

STUDY GUIDE FOR SMALL GROUPS

Summer Shorts

Titus

Week of August 2

“Doing What Is Good”

Text: Titus

Background

- The book is written by Apostle Paul to Titus who was an important partner in ministry with Paul.
- Titus was most likely a Gentile who was converted through Paul.
- Titus was sent to Crete which was known for their immorality.
- Titus' central emphasis is upon the relationship of practice to polity, behavior to belief, conduct to creed.
- there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty – the congruence between one's belief and one's actions = integrity.
- 3:8 is the crux of the letter.
- Titus presents to us the picture of the NT church. The ideal church, according to this epistle, (1) has an orderly organization, (2) is sound in doctrine, and (3) is pure in life, ready to every good work. In Timothy the emphasis was upon the need for sound teaching in the church. In Titus the emphasis is put upon the importance of God's order for the conduct of the churches. In fact, Titus 1:5 is the key to the epistle: “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.” Titus was to set things in order in the churches in Crete.

Discussion Questions

Opening Questions (your choice).

Think of an experience in your life when you wished for “what was to come” instead of “what was at that time.” Describe what it was like.

When was a time where you felt like God changed you in some way?

1. Describe your ideal Christian church – what are the leaders like? What are the programs offered? Why are these things important to you? Are there things that should disqualify someone from church leadership?
2. Read Titus 1. What is the meaning of “a faith and knowledge that leads to godliness?” How does it “rest on the hope of eternal life?” How is this a promise that God gave “before the beginning of time?” What does he mean that he brought his word to light at the “appointed time?”
3. What is your impression of the difficulty in Crete? Why is Titus’ goal for ministry there?
4. How is God’s character central to this passage?
5. How does Paul place his ministry within the larger framework of God’s overall plan?
6. What difference does the promise that the life of the coming age has invaded the present age through Jesus make to you?
7. What is the significance of how Paul addresses Titus?
8. What has been your experience as a spiritual “child” or with having spiritual “children”?
9. Read Titus 1:5-16. Why are such specific instructions about the qualifications of elders important?
10. In what different areas of life must the elder be blameless? Why?
11. In what ways must he or she take initiative?
12. How seriously does the church today take choosing leaders? In your opinion, how difficult a criterion is this?
13. How are “talkers and deceivers” ultimately “rebellious” people? Why does Paul specifically name the “circumcision group?” What was wrong with their teaching? How have they lost the true message of the Gospel?
14. Describe a time when you had to rebuke someone or when someone rebuked you and it turned out to be helpful and restorative.
15. “To be pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure” refers to Jesus’ teaching that purity comes from the heart not the practices (see Mark 7:14-15). Why is it important to emphasize that purity comes from the heart?
16. Read Titus 2 and 3.
17. Paul tells Titus to instruct Christians to live according to healthy teaching and has much to say about the way they are to conduct themselves (2:1-10; 3:1-2, 8-11). What strikes you as important in these instructions? Why?
18. Talk about the importance of the integrity of the family system. How does this challenge or encourage you?

19. Throughout the passage Paul repeats the need for Christians to be ready or eager for and energetic about doing good works (2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14). Why is establishing a pattern of good works so important?
20. Contrast what it means to be saved by grace, but we are supposed to do good works.
21. Sometimes we have different definitions and examples of what it means to “do good”? How do you define “goodness”?
22. What is the “grace of God that brings salvation?” How does it bring salvation?
23. In 2:11-15, what is Paul’s appeal about how Christians should live? How can we help each other with this appeal?
24. 8. As you look at 2:11-14, what might Paul’s response be to someone who thinks that this lifestyle is too hard?
25. Paul explains to Titus how their present life relates to God’s future, and to encourage the church to make that future their own here and now. Describe what we were once like according to 3:3.
26. How was God’s love, kindness and generosity lavished upon us?
27. Take stock of yourself. How have you experienced the kindness and generosity of God?
28. How has God saved us “not because of the righteous things we have done” but because of his mercy? How is Christ’s work of salvation like “washing” and “rebirth?” How is the Holy Spirit involved?