies. However, a modern interpretation of slave could be an employee or follower. The morals attributed to a slave in the text of Titus 2:9-10, which are being a follower to their leader, pleasing their leader, not talking back to their leader, not stealing from their leader, and being trustworthy, are all applicable to modern followers or employees.

Another antiquated concept is “*oikourgos*” or housekeeper, house manager, or houseworker found in Titus 2:5.⁶⁰ Titus 2:5 lists *oikourgos* as a virtue of a young woman, however, not all modern young women practice this idea. Paul does not

⁵⁵ J. K. Goodrich, "Overseers as Stewards and the Qualifications for Leadership in the Pastoral Epistles," *Zeitschrift Für Die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft Und Die Kunde Der Älteren Kirche* 104, no. 1 (2013): 78; F. J. Matera, *New Testament Ethics: The Legacies of Jesus and Paul*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996): 223.

⁵⁶ Henson, "An Examination of the Role of Spirituality in the Development of the Moral Component of Authentic Leadership Through a Sociorhetorical Analysis of Paul's Letter to Titus," 112.

⁵⁷ Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*, 425.

⁵⁸ C. Peterson and M. E. P. Seligman, *Character, Strengths, and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2004): 33.

⁵⁹ J. Byron, "Paul and the Background of Slavery: The Status Quaestionis New Testament Scholarship," *Currents in Biblical Research* 3, no. 1, (2004): 117-121.

⁶⁰ J. MacAuthor, *Divine Design: God's Complementary Roles for Men and Women* (Ontario, Canada: David Cook, 2010), 77.

describe what is meant by oikourgos because it is a completely cultural word that made sense to the ancient reader.⁶¹ The concept of a young woman as a housekeeper or being busy at home is no longer applicable, therefore; there are some cultural practices in the text. However, the modern interpretation of this trait is a strong work ethic, which is applicable both inside and out of the home.

Similarly related to oikourgos is the trait of loving husbands and children that older women are commanded to teach younger women in Titus 2:4. MacDonald suggests that Paul supports that women marry⁶² which is inferred in this text. Further, it is suggested through the text that women have children if married (for further see 1 Timothy 5:14). However, this is a cultural practice that may or may not occur in modern times as Ellman found that marriage rates are declining⁶³ and Takayama and Werding argued that birth rates are declining⁶⁴. According to Titus 2:4, it is important to teach the trait of loving husbands and children when appropriate, however, universal applicability suggests that individuals should love everyone. Therefore, this trait has supracultural principle for loving others.

Finally, Paul instructs younger women to be subject to their husbands as found in Titus 2:4. Horrell found that the direction for women to be subject to their husbands was given to establish authority or leadership in accordance with expected social norms.⁶⁵ In this passage, it is apparent that this follower role must be a choice. Since marriage may not be applicable in modern society, the interpretation of this passage is that followers must willingly choose to follow leaders.

Since there are several cultural practices enlightened by the ancient culture surrounding the author’s timeframe, not all traits have modern applicability. However, there are supracultural principles extracted from the text. These cultural practices and the modern interpretation are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2:

<i>Cultural Practce and Modern Application</i>	
Titus Trait	Modern Interpretation
subject to their masters	follower to their leader
try to please masters	try to please the leader
not to talk back to masters	not talk back to leaders
do not steal from masters	do not steal from leaders
busy at home	strong work ethic
loving husbands and children	loving others
subject to husbands	follower to their leader

⁶¹ Ibid, 78.

⁶² M. MacDonald, “Reading the New Testament Household Codes in Light of New Research on Children and Childhood in the Roman World,” *Studies in Religion* 41, no. 3 (2012): 382.

⁶³ I. M. Ellman, “Marital Roles and Declining Marriage Rates,” *Family Law Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (2007): 455.

⁶⁴ N. Takayama and M. Werding, *Fertility and Public Policy: How to Reverse the Trend of Declining Birth Rates* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2011), 3, 16-17.

⁶⁵ D. Horrell, “Leadership Patterns and the Development of Ideology in Early Christianity,” *Sociology of Religion* 58, no. 4 (1997): 333-335.

Distance

The third and final step to analyze if a passage is cultural or supracultural is to determine the distance between the two.⁶⁶ Distance refers to the concept of the space between time and culture between the Greco-Roman world and the modern world.⁶⁷ To overcome cultural and historical distance, the interpreter must take a surface command that applied to the culture of the author and extrapolate a principle that is supracultural.⁶⁸ Titus 2:1-10 contains both cultural and supracultural principles. The cultural aspects of the text are the gender, age, and role-based categories as these strictly conform to the ancient culture in the time the text was written. The supracultural ideas extracted from Titus 2:1-10 is that leaders should teach their followers and that followers must demonstrate specific traits as described by the outlined list.

IV. DISCUSSION

Titus 2:1-10 may not be in its entirety supracultural; however, there are supracultural principles that can be derived and applied to followership. The first supracultural principle is that followers can be taught. The second supracultural principle is that Titus 2:1-10 specifically discusses the traits of followers in the church. The author of Titus framed these traits around gender and age roles.

Teaching Followers

The first supracultural principle is that followers can be taught. There is great debate about whether leaders are made or born.⁶⁹ However, this debate is suspiciously absent from followership research. Based on the research, it is clear that there are effective followers and ineffective followers,⁷⁰ however, there is no discussion on whether this is naturally inherent or trained over the years. Paul thematically commands church leaders to teach followers. This indicates that followers can indeed be trained to be effective followers. Followership training is traditionally thought of as on-the-job training or more broadly as coaching;⁷¹ however, Gobble recommends purposeful followership training so as to enhance the follower's natural traits and teach followers how to support their leader.⁷² In fact, Eales-White emphasized the problem by

⁶⁶ Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*, 423.

⁶⁷ W. J. Larkins Jr., *Culture and Biblical Hermeneutics* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1988), 17-18.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ M. Boerma et al. "Point/Counterpoint: Are Outstanding Leaders Born Or made?" *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* 81, no. 3 (2017): 1.

⁷⁰ Nina M. Junker, Sebastian Stegmann, Stephan Braun, and Rolf Van Dick, "The Ideal and the Counter-Ideal Follower – Advancing Implicit Followership Theories", *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 37, no. 8, (2016): 1205.

⁷¹ M. Matsuo, "Human Resource Development to Facilitate Experiential Learning: The Case of Yahoo Japan," *International Journal of Training and Development* 19, no. 3 (2015): 206.

⁷² M. M. Gobble, "The Value of Followership," *Research Technology Management* 60, no. 4 (2017): 59.

suggesting that followership training is “non-existent.”⁷³ In the future, organizations should focus on followership training.

Traits of Followers

The second supracultural principle found in Titus 2:1-10 is that there are specific traits of effective followers. Paul frames these traits around gender, age, and role-based groups. However, these categories lacked supracultural applicability as previously found in this paper. Nevertheless, modern research has discussed these gender and aged based approaches to leadership and followership. Further, modern researchers have also investigated a traits-based approach to leadership, yet a universal trait theory of followership has been neglected.

V. TRAIT THEORY

The Trait Theory of Leadership suggests that leaders possess certain traits, which make them suitable for leadership.⁷⁴ In the 1930's, scholars researched trait theory in an attempt to understand leadership better, however, major weaknesses of the theory included inconsistent results and lack of measurability.⁷⁵ Shortly thereafter, the trait theory approach to leadership lost popularity,⁷⁶ but most modern leadership theories still focus on leader's traits such as the big five personality traits⁷⁷, transformational leadership's four I's⁷⁸, emotional intelligence⁷⁹, dark personality traits⁸⁰, and many other traits or attributes. Paul outlined the traits in Titus 2:1-10 with the intention of teaching these traits to groups in the church indicating that these are desirable traits of followers. There has been recent research conducted on the traits of followers which include Kelley's dimensions of critical thinking and engagement, Chaleff's criteria of support and challenge, Adair's categorization of a disciple, doer, disengaged, and disgruntled, and Howell and Mendez's interactive, independent, and shifting roles.⁸¹ However, there is no research in regard to a universal Trait Theory of

⁷³ R. Eales-White, "Leading into a Successful Future," *Industrial and Commercial Training* 24, no. 7 (1992): 19.

⁷⁴ Amy Colbert, Timothy Judge, Daejeong Choi, and Gang Wang, "Assessing the Trait Theory of Leadership Using Self and Observer Ratings of Personality: The Mediating Role of Contributions to Group Success," *The Leadership Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (2012): 670.

⁷⁵ Roseanne Foti, Sarah Allgood, and Nicole Thompson, "Trait Theory of Leadership," in *Encyclopedia of Management Theory*, ed. Eric Kessler (Los Angeles: Sage, 2013), 884.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 885.

⁷⁷ Colbert et al., "Assessing the Trait Theory of Leadership," 671.

⁷⁸ Mostafa Sayyadi Ghasabeh, Claudine Soosay, and Carmen Reaiche. "The Emerging Role of Transformational Leadership," *The Journal of Developing Areas* 49, no. 6 (2015): 463.

⁷⁹ John Antonakis, Neal Ashkanasy, and Marie Dasborough, "Does Leadership Need Emotional Intelligence?," *The Leadership Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (2009): 252.

⁸⁰ P. D. Harms and Seth Spain, "Beyond the Bright Side: Dark Personality at Work," *Applied Psychology: An International Review* 64, no. 1 (2015): 15.

⁸¹ Ronald Riggio, Ira Chaleff, and Jean Lipman-Blumen, *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008).

Followership. This could be because of the limited research and scholastic writing regarding followership as a field of study.⁸²

Gender

There is a significant gender bias related to followership. Braun, Stegmann, Hernandez Bark, Junker, and van Dick found that females are perceived to be ideal followers because followership is perceived to be a feminine role.⁸³ Titus 2:2-6 presents recommended traits for men and women as outlined in Table 3.⁸⁴

Table 3:

<i>Traits by Gender Group</i>	
Men	Women
temperate	Reverent
worthy of respect	teach what is good
self-controlled	avoid slandering
sound in faith	avoid wine
sound in love	love others
sound in endurance	self-controlled
	Pure
	strong work ethic
	Kind
	follower to their leader

This gender-based delineation of followership is consistent with implicit followership theory which states that an “individuals’ personal assumptions about the traits and behaviors ... characterize followers.”⁸⁵ This was found when Paul wrote Titus 2:1-10 which conformed followers with specific traits. Paul had a perception of followership based on gender and age-based roles of the Hellenistic timeframe and instructed the early church to comply with those implicit perceptions.

The traits listed by Paul contain both positive and negative traits (traits to pursue and traits to avoid) resulting in a more comprehensive view of followership. However, each trait is applicable and has value regardless of the gender specific category. For example, women should demonstrate the traits ascribed to a man being temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, love, and endurance and the

⁸² Melissa Carsten, Mary Uhl-Bien, Bradley West, Jaime Patera, and Rob McGregor, “Exploring Social Constructions of Followership: A Qualitative Study,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (2010): 543.

⁸³ Stephan Braun, Sebastian Stegmann, Alina Hernandez Bark, Nina Junker, and Rolf van Dick, “Think Manager—Think Male, Think Follower—Think Female: Gender Bias in Implicit Followership Theories,” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 47, no. 7 (2017): 382.

⁸⁴ NIV.

⁸⁵ Thomas Sy, “What do you think of followers? Examining the content, structure, and consequences of implicit followership theories,” *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 113, no. 2 (2010): 74.

converse is true with the female traits for men. Therefore, the categorization of a trait by gender should be abandoned and rather a robust Trait Theory of Followership is revealed.

Previous research has found some of these qualities and attributes within the scope of human personality. The big five personality traits are extroversion/introversion, conscientiousness, friendliness, emotional stability, and intellect.⁸⁶ These broad dimensions of personality encapsulate many traits outlined in Titus 2:1-10. For example, friendliness includes being kind, temperate, loving, and reverent while emotional stability includes self-control and avoiding wine. However, some listed traits apply specifically to followers such as showing respect, teaching what is right, avoid slandering the leader, strong work ethic, and following the leader. In this way, Paul provided a practical application of the traits of followers in Titus 2:1-10.

Age

While studying follower traits across generations and age groups, Dixon, Mercado, and Knowles found that there were similarities in commitment levels and self-attribution averages indicating likeness in follower traits across different age groups.⁸⁷ Although preferred leadership traits may change by generation, Ahn and Ettner conclude that there are universal values that transcend generations.⁸⁸ These values include integrity, good judgment, leading by example, sound decision-making, trust, justice, humility, and a sense of urgency.⁸⁹ Titus 2:1-10 depicts these as age dependent traits, however, the traits in Titus 2:1-10 either relate or exactly exemplify the universal traits found by Ahn and Ettner as seen in Table 4.

Table 4:

Trait Relationships

Titus Traits	Universal Traits
temperance (v. 2)	sound decision-making
worthy of respect (v. 2)	leading by example
self-controlled (v. 2,5)	good judgement
reverent (v. 3)	Humility
avoiding slander (v. 3)	Integrity
avoid wine (v. 3)	good judgement
pure (v. 5)	Integrity
strong work ethic (v. 5)	sense of urgency

⁸⁶ John Digman, "Personality Structure: Emergence of the Five Factor Model," *Annual Review of Psychology* 41, no. 1, (1990): 422-424.

⁸⁷ Gene Dixon, Ashley Mercado, and Brady Knowles, "Followers and Generations in the Workplace," *Engineering Management Journal* 25, no. 4 (2013): 68.

⁸⁸ Mark Ahn and Larry Ettner, "Are Leadership Values Different Across Generations?," *The Journal of Management Development* 33, no. 10 (2014): 987-988.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 980-985.

being an example (v. 7)	leading by example
integrity (v. 7)	integrity
soundness of speech (v. 8)	trust
not talking back (v. 9)	humility
not stealing (v. 10)	justice
trustworthy (v. 10)	trust

This indicates that there may be follower values that transcend across time and culture similarly to leadership traits.

Trait Theory of Followership

Paul outlined the follower traits listed in Titus 2:1-10 because they were desirable followership traits at the time. These traits continue to be valuable for modern followership as leaders want their followers to conform to the traits in Table 5. Table 5 summarizes the supracultural traits found in Titus 2:1-10 and presents the foundation for a Trait Theory of Followership.

Table 5:

Trait Theory of Followership

Traits to Pursue	Traits to Avoid
Temperate	slander
worthy of respect	wine
self-controlled	stealing from leader
sound in faith	talk back to leader
sound in love	
sound in endurance	
reverent	
teaching what is good	
be pure	
love others	
strong work ethic	
be an example	
integrity	
soundness of speech	
seriousness	
trustworthy	
follower to the leader	

The followership traits listed in Titus 2:1-10 transcend time, generational, cultural, and gender constraints resulting in a comprehensive view of followership traits. This

robust view of followership should be taught to followers in organizations as Titus 2:1-10 suggests. Titus 2:1-10 establishes the beginning of a Trait Theory of Followership; however, more research is needed to quantify these traits. Future researchers must be cautious to avoid the pitfalls and failures associated with the trait theory of leadership while studying follower traits.

VI. CONCLUSION

Titus 2:1-10, as a pastoral epistle, is a personal letter written to Titus. There is debate about the author of Titus; however, there is significant evidence that Paul wrote the book. Titus 2:1-10 categorizes certain traits by groups of age, gender, and social roles. Although the vice and virtues list in Titus 2:1-10 is based on ancient Greco-Roman culture, there are implications for the application of modern follower traits. These traits are the beginning of a Trait Theory of Followership. Further research is necessary to develop a robust description of the Trait Theory of Followership.

About the Author

Sarah Rolle and her husband Brian are local law enforcement officers. Sarah is grateful to her husband and family for their continued support as she works to obtain her Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership from Regent University.

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