



**FLOURISH
BIBLE STUDY**

TITUS

LEADER'S GUIDE



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WEEK 1: THE BIG PICTURE OF TITUS

Titus is short enough to read straight through before your coffee grows cold. This first week is meant to give you the overall scope of the letter—why Paul was writing, the concerns he had, and the solutions he proposed for establishing healthy churches on the isle of Crete. You should have sufficient time to cover all the questions in your group discussion.

1. What repeated words, phrases, or ideas jumped out at you? You can underline or highlight them in the letter itself or jot them down in the space provided here.

Answers will vary, but be sure to emphasize this key theme: sound doctrine should produce sound living.

2. What drives or passions compel the apostle Paul, the writer of the letter?

Answer: Paul is concerned that false teachers are impeding spiritual growth in the Cretan Christians and causing some to fall away. He writes to guide Titus in how to stop the spread of the problem and set in place structures that will foster spiritual health among all church members.

3. What concerns or possible problems did you pick up on?

Answer: The false teachers are drawing people away from the gospel. Additionally, decadent Cretan culture is infecting some and inhibiting godliness.

4. Make a note of anything in the letter that isn't clear to you from this first reading.
5. Based on your initial read-through, summarize in a sentence or two (or as many sentences as you'd like) what Paul wants Titus to accomplish in Crete.

Answers will vary, but each should identify that Paul is seeking to build up the church and to encourage believers to grow strong in practical godliness.

WEEK 2: NOT YOUR AVERAGE GREETING

TITUS 1:1-4

1. At the very beginning Paul identifies himself as a servant, or slave, of God. What does this term convey about how Paul views his life and ministry?

Answer: Paul's identity is in Christ. He has dedicated his entire life and being to serving God by glorifying him and sharing the good news.



2. We learn from Acts 9:1–15 and Galatians 1:11–24; 2:1–9 how Paul became an apostle. Read through those passages and note the ways that God worked through people and circumstances to shape Paul's life.

Answer: God captured Paul's heart on the Damascus road and worked through Ananias and others to set him apart, first to grow in the Lord and then to prepare him for ministry. God works similarly in everyone he calls, saving them by means of his own power and then guiding our steps through people and circumstances into the path he has marked out.

3. What is the purpose of Paul's ministry, and whom does he minister to?

Answer: Paul's ministry is to proclaim the truth of God's word, gospel, to his people, the elect. The "elect" are all the individuals God saves and adopts into his family, not through any merit of their own but purely by his grace. Paul's wording, "knowledge of the truth," is actually knowledge of the gospel. If someone were to ask you to define the Christian gospel, do you know what you would say? Many of us can recite bits and pieces of it, but sometimes we aren't as confident when it comes to giving a full, accurate definition. Here's a simple way: The gospel is *the good news that God sent his Son to save sinners from the just punishment they deserve for their sin. God's Son, Jesus, took on a human nature and came to earth to live a sinless life and die a sinner's death in our place to atone for our sin and secure our place in God's kingdom for all eternity.*

4. Why do you think that genuine faith and heart knowledge of the gospel result in godly living—a connection that Paul assumes in verse 1 when he says that faith and knowledge "accord with godliness"?

Answer: Genuine faith will inevitably result in good works or godly living. Paul isn't just passing along information; he's preaching life changing news!

5. Read 1 Timothy 6:3–12, where Paul conveys the same idea. What more do you learn here about the link between genuine faith and godly behavior?

Answer: Genuine faith produces godly behavior. God's people grow in godliness when they pursue righteousness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness. Paul encourages Christians to fight against worldliness, abstain from worldly matters, and pursue righteousness. Lastly, he reminds the elect that they are living for eternity and not for the fleeting pleasures of this world.

6. What do we learn about God the Father in verses 2–3?

Answer: God is trustworthy, he never lies, and he promised eternal life before time began.



7. Those God saves are saved for eternity. In other words, they are given eternal life. What do you learn about eternal life in verses 2–3?

Answer: Before time began, God planned to save his people and provide eternal life. God has chosen to reveal his plan of salvation through his written word and through the preaching of his word.

8. God the Father is called our “Savior” in verse 3, which might make us pause, since typically “Savior” is applied to Jesus Christ. How does Ephesians 1:3–6 clarify why it is good and right to refer to both God the Father and the Lord Jesus as Savior?

Answer: God the Father and God the Son are one, but they have distinct roles in salvation. God the Father predestined the elect to be adopted and chosen for salvation. God the Father blesses his children “in Christ.”

9. Why, according to Revelation 21:1–4, is heaven something to anticipate?

Answer: God will once again dwell with us and we will be with him forever. God will wipe away our tears, and we will never experience mourning, pain, or death.

10. What do you learn about Paul’s relationship with Titus from this greeting?

Answer: Paul thinks of Titus as his son. There is a real and intimate bond between the two of them.

11. Paul holds out God’s “grace and peace” to his dear ministry partner. We hear these words, “grace” and “peace,” frequently and in such a variety of ways that we could easily miss their significance here. We’re familiar with saying *grace* before meals and expressing a wish for some *peace* and quiet, but Paul’s use of these words is radically different. Paul includes the word “grace” four times in the letter. Look ahead to 2:11–14 and 4:4–7. What do you learn about God’s grace from these passages?

Answer: Grace, God’s unmerited favor, has been given to us in the person and work of Christ who has appeared to give us salvation. This grace also trains God’s people to abstain from worldly passions and to grow in godliness. God’s grace reminds us of heaven and spurs us on to wait for the return of our King. Paul reminds us that Christ has redeemed us from the law, which brings us peace.

WEEK 3: PORTRAIT OF GODLY LEADERSHIP

TITUS 1:5–9

1. Titus’s mission is to establish order in the Cretan church by appointing elders, or



overseers (v. 7), in every congregation, town to town. Basically, “Titus is in charge of putting others in charge.” What does this tell us about how God has designed churches to function?

Answer: God’s design for his churches contains order, structure, and proper oversight. The work should be done by more than one person, and each church should have multiple elders to shepherd God’s people.

2. A qualified elder is someone with a good reputation. He is “above reproach,” or as some Bible translations say, “blameless.” Paul emphasizes this term, using it once in verse 6 and again in verse 7. The word *reproach* means “a cause or occasion of blame, discredit, or disgrace.”⁸ Apart from avoiding bringing scandal on a church, why do you think it is so important for an elder to have this kind of reputation?

Answer: As an outflow of his walk with God, an elder should reflect God’s character and leadership to his congregation. A scandal could hurt not only his reputation but disgrace Christ and the gospel, and it ruins his credibility among those he leads.

3. Why do you think Paul places such heavy emphasis on the well-being of a man’s family as a qualifying trait?

Answer: An elder should demonstrate his ability to shepherd his own family before he is put in charge of God’s family/people. How he acts in the safety of his own home, behind closed doors, is a true reflection of his heart.

4. How do the following passages portray what a faithful husband looks like, and what specific traits do you note in these passages that would factor into leading a church?

	TRAITS OF A FAITHFUL HUSBAND	IMPACT ON CHURCH LEADERSHIP
Ephesians 5:25–31	Sacrificial love; nourishing and cherishing one’s wife. Prioritizing wife and children over other ties.	Commitment to working for the growth and spiritual health of the church.
Colossians 3:19	Love and kindness	Elders seek to shepherd gently and in love.
1 Peter 3:7	Husbands seek to understand their wife and love her accordingly.	Elders make a point to know church members and provide for the needs of the church.

5. How does 1 Timothy 3:4–5 help us understand what Paul means when he describes to Titus the kind of father who can serve as an elder?

Answer: The way a man manages his children will give insight into how he will



manage a congregation. An elder should properly manage his household with dignity and his children should reflect his leadership by being submissive.

6. To understand why these traits disqualify a man from leading the church, fill in the Disqualifying Traits chart. Under the middle column, note how Scripture portrays the trait, and in the last column, write why you think the trait renders a man unqualified to lead.

DISQUALIFYING TRAITS		
	HOW THE TRAIT IS PORTRAYED	WHY THE TRAIT IS DISQUALIFYING
1 Corinthians 13:4	Envy, boasting, arrogance, and rudeness are the antithesis of love.	The self-centeredness demonstrated in these traits inhibits genuine care for and building up of others.
James 1:19	Speech that is rash and laced with anger.	Unwilling to listen to others' viewpoints.
Proverbs 20:1	Heavy drinking brings regret and demonstrates folly.	Fails to set an example in self-control and wisdom.
Proverbs 16:29	A man given to violence can intimidate others and compel them toward sin.	A gentle man wins persuasively toward good, whereas those who rely on force to get their way are promoting their own kingdom rather than God's.
1 Timothy 6:10	Love of money leads to love of the world and ignites a craving for worldliness.	Jesus said that we cannot serve God and money simultaneously (Matt. 6:24). Those who serve their bank accounts first are therefore not serving God's people.

7. How does Jesus reveal the essence of hospitality in Matthew 25:31–40?
Answer: The essence of true hospitality differs from entertaining a group of people. Jesus refers to hospitality as meeting the needs of those who are hungry, thirsty, unwanted, lacking necessities, and even imprisoned.
8. Why do you think it's important for church leaders to demonstrate a hospitable spirit?
Answer: Elders set the tone for the whole church in this regard.

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9. How do Paul's other references to "good" and "goodness" deepen our understanding of what he means here in verse 8?

Romans 15:14

Paul is concerned with the people's character: their morality and their goodness. Their knowledge should lead to their good behavior, and then to proper discipleship.

Galatians 5:22

Goodness is a fruit of the Spirit, meaning an elder who demonstrates goodness reflects the work of the Spirit in his life.

Ephesians 5:8–9

As children of the light, believers should love all that is morally good, right, and true.

10. What does it look like for believers (not just leaders, but all Christians) to genuinely love what is good? In other words, how does a love of goodness show up in our lives?

Answer: The word of God reveals to us what is morally good, right, and true. With this knowledge and through the work of the Spirit, believers begin to hate what is evil and love what is good! This is seen by seeking peace rather than revenge, loving and praying for your enemies rather than hating them, encouraging one another rather than gossiping or slandering etc.

11. An "upright" person is one who is righteous by biblical standards. Uprightness includes moral conduct, of course, but it goes even deeper. What does the example of Abraham, recounted in Romans 4:18–25, show us about this righteousness, and, therefore, why it's a must for church leaders?

Answer: Despite his circumstances, Abraham believed God and trusted that God could accomplish what he promised to do. Church leaders need to trust God despite whatever circumstances they find themselves in. God is trustworthy and capable of doing what we might consider to be impossible, as demonstrated in Christ's resurrection!

WEEK 4: EMPTY TALKERS AND DANGEROUS DECEIVERS

TITUS 1:10–16

1. What do you think it means to be an "empty talker"?



Answer: Empty talkers might say a lot of words and come across as confident, but their words lack substance or any basis in fact.

2. If we look back at the end of the last section to verse 9, what clue are we given about the way in which these troublemakers are being “insubordinate”—that is, resisting authority and pursuing their own way?

Answer: They were contradicting God’s word.

3. What is Paul’s remedy for preventing the spread of this false teaching?

Answer: They mustn’t be given any opportunities to spread their false teaching.

4. The bad doctrine taking hold was bringing great distress on the Cretan Christians. Why do you think they reacted with distress?

Answer: The gospel that was preached to the Cretan Christians was the good news that Jesus met all the requirements of the law, died for their sins, and satisfied God’s wrath. Now, they’re being told they have to do something else to become saved. It would be distressing to believe that your salvation depended on a work that you had to do, especially the countless Jewish laws and circumcision.

5. In verse 11 Paul said that the false teachers must be silenced. Now, in verse 12, he tells Titus how: with sharp rebuke. What does Paul hope the rebuke will accomplish?

Answer: Paul’s hope was that they will not live up to their bad reputation, and stop following myths and the words of the false teachers. Paul hoped that a strong rebuke would lead them toward sound doctrine or teaching.

6. What do you learn about what godly church leaders are to do from both the way Titus is to handle the problem and the outcome Paul hopes for?

Answer: Church leaders should not tolerate false teachers, but should strongly rebuke them.

7. Paul says that the minds and consciences of the false teachers are “defiled.” In the context of his message here, why do you think “defiled” is a good description?

Answer: Defiled refers to something that is profane. The purity of Christ cleanses our consciences. Wicked deeds flow from profane hearts and minds.

8. There was a similar problem with false teachers in the Ephesian church, which Paul addressed in a letter to Timothy. Paul remarks on the defiled consciences of those false teachers as well. Read 1 Timothy 4:1–5 (we touched on a bit of this passage just above). What do you observe in this passage about:

**The source of false teaching**

It has demonic origins.

The nature of false teachers

They lie with no qualms of conscience. Their consciences are seared, which means they've lost sensitivity to sin.

The results of false teaching

Making God and his ways look restrictive and narrow, taking away all the joys God intends for his people.

The antidote to false teaching

Enjoy all the things that God has given to you and thank him for it!

9. According to Paul's words to Titus in 1:16, why can false teachers be hard to identify?

Answer: Although they might profess to have faith, they show by their actions that their profession is false. True faith is evidenced in the fruit of good works, not just words.

10. Paul's assessment of the false teachers comes in strong language: "They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work." What are we meant to learn not only from his words but also from his tone?

Answer: The false teachers aren't just confused or struggling to understand doctrine. They are men who have refused the Bible's teaching and proclaim a different doctrine. Their unbelief will only lead to evil deeds, and they should be strongly rebuked and avoided.

WEEK 5: REFLECTING CHRIST IN REAL LIFE

TITUS 2:1-10

1. Why do you think it's important for believers to sit under sound Christian teaching?

Answer: Only God's word reflects truth, and since we are conformed to what we absorb in our minds and hearts, it's important that what we absorb is truth!

2. Paul lists six qualities that older men are to model. While Paul likely has in mind men who are older in years, it certainly can include those who are older by virtue of maturity in the faith. How would you define these qualities? In other words, how do you recognize these qualities when you see them?



Sober-minded:

Clear-headed, the ability to think clearly; not rash with decisions or emotionally driven.

Dignified:

A man who is worthy of respect; he's steady and stable and lives out God's word within his home, church, workplace, community.

Self-controlled:

He controls his emotions and impulses and lives a disciplined life; not impulsive.

Sound in faith:

He is committed to knowing, understanding, and practicing his beliefs. His faith in Christ, demonstrated through the reading of the word, leads to obedience and fruitfulness.

Sound in love:

He actively lays down his preferences and rights to emulate Christ's love (1 Cor. 13).

Steadfast:

He is unwavering in his commitments.

3. Why do you think these six qualities are particularly important for older Christian men to model both at home and in church?

Answer: Such qualities indicate trustworthiness and foster a sense of security in the home and church.

4. To get them set in your mind, simply list the four traits Paul names in verse 3:
 1. Reverent in their behavior
 2. Not slanderers
 3. Not slaves to wine
 4. They are to teach what is good
5. From among the various sins of the tongue—gossip, lying, flattery—Paul chooses to name slander here. How do the following passages show us how the Lord views slander and therefore why it's out of place for a mature Christian woman?

Proverbs 10:18

Slander is a trait of fools.

Proverbs 11:13

One who slanders is untrustworthy

Matthew 15:19

Slander originates in the slanderer's heart

Ephesians 4:30–31

Slander grieves the Holy Spirit

6. What do you think it means to be a “slave to much wine”? How might that be evidenced in a woman's life?

Answer: This may be seen in women who feel that they need to drink, or women who drink too much, or who drink too often.

7. Although a woman naturally loves her husband and children, Paul indicates to Titus that younger women have much to learn about familial love from older wives and mothers. What might a young wife and mother be able to learn about family love from more experienced women?

Answer: Overarchingly, how to trust Christ through various difficulties and relational challenges, and how to respond to such challenges in a loving, Christlike manner.

8. “Working at home” is something else that older women can model for the younger. Paul isn't prescribing the home as the sole arena for women's work and life, but he is saying that a godly wife and mother prioritizes her time and energy for the good of her family. Read Proverbs 31:10–31, a poem that exalts feminine wisdom, and note how the woman in the poem prioritizes her family in all she does.

Answer: A godly woman is trustworthy and actively pursues care toward her husband and children. She works hard in and outside of the home, not for selfish reasons, but for the good of the household. She also works for the good of faith community and her neighbors. She fears the Lord.

9. Paul gives a reason for why women are to be marked by a godly lifestyle: “that the word of God may not be reviled” (v. 5). How does a godly lifestyle inhibit unbelievers from criticizing God, his word, and the gospel?

Answer: When our lifestyle matches our profession, unbelievers can't accuse us of hypocrisy. When we shine light on the love of God and the goodness of his ways by living them out, others are attracted to the gospel.

10. What reason does Paul give for why the younger men in the Cretan church are to live out these particular characteristics?

Answer: So that nothing negative can be said about them.

11. Self-control has been listed as a characteristic of godliness for each demographic.



Here, Titus is to “urge” the younger men to cultivate this trait. How do you think a Christian—not just a younger man but all men and women—can demonstrate self-control in each of the following areas?

Physical appetites:

In not being ruled by the pleasures of eating, drinking, and sex. Not turning to these pleasures to escape life’s stresses or as a source of comfort.

Mind and thoughts:

Being regularly in God’s word so we’re transformed to reflect Christ (Romans 12:2; Philippians 4:8).

Emotions:

Bringing all our passions and strong emotions before the Lord, praying for humility and for the work of the Spirit to rule us.

12. Twice in verses 9–10 we find the phrase “in everything.” Explain what Paul means in both instances:
- v. 9: They are to be submissive to their masters in all circumstances.
 - v. 10: Living a life of respect and honor toward their masters will make the gospel attractive to others.

WEEK 6: GOD’S AMAZING GRACE

TITUS 2:11–15

1. So grace underlies our salvation, but grace continues to operate in our lives after we’re saved. According to verses 11–12, in what two ways does God’s grace work in the lives of believers once they are saved?
 1. Grace trains us to *renounce*—to reject and subdue—patterns of ungodliness and worldly passions.
 2. Grace *enables* us to live godly lives.
2. When Paul writes that grace “trains” us, he means that it enables or equips us. But we aren’t to sit by passively, watching for the transformation to just happen. How does Philippians 2:12–13 shed light on how to apply Paul’s words here in Titus?

Answer: Christians are to actively pursue obedience and good works, while being assured that it’s God’s grace that will empower and enable them to do so.



3. Again this week self-control is linked to godly conduct. We've now encountered the term five times in this brief letter! All people, believers or not, desire mastery over their appetites and cravings. Even so, Christians view self-control differently from unbelievers, and they want it for different reasons. To enhance your understanding of biblically rooted self-control, fill in the Godly Self-Control chart that follows (some of the verses won't provide an answer for each column).

GODLY SELF-CONTROL	
FRUIT PRODUCED OR DANGER AVOIDED	
Proverbs 25:28	Lack of self-control leaves us vulnerable to the pull of the world, the flesh, and the devil.
1 Corinthians 9:24–25	Practicing self-control fosters perseverance all through this life until we receive the “prize” of being with Jesus in our heavenly home.
Galatians 5:22–24	Self-control is an aspect of the Spirit’s fruit, his transformative work.
2 Timothy 1:6–7	The Spirit who indwells us produces self-control. Again we see here that biblical self-control is Spirit-enabled.
1 Peter 4:7	Self-control of our affections and appetites keeps us from straying from God’s word and ways and therefore able to pray with a clear conscience and in keeping with biblical truth. Self-control keeps us sensitive to the things of the Spirit, which in turn guides us in what to pray for.
2 Peter 1:3–8	Self-control makes us effective in the Christian life.

4. Evidenced here in the “waiting” is a grace-enabled desire. Think about something you’ve longed for at some point in your own life. What do you think determines whether we look to our hopes with anxiety or expectant anticipation?
- Answer:** Belief that what we hope for will actually happen.
5. What does Paul say that Jesus redeems us from, and what do you think this means?
- Answer:** Christ redeemed us from the power of sin, which means it no longer has power to control us.
6. What does Paul identify as the purpose (two are given) for Jesus’s purifying work?
- Answer:** Jesus purifies his people to enable them to be with him and to live lives that reflect him.
7. Titus is to project the authority he’s been granted as he declares what Paul has



instructed for everyone in the church. He's also to "exhort." What does it mean to "exhort"?

Answer: To exhort is to set out strong warnings or encouragement.

8. Based on what we've learned about what was going on in the church in Crete, what do you think Titus will need to rebuke?

Answer: Titus will need to rebuke not only the false teachers but those who have begun to follow them and adopt their wrong teaching.

9. Paul cautions Titus not to allow anyone to disregard, or despise, him. Basically, Paul is strongly encouraging Titus not to back down in the face of opposition. But as any pastor will tell you, that's easier said than done! Look back over the letter at all the things Paul said that were intended to encourage Titus in his mission. Which one jumps out to you most, and why?

Answers will vary.

WEEK 7: A REMINDER AND A REMEMBRANCE

TITUS 3:1-3

1. We know from other New Testament writings that Paul's instructions in verse 1 about obeying governing authorities aren't absolute. How do the following passages help us know how to understand them for our own context and apply them?

Mark 12:13-17

We should pay our taxes as part of our obedience to governing authorities, not because those authorities are righteous but because God is, and he's commanded it.

Acts 5:27-29

We are to obey governing authorities and the rules of the land unless doing so flies directly in the face of biblical commands and would cause us to disobey God.

Romans 13:1-6

We obey the governing authorities because God is the one who sets them in place and gives them their authority to govern.

1 Peter 2:13-15

The godliness exhibited in obeying governing authorities preserves our godly reputation and shines light on the gospel. Obeying indicates that we trust the way God chooses to work through the civic leaders he sets in place.



2. What do you think it means “to be ready” for every good work? Consider your answer from both a spiritual perspective and a practical one.

Answer: Shaping our lives by God’s word and knowing what it says prepares us to respond wisely and biblically in the moment to whatever need is presented to us.

3. Paul says to avoid quarreling. How would you describe the difference between a disagreement, which is sometimes necessary, and a quarrel?

Answer: We will not always agree with people on every matter, so disagreements are unavoidable and if handled humbly, often constructive. A quarrel typically stems from a desire to win and to have one’s own way.

4. The word that our Bibles translate as “gentle” means something quite different from how we typically use it. Our idea of “gentle” appears in promotions for fabric softeners, toothpastes, and laxatives. Paul was thinking of an attitude—specifically, an attitude we are to hold toward ourselves and others. How does the example of Christ in Philippians 2:3–8 show us this attitude?

Attitude toward ourselves:

Don’t think of ourselves more highly than we ought. Take a humble approach, being willing to lay down our preferences.

Attitude toward others:

Be servant-hearted, considering others’ needs as important as your own.

5. We use the word “foolish” to describe silliness or behavior that we view as misguided but not necessarily terrible. The Bible uses the word in a much more significant way. What does each of the following passages reveal about the true nature of folly?

Psalms 53:1

Unbelief is folly.

Proverbs 1:7

Fools reject and scorn the truth about God.

Romans 1:18–22

Folly believes good is evil and that evil is good.

6. Maybe you can discern today’s “addiction” lingo in Paul’s words about enslavement to passions and pleasures. Just because we’re Christians doesn’t mean we aren’t susceptible to addictive habits, but it’s not the same experience as that of unbelievers. How is it different for Christians?

Answer: Christ has freed us from the power of sin so that we are able not to sin.



“Sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. . . . For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (Romans 6:18;8:2–4).

7. Envy is often hidden in our heart, where no one else can see. Why do you think Paul includes it here in this section about reflecting the gospel in the way we live?

Answer: Envy inhibits genuine love and doesn’t seek the best for the ones we envy. Envy leaks out in the way we talk about the envied one and in failing to promote blessing in their life.

8. This recall of what we used to be like before Christ redeemed us humbles us and encourages us to love the unlovely. Identify one or two particular ways it encourages you.

Answer: Try to elicit a few different responses.

WEEK 8: GOD OUR SAVIOR

TITUS 3:4–8

1. Paul names two characteristics, or attributes, of God in verse 4: goodness and loving-kindness. In what specific way are God’s goodness and loving-kindness seen in these verses?

Answer: God’s goodness and loving kindness underlie our salvation.

2. God’s goodness and loving-kindness are shown most fully in the acts described here, but this isn’t the only way they are manifested. What additional facets of God’s goodness and loving-kindness are shown in Psalm 145:9–17?

Answer: This psalm speaks to God’s goodness to all his creation. He supports all life and provides generously and graciously for all living things.

3. Why do you think regeneration—being born again—is described as “washing”? Look back at 2:11–14 if you aren’t sure.

Answer: Regeneration washes away all our sin and cleanses us from its defilement.



4. Paul says that we were saved by the “renewal of the Holy Spirit.” How does Romans 8:9–11 help you understand what Paul means?

Answer: The Spirit raised Jesus from the dead, and now raises us to new life in Christ. We die to our sin and are raised to new life by the power of the Spirit.

5. What is indicated in Titus 3:4–5 about the part we play in our salvation?

Answer: God saved us according to his own mercy, and not because of anything that we’ve done or could do!

6. All three persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—work together, as one, to save us. What is shown in verse 6 about the distinct role of each divine person?

Father:

The Father chooses those to be saved and pours out his mercy on them.

Son:

The Son accomplished the work necessary for our salvation, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from him to unite believers with all of Christ’s work.

Holy Spirit:

Believers receive the full measure of the Spirit and the Spirit unites believers with Jesus.

7. What reason is given in verse 7 for why God saves us?

Answer: God saves us in order to make us heirs with his son. As heirs and children of God, believers will receive an inheritance.

8. As parents are able, they leave an inheritance for their children, passing along their worldly goods at the time of their death. What is indicated in verse 7 about what believers inherit from God our Father?

Answer: Believers inherit eternal life!

9. What is Titus to do with the “trustworthy” truth of the gospel, and what effect is this expected to have?

Answer: Paul wants Titus to insist that the truth of the gospel is trustworthy. If he begins with the gospel, then the Cretan believers will be motivated to devote themselves to good works. Understanding God’s mercy and grace offered in the gospel will motivate them to do good works.

10. Paul seems to state the obvious: Good works benefit everyone, believers and unbe-



lievers. But he is thinking not in general terms but in terms of God's kingdom. Summarize here how devoting ourselves to good works is profitable for:

Our fellow believers:

Believers make up one body and together support one another. When believers use their gifts, it edifies and encourages the whole body. Good works demonstrate the love of God and bring glory to his name.

Our unbelieving friends and neighbors:

Good works demonstrate God's goodness, love, and mercy to people who aren't looking for it. This also glorifies God. Good works motivated by love and grace for others will adorn the doctrine of salvation.

WEEK 9: HEARTS ON GUARD

TITUS 3:9-11

1. What is Paul's clear-cut instruction for Titus here?

Answer: Titus is to resist the temptation to engage in controversies about issues that merely distract and don't actually further anyone's grasp on the one true gospel.

2. Not all controversies must be avoided. In fact, some are necessary. How does Paul clarify the difference?

Answer: Some controversies are necessary to actually clarify biblical truth. This very sort of situation arose a few years ago over a wrong understanding of the Trinity (this became known as the ESS controversy, or Eternal Subordination of the Son). As theologians weighed in with their expertise, clarity was provided for the entire church. What Paul argues against are "foolish" arguments that are usually more about winning than about clarifying truth.

3. How do you think you can recognize a controversy that is "unprofitable and worthless"?

Answer: If it doesn't add to our spiritual growth, distracts from the gospel, isn't loving, or is based on personal opinions.

4. Fill in the "Current Church Controversies" chart to the best of your knowledge and understanding. Note whether you think the controversy is good for building up the God's people, or if it is foolish. If you can, include Bible verses to support your viewpoint. An example has been provided to get you thinking. Because controversies shift and change regularly, a blank chart is included in the back of the study for you



to copy and use another time if you'd like some help thinking your way through a contentious situation.

Answer: As group leader, be sure to have at least one you are ready to discuss. You might want to Google the ESS controversy mentioned above, or go with one your group has likely encountered, like the place of politics in the church, or differing opinions about what women are biblically permitted/forbidden to do in a worship service.

5. Where do you see mercy held out in these instructions?

Answer: Paul tells Titus to warn the divisive person twice. He gives the person two warnings to stop stirring up dissension.

6. What Paul advocates here is known as “church discipline.” How do the following passages outline the process as well as the intended outcome both for the church as a whole and for those who are disciplined?

Matthew 18:15–16

As a first step, the straying one is to be contacted first privately in hopes of bringing about repentance. If she doesn't listen, then others are brought in to reinforce the need for repentance. If she still refuses, the entire church is made aware of the situation as a way of bringing her to repent. If she still refuses, she is to be “excommunicated,” or put out of the church fellowship, which serves as a powerful illustration of where her sin is taking her—away from the Lord.

1 Corinthians 5:1–5

The Corinthian church failed to discipline a man who was committing sexual immorality. Paul urged the Corinthian believers to mourn over this sin and to cast the unrepentant one out of their fellowship. This was to protect the fellowship of the church and also demonstrate the seriousness of sin, and hopefully lead to repentance and restoration.

7. What is the troublemaker risking by his stubborn refusal to repent?

Answer: He is risking eternal condemnation.

8. Why do you think “warped” is a good description for false teachers?

Answer: They are twisting, or warping, the pure gospel and the truth of God's word, and their rejection of the truth exposes that their hearts are twisted and warped.

9. Paul has made a distinct contrast in chapter 3 between good works, which are “excellent and profitable” (v. 8), and contentious quarrels that are “unprofitable and worthless” (v. 9). What is the overarching profit he is aiming for?



Answer: Paul urges devotion to good works because it benefits everyone—the church and those in need of hearing the gospel. Good works adorn the gospel, demonstrate the love and power of the indwelling Spirit, and glorify God. Contentious quarrels, on the other hand, hinder such fruitfulness.

WEEK 10: TOGETHER FOR THE GOSPEL

TITUS 3:12–15

1. So that Titus can leave the growing yet needy Cretan churches in good hands, Paul plans to send one of his ministry partners, either Artemas or Tychicus. This will prevent a void in leadership. Perhaps whichever one he sent brought along this very letter. This is the only reference to Artemas in the Bible, and we know nothing else about him. However, we have lots of information about Tychicus. What three things do we learn about him from Colossians 4:7?

1. He is a beloved brother in Christ.
2. He is faithful in his ministry.
3. He serves in partnership with Paul and other faithful believers.

2. What can we infer about the spiritual maturity of the unknown Artemas from what we're told about Tychicus in Colossians 4:7?

Answer: We can infer that he has the same reputation as Tychicus since they are paired together here in Titus.

3. What do we learn about Apollos and his ministry from the following passages?

Acts 18:24–28

Apollos was a Jew, and he had a thorough understanding of the scriptures. He spoke boldly and accurately about the scriptures. When he needed correction, he humbly received it from Aquila and Priscilla.

1 Corinthians 1:10–13; 3:1–9

Apollos was teaching and preaching and people followed him like they followed Paul and Peter. Apollos was a servant assigned by God to teach and preach alongside Paul.

4. In what specific way is Titus to strengthen the partnership he and Paul share with Zenas and Apollos? What do you think this would entail?

Answer: Titus is to make sure that Zenas and Apollos have sufficient material provi-



sions to carry out their ministry. They are fellow ministers of the gospel and Paul is urging the church to supply their needs without delay.

5. Because good works hold such high priority in this epistle, let's be sure we are well grounded in what Paul has written about them. We find "good works" six times in this short letter! Summarize what you learn about good works from each instance:

1:16 (good works and the false teachers)

Good works are impossible for false teachers and all those outside the faith because true good works spring from faith.

2:7 (good works and Titus himself)

The bad works of false teachers profess to know and worship God, but their works prove that they really don't.

2:14 (good works and God's redeemed people)

God redeemed us to reflect his glory in carrying out good works of faith.

3:1 (good works and God's redeemed people)

Christians should conduct their lives in such a way as to always be ready and prepared to carry out good works.

3:8 (good works and God's redeemed people)

Believers are to devote themselves to good works and guard themselves in this state of devotion.

6. According to 3:14, what approach must God's people take toward the good they do?

Answer: This is the second call to be devoted to good works. Such devotion keeps us ready to meet urgent needs as they arise.

7. One reason for doing good works is to "help cases of urgent need." What do you think those cases might include?

Answers will vary. Urgent cases include the need for money, shelter, medical attention, or food as well as encouragement for the doubting and fearful.

8. While Paul conveys grace to everyone in the churches there, his greetings are reserved for a select group. Who is this group, and what do you think this communicated to those who first heard it?

Answer: Paul greets especially fellow believers who love him because they love Christ.

9. Paul brought God's grace front and center at the beginning of the letter, and he ends on the same grace note. Grace is foundational to everything Paul has written to



Titus. Let's close our study with a final look at what we see of God's amazing grace in this letter. What stands out to you as you reflect on these verses?

1:4

Paul begins his letter by reminding the church that grace and peace come from our Father.

2:11–13

God's grace, his undeserved favor toward a sinful people, is demonstrated by the giving of his own son to make salvation possible.

3:4–7

Because of God's grace, his favorable disposition toward us, people can be justified and made heirs with Christ.

3:15

Paul begins with grace and ends his letter with extending grace to the Cretan church. Paul roots his salvation and his ministry in God's grace, and he reminds these believers that God's grace is with them and for them.