

Paul instructs Titus to remind the church to submit to governing authorities, even when those authorities may be flawed or corrupt -- how does the biblical understanding that all authority ultimately exists under God's authority shape the way you personally relate to leaders you disagree with?

The sermon challenges us to consider what words our unchurched neighbors would use to describe Christians they know -- what gap, if any, exists between how you hope others perceive your faith and how they likely actually perceive it?

Paul lists seven characteristics of life apart from Christ in Titus 3:3, and deliberately includes himself in that description by saying 'we' -- why is it important for believers to maintain an honest memory of who they were before Jesus, and what happens to our witness when we forget?

The sermon draws a distinction between rebelling against authority and retreating from the world, suggesting neither is the right response for Christians -- where do you find yourself most tempted to fall into one of these two extremes, and what does 'being ready to do good' look like as an alternative?

Ephesians 2:10 teaches that God prepared good works in advance for each believer to walk in -- what specific good works do you believe God has uniquely positioned you to do based on your neighborhood, workplace, relationships, or gifts?

The sermon describes the Holy Spirit as God taking up residence within the believer, continually renewing and transforming them from the inside -- in what area of your life do you most need to surrender to the Spirit's renewing work right now?

Paul's language in Titus 3:5 makes clear that salvation is entirely God's merciful act and not the result of our righteous deeds -- how does a deep understanding of mercy, rather than merit, change the way you approach both your relationship with God and your treatment of people who are far from him?

The sermon emphasizes that justification means God declares us righteous not because we have become righteous but because of what Christ accomplished -- how does this distinction between being declared righteous and earning righteousness affect how you handle guilt, failure, and spiritual growth?

The pastor suggests that communities, schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods ought to be visibly better because God's people are present in them -- what would it look like practically for your specific community to bear the mark of your presence as a follower of Jesus?

The sermon closes with the call to wake up each morning asking God to reveal the good he has placed in front of us that day -- what would change about your daily routine, your priorities, or your attention if you made that prayer a consistent habit?

Small Group Guide

Based on Titus 3:1-8 | "A Reminder for the Church"

Overview

This week's sermon walked us through Titus 3:1-8, where Paul instructs the young preacher Titus to remind the church how to live among those who do not yet know Jesus. The message centered on three core reminders: live like someone God has changed, remember who you were before Jesus, and remember what God did for you. This guide is designed to help your group go deeper into those reminders together.

Key Takeaways

- Christians do not always need new information. Sometimes we simply need to be reminded of what we already know to be true.
 - A life changed by Jesus should become visible to those around us through the good we do and the way we treat people while doing it.
 - Remembering who we were before Jesus keeps us humble, gentle, and grateful toward those who are still far from God.
 - Salvation is entirely God's work. He washes us, renews us by the Holy Spirit, and justifies us by his grace.
 - We do not do good in order to become God's people. We do good because we already are God's people.
 - A church built to last is not defined by what happens inside the building on Sunday. It is defined by the people who carry Jesus with them everywhere they go throughout the week.
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Getting Started

Use one of these questions to open your group time and help everyone ease into the conversation.

1. What is something in your daily life that you need a regular reminder for? What happens when you forget?
2. Think about a time someone's behavior made you think, "There is something different about that person." What did you observe that gave you that impression?

Discussion Questions

Reminder One: Live Like Someone God Has Changed

(Titus 3:1-2)

1. The sermon described the words a person who has never attended church might use to describe Christians. What words do you think your neighbors, coworkers, or classmates would use to describe you specifically? How does that sit with you?
2. Paul tells Titus to remind the church to submit to governing authorities. In a culture where suspicion of authority is common, why do you think this is such a challenging instruction to follow? What makes it easier or harder depending on the specific authority involved?
3. Paul says in 1 Timothy 2:1-2 that we are to pray for all those in authority, not just the ones we agree with or voted for. Be honest with your group: how consistent are you in actually praying for leaders you disagree with? What gets in the way?
4. The sermon described two unhealthy responses Christians have historically had toward authority and the world: rebellion and retreat. Which of these do you think is the greater temptation for you personally? Why?
5. Paul says we should be "ready to do whatever is good." The word "ready" implies active anticipation, not passive waiting. What does it look like practically to go through your day looking for the good God has placed in front of you?

Reminder Two: Remember Who You Were Before Jesus

(Titus 3:3)

6. Paul lists seven characteristics of life apart from Jesus in verse 3: foolishness, disobedience, deception, enslavement to passions and pleasures, malice, envy, and hatred. Without oversharing, which of these do you most recognize from your own life before Jesus, or from seasons when you drifted from him?
7. The sermon asked this question: "How differently would we treat people who are far from God if we remembered that we too were once far from God?" How would you answer that? In what specific relationships or situations does this reminder need to change how you respond?
8. Why do you think it is easy to forget where we came from spiritually? What habits or practices help keep that memory alive?

Reminder Three: Remember What God Did for You

(Titus 3:4-8)

9. The sermon described three things God does in saving us: he washes us through new birth, he renews us through the indwelling Holy Spirit, and he justifies us by his grace. Which of these three aspects of salvation feels most real and personal to you right now? Which one do you feel like you need to understand more deeply?
 10. The pastor said, "The Holy Spirit is God in your skin." He moves in and begins convicting, reminding, comforting, and counseling. How aware are you on a daily basis that the Holy Spirit is living and working within you? What helps you stay attentive to his presence?
 11. Paul says in verse 8 that these truths are "excellent and profitable for everyone," meaning the people around us should benefit when the gospel takes root in us. Who in your life stands to benefit most if you take this week's message seriously? What would that look like?
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Practical Applications

Choose one or more of these to commit to before your group meets again.

- **The Morning Prayer:** Set an alarm or phone reminder each morning this week with the question the pastor suggested: "Father, what good have you put in front of me today?" At the end of the week, take note of what you observed and how you responded.
 - **Pray for a Leader You Disagree With:** Identify one person in authority in your life, whether in government, your workplace, or another setting, with whom you have significant disagreement. Commit to praying for that person by name each day this week. Pray not just for them to change, but for God to work through them and for you to maintain a humble posture toward them.
 - **Write Your Before-and-After Story:** Take some time this week to write out, even briefly, what your life looked like before Jesus and what changed when God intervened. You do not need to share it publicly. The goal is simply to keep the memory of God's mercy fresh and to let it shape how you see others who are still far from him.
 - **Do One Intentional Good Thing:** Identify one specific act of good that God may already be prompting you toward in your neighborhood, workplace, school, or home. Do not wait for a more convenient moment. Do it this week.
 - **For Those Still Exploring:** If you have questions about what it means to respond to the gospel through faith, repentance, and baptism, reach out to your group leader or a pastor this week. Do not sit with those questions alone.
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Closing Thought

The sermon ended with this challenge: a church is not built to last because of what happens inside the building for an hour on Sunday. A church is built to last when the people leave the building and carry Jesus everywhere they go. As you close your group time, consider praying

together and asking God to make that true not just of your church, but of each person in the room.

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by praying over one another. Ask the Holy Spirit to make the gospel visible through each person in your group this week, in their homes, their workplaces, their neighborhoods, and their communities. If anyone in the group is sensing a specific prompting from the Spirit, pray over that directly before you leave.

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Built to Last: Living the Gospel Every Day

Day 1: Remember Who You Were

Reading: Titus 3:1-3; Romans 3:23

Devotional: It is easy to forget where grace found us. Paul does not dredge up the past to shame us -- he recalls it to humble us. Before Jesus, every one of us was lost, disobedient, and enslaved to something other than God. When we remember that we too were once far from him, we find it far easier to extend patience, gentleness, and compassion to those around us who are still wandering. Humility is not weakness. It is the honest acknowledgment that everything we have was given, not earned. Let your past fuel your gratitude today.

Reflection: What specific areas of your life changed most dramatically when Jesus found you?

Practical Application: Write down three words that described your life before Christ. Keep them somewhere visible this week as a reminder of where grace met you.

Day 2: What God Did for You

Reading: Titus 3:4-7; Romans 5:8; Romans 6:23

Devotional: Paul draws a sharp contrast between who we were and what God chose to do about it. He did not wait for us to clean ourselves up. He appeared -- full of kindness and love -- and moved toward us while we were still deep in our sin. His mercy is not God lowering his standard. It is God paying the price we could never afford. He washed us, renewed us, and justified us -- not because of anything we accomplished, but because of who he is. Salvation is entirely his work. Our only fitting response is a life of grateful obedience.

Reflection: In what ways do you still struggle to fully receive God's grace rather than trying to earn his approval?

Practical Application: Spend five minutes in prayer today simply thanking God for each element of your salvation -- the washing, the renewal, and the justification -- without asking for anything else.

Day 3: Live Like Someone God Has Changed

Reading: Titus 3:1-2; Ephesians 2:10; Romans 12:2

Devotional: The gospel was never meant to stay inside the walls of a church building. Paul insists that a life genuinely transformed by Jesus ought to become visible to the people living around us. Peaceable. Considerate. Gentle. Ready to do good. These are not personality traits reserved for naturally kind people -- they are marks of a life being continually renewed by the Holy Spirit. God saved you with a purpose already prepared. The question is not whether good works exist for you to do. The question is whether you are paying close enough attention to recognize them when they appear.

Reflection: When the people in your neighborhood, workplace, or home observe your daily life, what do they learn about Jesus?

Practical Application: Begin each morning this week with this simple prayer: "Father, what good have you put in front of me today?" Then watch for the answer throughout your day.

Day 4: A Humble Posture Toward Authority

Reading: Titus 3:1; Romans 13:1; 1 Timothy 2:1-2

Devotional: One of the most countercultural marks of a Christ-follower is a humble posture toward authority. In a world that instinctively resists, questions, and resents anyone in a position of leadership, God calls his people to look different. This does not mean blind obedience -- our ultimate allegiance always belongs to God. But it does mean recognizing that human authority exists within God's created order, and that our response to it reflects something about our trust in him. One of the most powerful ways this posture becomes visible is in how we pray -- not just for leaders we prefer, but for all who govern.

Reflection: Is there a person in authority over your life for whom you have never genuinely prayed? What has kept you from doing so?

Practical Application: Identify one leader -- governmental, professional, or otherwise -- with whom you disagree. Pray specifically and sincerely for that person by name every day this week.

Day 5: Ready to Do Good

Reading: Titus 3:8; Ephesians 2:10; Matthew 5:14-16

Devotional: Paul closes this passage with a clear and urgent call: devote yourself to doing what is good. Not occasionally. Not when it is convenient. With devotion. The gospel takes root in us

not so that we can simply know it, but so that the people around us can benefit from it. Our homes, workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods are meant to be touched by the presence of God's people living out God's purposes. You were not saved merely to secure your own eternity. You were saved to make the goodness of Jesus visible in every room, every relationship, and every responsibility God has entrusted to you.

Reflection: What specific sphere of influence has God placed you in where his goodness could become more visible through your faithful presence?

Practical Application: Identify one concrete act of good you can do this week for someone who does not yet know Jesus. Do it without announcing it, and pray that God would use it to draw that person closer to him.