



Saved for **GOOD**

Titus

LEADER'S NOTES

DATE	BIBLE	DATE	BIBLE
9-15 Oct	Choose your own	13-19 Nov	Titus 2:11-15
16-22 Oct	Titus 1:1-4	20-26 Nov	Titus 3:1-7
23-29 Oct	Titus 1:5-9	27 Nov-3 Dec	Titus 3:8-15
30 Oct-5 Nov	Titus 1:10-16	4-10 Dec	Christmas Party to Finish the Year
6-12 Nov	Grow: No Groups		

TITUS: SAVED FOR GOOD

In this letter Paul tells Titus how to oversee the churches in Crete and how to setup other elders to do the same. It's part of the "pastoral epistles" – 3 letters Paul wrote to Timothy and to Titus explain how to pastor churches in sound doctrine and godly living. These are the 5 biggest themes in Titus:

- 1. Salvation:** Christians have been saved by God – by the grace of God the Father, through God the Son giving himself for us, and by the regenerating work of God the Spirit. This is the foundation of our new lives which we need to understand deeply, because...
- 2. Behaviours follow beliefs:** our beliefs drive our behaviours, whether that's the true beliefs and sound doctrine elders are to teach, or the false damaging teaching of rebellious people. Paul starts the letter making this connection, explaining that he is an apostle *"...to further the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness"* (1:1)
- 3. Doing good:** having been saved, and with a firm foundation built on sound beliefs, what are Christians meant to do? Good. *"And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good... Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good..."* as we're Christ's own people *"eager to do what is good"* (3:8, 14, 2:14). In order to do good, Christians need to be taught, instructed, encouraged, rebuked, reminded, warned and modelled to, in many aspects of our lives.

4. The Church: the letter is written to an elder/pastor about how to guard and grow the Church, and what to direct God's people to do / not do. So it instructs pastors in how to behave and teach, whilst informing the kinds of things churches should look for and celebrate in their leaders. At the same time, it's written for all Christians, who 'look-in on' the instructions to a pastor; the last sentence of the letter reads "*Grace be with you (plural) all*" (3:15) which shows Paul is aware all the churches in Crete will read this letter, even though it's addressed to Titus. There's also a rich picture of what a Christian *community* doing good looks like, which we're meant to emulate at Salt. So (to sum up my point here): 1) pastors are meant to do good, teach and model it, 2) individual Christians are meant to do good and cling to the truth, and 3) Christian churches/communities are meant to take responsibility to do good, plus teach and model good to each other. The Christian life is not a solo journey, it's by definition corporate.

5. Evangelism: there is an evangelistic edge to Titus. We obey God to honour God because that's what we've been saved for, *and* to show the goodness of the gospel so others come and trust the same saviour. E.g. young women are told to live a particular way "*so that no one will malign the word of God*" (2:5) and slaves "*so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive*" (2:10). There is also a clear awareness of the corruption of people outside the church in Crete, acknowledging that "*at one time we too were...*" living just like them before God's grace saved us (3:3). Since it saved us who were just like them, it can save them too.

These 5 things we really need! Especially in our unbelieving culture that...

1. Can't understand salvation by grace or the character of our triune-God
2. Thinks all beliefs are equally valid, and severs the connection between beliefs and behaviours
3. Has a radically different definition of what "good" is, compared to God
4. Undervalues leaders and character, and overemphasises individualism
5. Can't see the need for a Saviour and thinks that Christians cause harm rather than good

All Christians want to do good but we often don't know what "good" looks like. Titus will teach us how to do good in a world that's confused about what's "good". **Christians are saved for good.**

USING THESE NOTES

LCOMA: These notes use a bible reading approach called LCOMA.

Launch: This introduces the topic you'll unpack & gets everyone talking.

Context: This is about seeing how this passage fits in the book. What must we know from context to understand this piece properly?

Observe: This is about getting an overview of what the passage says.

Meaning: This is about deciding what big idea/s the author is explaining, what does it mean and why does it matter.

Apply: This is about reflecting on how the passage impacts your life – your head (beliefs), heart (emotions) and hands (actions).

The Code: these notes use a symbol-based code to help you easily work out which questions might best suit your Small Group.

→ **Simpler:** questions with this arrow symbol → trace 1 idea through a passage. So they're great if you have time pressures, less mature Christians in your group, or just want to unpack and apply 1 big idea.

++ **Bonus:** questions with this plus symbol ++ fill-in the picture more. So they're great if you want to dig deeper or explore a few extra ideas. You don't need to ask every bonus question; just pick the best ones.

The Goal: Remember, the purpose of a bible discussion is... to discuss the bible. It's not to ask every question in the notes and tick them all off. These notes will help you dig into the bible but don't let them get in the way of the actual goal – wrestling with the bible together, loving it and living it out.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN • 9-15 OCT

DIRECTION: Take this week to choose your own adventure. You could...

- Take it in turns to share your testimony of God saving you.
- Grab a feed and have social fun times (more on that below).
- Pick-up where you left off on a previous week's discussion by reading the passage again and exploring it more together.
- Write your own bible discussion on a topic the group wants to explore (more on that below).

WHY 'CHOOSE YOUR OWN' WEEKS:

One downside of the way we unpack books at Salt is we move quick! You might have started a great chat in your group 1 week, but by the next we've moved on. So we sprinkle these 'choose your own' weeks throughout the year to give you a chance to choose your own adventure – to have social fun times together, to continue 1 of those great chats, or to look at another topic / question / part of the bible your group wants to explore. Choose your own weeks can be great for you and your Small Group to dig into something that's puzzling, troubling or exciting them.

SOCIAL FUN TIMES:

Not all socials are equal. The key is not simply to have some fun together – though make sure you do that too! Be intentional and use this moment to build trust and deeper relationships. That'll flow into the normal weeks where you share, pray and read the bible together.

Deeper relationships will allow your Small Group to be more open about what's really going on in our lives and to be more honest about what we think the bible means and how we're really going at living it out.

If you decide to do a social I'd also highly recommend you refresh yourself on chapters 5 and 6 of *Getting Started as a Small Group Leader* (available at www.saltchurch.info/resources/small-group-leaders). There are dozens of tips on how to use a social week intentionally to grow your Small Group.

DO YOUR OWN BIBLE DISCUSSION:

Alternatively, if you want to continue a previous discussion or dig into another topic / question / part of the bible here's how you could do that...

Getting Ideas: A week before, let your group know there's a 'choose your own' week coming up. Collect ideas, like a topic / question / part of the bible they want to explore. Vote on the most popular 1 and get prepping.

Getting Prepped: Brainstorm where in the bible the topic / question comes up. Or for a part of the bible, read it a bunch of times to work out what it means. Ask your coach & other leaders if they know good places to go / what the passage means. If you're more experienced at this you can read a systematic theology or commentary (there's a bunch upstairs at 275 Keira St you can borrow). Plus, if you're keen to learn more about how to create studies, check out *Writing a Small Group Study* by Richard Sweatman.

Packaging a Discussion: Here's 3 options...

1. Use the COMA method: ask the group what's the *Context* | what you *Observe* | what you think it *Means* | how you think it *Applies* to us.
2. Use the Swedish Method to read the passage and ask these questions:
 - a. What stands out to you?
 - b. What's a question you have?
 - c. What do you think the big point is?
 - d. What do you think this will mean for your life?
 - e. What from this passage can you share with someone else?
3. Just read a passage, ask 'what do you reckon?' and see where you go.

Remember: You don't have to have all the answers or be a bible expert to be a Small Group Leader, so don't stress out for this week. Just get people into God's word and let Him teach and transform us by His Spirit. Your Small Group Coach is always available and ready to give you help too.

TITUS 1:1-4 • 16-22 OCT

DIRECTION: Why does Paul start his letter with this theologically dense sentence? It concisely introduces the themes of the rest of the book: that only the work of God can give us the foundation to go and do good. This is a great launching pad for your group to linger on before getting into the rest of Titus. Discussion about “election” might arise in your group which is great to clarify but don't lose the main point: a deep grasp of the Gospel (the work of God) will grow us in godliness (adoration and obedience).

PRAY TO START: Pray for God to shape us as we grow in knowledge of Him through the book of Titus.

LAUNCH:

→ What is the most awe-inspiring thing you've ever seen?

CONTEXT:

→ Read **Isaiah 6:1-8**. What fuels Isaiah's desire to serve as a prophet?

Awe! An awareness of God's holiness in comparison to Isaiah's sin causes him to despair. Then having his sin atoned for causes his fear to turn to awe!

READ: Titus 1:1-4

OBSERVATION:

→ List the things that God has done for his people.

Elected, told the truth, given eternal life, brought to light, entrusted teachers, saved

→ What is Paul doing in response to God's work?

Furthering faith and knowledge; preaching in hope. You can see that everything Paul does is as a response to the glorious grace of God.

MEANING:

→ What outcome does Paul want to see from his work?

Godliness. Some commentaries prefer to say 'god-ward-ness' as a posture towards God, rather than just obeying God. The OT equivalent would be 'fear of the Lord' (Prov 22:4; Josh 4:23-24), a posture of awe-filled reverence and humility to God.

→ If these 4 verses are a summary for the letter, what does Paul hope this letter will accomplish?

Paul's intent in the whole letter is to further their faith and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness. Although it's written to Titus, the "you" in 3:15 is in the plural form, showing that Paul intends for more people to read it than just Titus.

→ Why does Paul talk about the timeline of God's work? I.e. from eternity past ("God's elect," "beginning of time") to eternity future ("eternal life" v.2)

If Paul wants his readers to 'fear the Lord' / be reverent / be godly then drawing attention to the size of God's work is a really great way to inspire awe!

++ What causes Paul to keep doing the work of a servant and apostle?

His certain hope of eternal life, given to us by the God who doesn't lie.

++ Read Titus 2:11-12. If Paul wants us to be godly, what is the only thing that can teach us to be that way?

The grace of God! Our only hope for holiness and increased awe of God is by meditating on and truly knowing what God has done for us.

++ If the Gospel/Grace of God is our only hope for godliness, then what is the "knowledge of the truth"? i.e. what "truth"?

See also Ephesians 1:13; 4:20-21. Knowledge of (Gospel) Truth will lead to godliness i.e. a greater appreciation of God's work for us, awe for our Saviour, and obedience.

APPLY:

→ Paul wants his readers to become more godly as they read this letter.

Do *you* want to become more godly? Why, why not?

What could it look like for you to become more godly?

From this passage, how do we become more godly?

Let's pray for understanding of the knowledge that leads to godliness!

++ All of Paul's effort and work comes from his hope in the eternal life that God promised. What does that certain hope mean to you right now?

++ What do you think of this quote:

"So often we try to develop Christian character and conduct without taking the time to develop God-centred devotion. We try to please God without taking the time to walk with him and develop a relationship with him. This is impossible to do." Jerry Bridges - 'The Practice of Godliness'

PRAY TO END: From eternity past to eternity future, God has been lavishing grace on us so we'd know and please him. Spend a good amount of time in praise to God. Let's praise him!

TITUS 1:5-9 • 23-29 OCT

DIRECTION: This passage is often called the “qualifications for elders.” That is helpful, as Paul goes on to explain why the people who lead God’s precious church need these qualifications. But at the same time, the character-traits in this list should be things all Christians are striving for. So we’ll explore what godly leaders should look like, why leaders are held to such a high standard in God’s household, and then how we too can have this kind of character. A subpoint that may come up is the roles of men and women, i.e. why is Titus only to appoint *men* to lead the church in this way? We’ll explore this more on Sunday, so encourage people to share their thoughts in your group and to come on Sunday with their questions.

PRAY TO START: Pray we’ll love God’s people as much as He does.

LAUNCH:

→ Think of the best and worst boss you’ve ever had. What were they like?

CONTEXT:

→ Read **Colossians 1:21-22**. What has Christ done for all Christians? How does that bring assurance as we strive to become more godly?

“Free from accusation” is the same word used twice in Titus 1:5-9 (blameless). Our status before God is absolutely blameless on the basis of Christ’s holiness for us. So any achievements in godliness or growth in character don’t earn our salvation, any more than our failures un-earn our salvation. We can only be blameless because Jesus has made us free from accusation. From that place of assurance, we can strive, by God’s grace, to know the truth so we become more godly. This is also true for the elders Titus is to appoint: they’re meant to be blameless (1:6,7 which might refer more to how outsiders view them - a common theme in the book); but the ultimate source of their blamelessness is Christ making them free from accusation.

READ: Titus 1:5-9

OBSERVATION:

→ List the attributes and qualifications...

An elder should be:	An elder shouldn't be:

MEANING:

→ What would an elder/overseer/manager look like if they lived out all the *negative* attributes?

→ What would they look like if they lived out all the *positive* attributes?

++ Consider for a few of the attributes, how does it flow from the Gospel?

E.g. God has been immensely patient with us so how could we be "overbearing [or] quick-tempered"? Our greatest reality is that Jesus is Lord, so why would we trade sober-mindedness ("self-control") for "drunkenness" (escape from reality)? Etc.

→ In your workplace, character probably isn't as important as productivity. But this qualification list is almost exclusively character-focused. What might that show about God's values?

→ What reasons does Paul give for this high standard for church leaders?

They're to be like this "since an overseer manages God's household..." and God's household is so important to God! Jesus died so we can be his family (2:14, 3:7). Elders lead by example in the household, demonstrating the difference God's grace makes. Elders like this can be an example to God's household and to outsiders (2:7-8). Ultimately it is the grace of God that has taught them to live this way (2:11-14).

++ What do you think it means that an elder's children "believe"? Why is this important?

Since each person needs to respond personally to the Gospel, the faith of an elder's children can't be ultimately his responsibility. It is God who elects people to believe. So it seems more to be saying: do the elder's children believe/trust in him (i.e. in the elder)? They should be able to testify to his faithfulness as a Dad. And he should be bringing them up in the training of the Lord (Eph 6:4).

APPLY:

→ Reflect on your own life. How do you measure up against this list?

Guilt can't be our motivation for godliness. However, "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation" (2 Cor 7:10). Guilt should cause us to throw ourselves upon the mercy of God to trust and obey him more.

→ How can we grow in those positive attributes and reduce the negative?

By meditating on and clinging to the grace of God (Titus 2:11). That is the only motivation that will produce true repentance. "Holding firmly to the trustworthy message" (the Gospel) is the only way we'll be able to "encourage [and] refute." (v 9)

++ Have you ever considered growing to lead God's people?

Often we shrink back from leading others out of fear or insecurity. But all Christians should be striving for this sort of character, and it is the fruit of the Gospel at work in us. We'd love more leaders right now and will need tonnes more leaders at Salt in the years ahead – people who are willing to give it a go, knowing growth in godliness is a work of God.

PRAY TO END: Confess the ways we don't live up to these attributes, pray for grace so that we might adore and obey our God more and more, and give thanks to God that *"now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation" (Colossians 1:22)*

TITUS 1:10-16 • 30 OCT-5 NOV

DIRECTION: This week explores how damaging false teaching is, how we should resist people who add human commands to God's word, and how we should be willing and ready to give and receive rebukes.

In 1:10-16 we get another reason why Paul left Titus on Crete: to appoint elders because of disruption (1:11) and division in the Cretan churches (3:10), caused by the teaching of rebellious people (1:10) and the ungodly lifestyle of the average Cretan (1:12). In this environment it's crucial that an elder "hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can... refute those who oppose it" (1:9). False teaching is so damaging! Paul wants these Christians to see they're pure *in Christ* (2:14) so they forsake anything else they might trust to "make them pure", like obeying merely human commands.

PRAY TO START: Pray that we might become sound in the faith.

LAUNCH:

→ Have you ever rebuked someone / been rebuked by someone? What was good and bad about that experience?

READ: Titus 1:10-16

OBSERVATION:

→ What are the false teachers in Crete like?

Rebellious, deceivers, liars, evil brutes, gluttons, rejectors of the truth, corrupted, deniers of God, detestable, disobedient, unfit for doing any good

→ Does the description of these false teachers feel a bit harsh to you?

v16 sounds like a really strong statement, but Paul really cares about the Cretan church and hates those who are trying to lead them astray from the truth.

→ What is Paul worried will happen to the churches in Crete?

That they'd be "disrupted" and that they'd "deny God by their actions."

→ What is Paul's hope for the Cretan church?

That they'll be "sound in the faith" (v 13) and "pay no attention to Jewish myths or to merely human commands."

MEANING:

→ From this passage why does Titus need to appoint elders?

"For" or 'because' tells us that this is the reason for his previous statements. Why is he appointing elders? Because there are many rebellious people and elders are needed to correct them.

→ How is Titus going to help them be "sound in the faith"?

By "rebuking them sharply" (v 13). Which is exactly what elders are called to do in v9. Elders share the "trustworthy message" and correct people with the Gospel.

++ Read **Galatians 5:2-12**. What is the issue of the circumcision group?

It seems some Jews are compelling Gentile Christians to observe Jewish laws, especially to be circumcised as the mark of belonging to God's people. Also Acts 15.

++ Read **Titus 2:14**. What has Jesus done for us? What does that mean for our need to be circumcised as a mark of belonging to God?

Jesus has made us pure! Which means everything is pure for us! To those with faith in Christ, nothing can make us unclean. Those who'd try to lay a burden of extra works to be saved now are similarly rebellious, dishonest, disobedient & detestable.

APPLY:

→ Proverbs 13:1 says "A wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a mocker does not respond to rebukes." How could you be more willing to be rebuked and corrected?

→ What about you might make it hard for Christian brothers and sisters, or your Church leaders, to rebuke you?

Often our insecurities make this hard for others. We can be overly sensitive, prone to self-criticism or crushing grief. On the flip-side we might instead be aggressive, argumentative, stubborn and quick to disagree. Or we can be too concerned about the way a rebuke is packaged and delivered and not eager to learn and grow.

→ What makes it hard for you to rebuke and correct other Christians? How could you be more willing to helpfully correct other Christians?

Sometimes we think we need to know people really well and be besties before we can rebuke them. Or we're worried about being hypocrites. But Jesus tells us not to merely correct our own faults but to "first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye" (Matt 7:5). On the flip side sometimes we're very ready and eager to rebuke others, but don't give much thought to how to do that helpfully – like praying about it beforehand, considering how it will be received and how to do it in the most constructive way.

→ What are some inappropriate things people may try to force Christians to believe or do?

For these Jewish "Christians", the Gospel = Jesus + Works (especially the work of being circumcised as the mark of belonging to God). In reality, the Gospel = Jesus! Jesus has already made us pure when we trust in his work. Some examples of Jesus + Works for us (aka things people tell us we must have in order to be saved and right with God) might be: rituals, voting a certain way, being baptised a particular way or at a particular age, pretending to be perfect, speaking in tongues, etc.

→ How could you work out what are "merely human commands" (v14) and what are God's good commands to you?

Test everything to the Gospel and word of God! Does it cause me to trust in Jesus more? If I'm not being led to Jesus, or if this command is motivated by guilt, then it's almost certainly false. We're "eager to do what is good" (2:14) since we love and rely on the grace of God! (2:11)

PRAY TO END: Praise God that he has made us pure and protects us from false teaching through our leaders!

Ask God to help Michael, Andy and Geoff faithfully carry out this work of protecting us from false teaching at Salt Church.

Pray that we might all be willing to learn and to correct each other so we know, obey and enjoy God more.

Want to learn more? Check out this article during the week:

www.desiringgod.org/articles/embrace-the-blessing-of-rebuke

GROW: NO SMALL GROUP • 6-12 NOV

Grow is on this Wednesday 8th November, 7-9pm including dinner.

We really want every member of Salt Church to come to *Grow* – for everyone who calls Salt their home to be there or to watch the livestream.

Why Come to Grow?

We know that many of us have busy lives with lots of responsibilities. So getting to Church and Small Group regularly is enough of a challenge, yet alone coming out for a moment like *Grow*.

Also, many of us at Salt feel like we already know our Church's vision and we're on-board with it, so it doesn't really feel worth coming to *Grow* – there's nothing new to hear and I could definitely use a night off.

There's also a bunch of us at Salt who have never been to a *Grow*, so don't really know what it is that we're being encouraged to get along to.

Whatever camp you're in, here's where *Grow* fits and why *Grow* matters.

Bus Versus Boat

You may have heard Salt's pastors describe Salt as a rowing team not a bus. On a bus 1 person drives and everyone else comes along for the ride. If you're not driving, you don't have to contribute to the trip, you hop on and off when you want, you get somewhere because of the driver.

But on a rowing team 1 person might steer the boat, but you only move forward if everyone rows; if the team works together to make it happen.

God's Vision for Salt Church

Christ Jesus has given all of his people a massive vision and task:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt 28:18-20)

We pray this would happen in Wollongong and we'd play our part in it. We want to see a flood of lifelong disciples of Jesus across Wollongong and beyond because it's what Jesus wants to see and it's what Jesus deserves.

Why Grow Exists

We don't want to do this solo though – each of us trying to make disciples or growing as Christians on our own. We also don't want to be a bus – a handful of us doing this and the rest just kicking back, along for the ride. We want to be a rowing team, for the glory of God.

But without moments like *Grow* it's very difficult for us to row together as a whole Church. At *Grow* we plan and pray about how we're going to do this *together*. What kind of Church do we want to be? Where are we heading as a Church? Where is God guiding and leading us? It's like a family meeting, or the team huddle just before we put the boat out on the water.

Each *Grow* is different too. The big vision doesn't change; it shouldn't as it's God's vision that he gives to every Church and all His people. But how we achieve that vision, the strategy, the next steps, the different roles we can each play – that's what changes. So each *Grow* we dive into the next steps to take as a Church family. Not what's coming up this week, but what we're doing in the next 3 months, this year, where we want to be in 5 years.

As well as all that, *Grow* is just like Sunday Church in that we get to meet together as God's people for fellowship, to enjoy being a community, to listen to and learn from our good Father.

How You Can Help

To make it easier for more of us to come to *Grow*, we're no longer going to run Small Groups in the week that *Grow* is on. Instead, we'll go to *Grow* that week for bible teaching and fellowship. We've also moved *Grow* so it's mid-week (Wednesdays for this year) and not on Fridays as it was before, when many of us are worn out from a week of work or have competing plans.

So can I encourage you to come to this *Grow*, 7-9pm this Wednesday. And not only that, but to help bring others from your Small Group along too? Each *Grow* really is a hugely encouraging and crucially important moment for our Church family. We want to grow – that's what Jesus deserves.

TITUS 2:11-15 • 13-19 NOV

DIRECTION: 3 ideas this week – that we'd understand grace deeper, learn how to live now we've been saved, and teach others how to live.

LAUNCH & CONTEXT: In 2:1-10 Paul wanted Timothy to teach the things in this find-a-word. Have a race to see who can find them all first!

Doctrine	Faith	Endurance	Kind	Good
Temperate	Love	Reverent	Pure	Self-control

F	T	K	E	O	R	U	R	C	H	N	O	S	D
T	T	R	E	V	E	R	E	N	T	O	A	K	T
N	C	R	P	E	D	R	E	N	O	I	E	T	O
D	C	V	E	R	O	R	G	D	N	E	A	N	R
D	E	E	R	U	P	H	O	D	R	D	R	R	D
C	T	D	T	N	T	A	O	T	D	N	I	K	E
E	N	I	R	T	C	O	D	H	E	K	E	M	N
M	L	R	M	R	E	N	D	U	R	A	N	C	E
T	O	T	E	M	P	E	R	A	T	E	C	P	F
C	V	E	U	R	E	D	R	E	D	U	L	R	O
E	E	E	T	T	E	P	E	P	E	E	O	I	C
S	E	L	F	C	O	N	T	R	O	L	O	V	P
F	G	M	E	E	E	F	H	T	I	A	F	O	N
F	E	O	E	R	A	D	C	R	T	O	E	E	E

READ: Titus 2:11-15

MEANING:

→ Grace is a word often used in the bible (and often used by us!) - what do you think "grace" means?

→ Read **Ephesians 1:7-8, 2:4-5**. How does this help us understand grace?

Grace is the quality in God that leads to God giving us the free gift of salvation. It is the abundant provision of God to sinners that leads to life.

→ Read **1 Cor 15:10, and 2 Cor 8:1, 9:8, 12:9**. Grace is used in another slightly different but related way here. What is it?

In these verses grace is God's power given to us to help us live how he wants us to. This is the sense Paul is using it in Titus 2:11-15 – God's grace is teaching us.

1 Cor 15:10 - the grace of God led Paul to become who he is, it spurred him to work harder than the rest of the apostles and to be transformed

2 Cor 8:1 – God's grace is the cause of the Macedonians extreme generosity

2 Cor 9:8 – God's abounding grace (some versions have "blessing") means we can abound in good works

2 Cor 12:9 - God's grace is power given to Paul to endure the thorn in his flesh

→ The rest of this passage is about how we're to live in light of being saved and by the power of God's grace. For each point in the table chat about: 1) what it means, and 2) what living it out might look like for you.

	What does it mean? <i>Get the group to explain what these key words mean, without assuming anything. These are words we often use but may not fully understand.</i>	How can we live it out? <i>Get practical & try to link answers with what your group shared in the previous column.</i>
Saying no to ungodliness and worldly passions (v12)	<i>What do 'ungodliness' and 'worldly passions' mean. What examples of can we see in our world today?</i>	
Being self-controlled (v12)	<i>What does it mean to be self-controlled?</i>	<i>What parts of life do we show least self-control?</i>

Living an upright Godly life (v12)	<i>Godliness as God defines it is very different to how our world defines it!</i>	
Waiting for Jesus' return (v13)	<p><i>We know that - Matt 24:36: no one knows the day or hour of Jesus' return; Acts 17:31: God appointed Jesus as judge; 1 Thess 4:16-17: Jesus will descend from heaven; Rev 1:7: everyone will see Jesus' return.</i></p> <p><i>It's a "blessed hope" as it's the end & beginning - the end of a sinful world, the beginning of God's new kingdom in all its fullness.</i></p>	<p><i>Perhaps attitudes while we wait: what should we be feeling, thinking and doing while we wait?</i></p> <p><i>You could also explore what people are looking forward to in the new kingdom, to get our heads around how good this new kingdom will be!</i></p>
Doing good (v14)	<i>There are many definitions of "good"! How do we decide what is good, and therefore worth doing? See also Eph 2:10: God created us to do good works and prepared them for us to do; Matt 5:16: good works lead to God's glory.</i>	

++ Paul tells Titus to teach, encourage and rebuke with all authority. Where does Titus' authority come from? Do we have the same authority?

In Matt 28:17-20: God gave Jesus authority, Jesus then gave his disciples the authority to make disciples, baptise and teach. In 2 Tim 3:16: authority is in the scriptures, so we have this authority too in some sense, since the basis of authority (Jesus and His word) is eternal and unchanging.

PRAY TO END: that we'd work with God's grace to become like Jesus.

TITUS 3:1-7 • 20-26 NOV

DIRECTION: 2:1-10 was a picture of Christian family life and 2:11-15 showed where the power to live it comes from – we’re to be a community of self-control and love, as God’s grace teaches us. But how do Christians treat those *outside our community*, show the gospel’s transforming power *to our city*, and what’s our motivation for this? The answer is to remember what we were like and how, by the “kindness and love” of our triune God we are transformed to live gentle and peaceable lives to win others.

PRAY TO START: We’d dwell on the grace of God and be transformed

LAUNCH: → Who is the person that annoys you the most?

This is a set-up for us to read “at one time we too were...” Before the saving grace of God, we too were just as bad as any other sinner around us.

OBSERVATION:

→ In pairs or on your own, draw on the passage printed here:

Underline all the *conjunctions* (aka connecting words like but, because, so that) and *prepositions* (aka modifying words like to, in, through, by)

Circle all the words that describe who God is or what God has done.

¹Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, ²to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.

³At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

⁴But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

MEANING:

→ What stands out to you most in the way these Christians used to act (v3) and are now supposed to act (v1-2)?

→ Why is it important for Christians to act in this new way?

"We too were foolish," so we should respond with love and kindness to those who don't yet know Jesus and still are foolish. As opposed to being Christians who "Bible-bash," yell, or look down on the people we used to be the same as! When we live this way before outsiders we show the goodness of the gospel so others come and trust the same saviour. E.g. young women are told to live a particular way "so that no one will malign the word of God" (2:5) and slaves "so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive" (2:10).

→ What causes us to act differently?

We're reborn! Renewed! The 'old self' who lived as a slave to passions and pleasures was done away with when we were saved! We don't need to live lives driven by insecurity and the need to prove ourselves. We have been "justified by his grace."

++ What different work does each member of the Trinity do to save us?

The triune God saves by His mercy. God the Father saves through rebirthing and renewing us by (aka by means of) God the Holy Spirit. The Father pours out the Spirit on us through (aka based on the work of, and at the request of) Jesus Christ.

++ What is the final outcome of God's saving work in our lives?

v7 - having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. What a beautiful reality!!

APPLY:

→ Look at v1-2 again. How are you going at obeying this?

Some areas to push into maybe: being subject to authorities when we drive; our attitude towards gossip/smearing someone's reputation; how short-tempered we are when we should be gentle/patient.

→ Read v3 again. What is your reaction to people like that?

Christians can be known for their self-righteousness: "Thank God I'm not like THAT person." v3 tells us that we were exactly "that" person. We should react by being "considerate...gentle." towards people.

→ Our culture believes that our good deeds prove we're good people. How does this passage teach us otherwise?

v5 speaks for itself. God didn't save us because we're good people. He saved us because he's merciful.

++ Why should God allow you into heaven?

Any answer that points to the things we've done is the wrong answer! "Because Jesus died for me and I trust him" is our only hope of making it into eternal life.

++ Think about your unbelieving friends and family. What 'passions and pleasures' do you think they are 'enslaved' to?

Maybe they're super career focussed, driven by money, have insane expectations for their spouse or kids. Other examples: Intimacy (often without commitment), experiences / travel, being their 'best selves.' We have great news for these people!! They don't need to chase these things for their security. God loves us just because he wants to and he gave us Jesus so that we can be reconciled to him.

PRAY TO END: Praise God for his mercy kindness and love to people who deserve nothing but wrath!

Pray for your unbelieving friends, family, workmates and neighbours.

TITUS 3:8-15 • 27 NOV-3 DEC

DIRECTION: Like the intro in 1:1-4, Paul's conclusion sums up for us the point of his letter. What difference does the Gospel make in our lives? It teaches us to devote ourselves to doing good. That "good" is excellent, profitable (v8) and productive (v14). It looks like supporting Christians (v13), providing for urgent needs (v 14), and harder things like protecting God's household from division and distraction (v9-11). Paul finishes with the theme of this letter and his entire life: "*Grace* be with you all." When Christians are captivated by God's grace, everyone benefits!

PRAY TO START: Pray we might be captivated by the grace of God.

LAUNCH:

→ Besides Jesus, what do you think everyone needs to know about?

A great podcast, tv show, book, hiking trail, café, etc.

CONTEXT:

→ How would you summarise the message of Titus in 1-2 sentences?

READ: Titus 3:8-15

OBSERVATION:

→ What is the "trustworthy saying"? What is Titus to "stress"?

The trustworthy saying is the Gospel of 3:3-7. Titus should always be sharing the Gospel with Christians and non-Christians.

→ What is the effect of the "trustworthy message"?

"So that..." we'll trust in God [for salvation] and be devoted to good works (v8).

MEANING:

→ Why do you think “foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law” are called “unprofitable and useless”? (v9)

Because we're no longer under the law! We don't need to trace our genealogies to find out if we have Jewish heritage and so legitimately belong to God. We belong to God through faith in Christ Jesus.

→ Why does Paul call them “divisive” people?

That's what their teaching does. Although they think they have the “truth” by requiring circumcision and Jewish laws, they're actually dividing people and distracting them from the truth of the Gospel. That's a tragedy!

++ Why is “warped” (v 11) a good description of these people?

They've 'twisted' the truth for their own dishonest gain. They've deviated from the standard of truth, rejecting it and turning it into something different (legalism).

→ So how does v9-11 give us examples of “doing what is good”?

Paul is showing what “doing what is good” could mean - it means rebuking and guiding those who are misguided, until we're certain that they can't be helped except by exclusion.

→ How does v12-15 give us examples of “doing what is good”?

Paul is expanding on what “doing what is good” could mean. It means helping those in need and helping other Christians (v13-14).

++ Why do you think Paul ends his letter with a request to God for “grace”?

APPLY:

→ What is a “good” you need to devote yourself to this week?

→ What has encouraged you the most from Titus?

→ What has challenged you the most from Titus?

++ What are some urgent needs we can be providing for at Salt Church, and in our wider community?

*Medical emergencies (e.g. providing dinners, cleaning someone's house etc.).
Helping financially (e.g. unexpected bills, car troubles). Lots of ways we can do good to our church family and wider community.*

++ What do you tend to “stress” more for Christians – how safe we are before God, or the need to obey God?

We need to stress both and the relationship between the two. We need to stress the Gospel of 3:3-7 (and 2:11-14) and that is what teaches us to devote ourselves to doing good. From the security and freedom of being saved, we devote ourselves to good. As Martin Luther put it: we're saved by grace alone through faith, but grace is never alone (i.e. it's accompanied by the good works that are the fruit of grace).

++ How would you go about warning a divisive person?

However we do it, it has to be with “gentleness” (v2). Then it has to be done with the Gospel, because only that standard of truth can straighten any distortion.

PRAY TO END: Confess the times we haven't been devoted to good.

Thank God for the Gospel that extends grace to us even when we aren't doing good. And thank God for all we've learned in Titus!

FINISHING UP • 4-10 DEC

DIRECTION: Have a Christmas party with your group to end the year! The reason we have Small Groups is so we can help each other know God better and learn to love each other like He's loved us. As you finish up for the year – or maybe even finish up as a group – take the chance to reflect on how God's grown you in your relationships with Him and each other.

Fyi groups normally finish up in early Dec rather than later, because:

1. It's way better for the vibe of your group to finish well, with people coming and wanting more, rather than limping to the end of the year with people slowly dropping off. That's painful for everyone!
2. December's a full time for lots of people with shopping, holidays, Christmas parties. So beat the rush & get in early!

If your group's finishing up altogether, or if people might change groups next year, think through ending well. Chat with your Coach & check out 'It's a Living Thing' in chap 5 of [*Getting Started as a Small Group Leader*](#) for tips.

REFLECT: Think back to when you first joined this group.

- How have you seen your *relationship with God* grow this year?
- How have you seen your *relationship with other people here* grow?
- How have you seen *someone else in our group* grow as a Christian?

PLAN: As we finish up meeting for the year, what can you do:

- To keep growing as a Christian over summer and into next year?
- To *help others in this group* keep growing as Christians over summer?

PRAY: Finish your night and year in prayer:

- Thank God for how He's grown us to know Him better and taught us to love each other like He loves us this year.
- Ask God to help us grow over summer and next year, so we'd all know, love and trust Him more at the end of next year than we did this year.



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For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope – the appearing of the glory of our great God and

Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good

Titus 2:11-14